

POLICE ATTACK SOUTH AFRICAN STRIKERS

Statement by the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International (South Africa)

ON 13 and 14 July the blood of the workers flowed in the streets again; the iron heel of police fascism came down once more. This time it did not happen under former apartheid president P. W. Botha but under the 'new' South Africa of which the president is Nelson Mandela.

The Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International (South Africa) condemns in the strongest possible terms the brutal and vicious attacks against Pick'n'Pay supermarket workers, members of the South African Catering, Commercial and Allied Workers' Union, who have been on strike since 12 July. More than 10,000 are on strike in support of their demand for a 15.6 per cent wage increase.

Savaged

On 13 July the police used killer dogs, rubber bullets and stun grenades. On 14 July the police locked killer dogs in the shopping centre with the strikers. After the dogs had savaged numerous workers the police tear-gassed the building and cold-bloodedly beat up workers. Many were arrested.

This is an outrage straight from the days of P. W. Botha and it happens within 100 days of African National Congress rule. But workers remain defiant. Afterwards they declared that they will continue the struggle for their demands despite the police brutality.

These workers are members of COSATU, the South African

trade union federation, which has a political alliance with the ANC and the South African Communist Party. Most COSATU workers voted the ANC into office. What's more, the ANC minister of police is the former COSATU assistant general secretary and a current SACP leader!

Yet, to date, not one ANC minister has come out in defence of the workers against the police. Workers must learn from this. The ANC and SACP are not fighting in the interests of the workers but to protect the bosses.

We salute the workers in their courageous battle!

We demand the full right to strike, picket, and protest without any restrictions!

We call on all workers to organise solidarity actions in support of the strikers and to support their marches and pickets.

We call on all unemployed and other workers not to scab.

We call on the public to support the strikers.

We call on all workers and their organisations to demonstrate against police brutality.

We call on all workers to immediately discuss the establishment of a powerful strike fund.

Workers, form committees to defend your struggle against the police!

Workers, learn the lesson of this battle, take COSATU out of the alliance with the ANC and SACP, the new repressors of workers' struggles!

Build an independent revolutionary workers' party now!



Bosnian cellist Vedran Smailovic (right) and three British musicians play at Workers Aid for Bosnia's successful concert in London on 14 July: full report page 3
Photo by Marg Nicolson

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— Against political assassinations in Brazil

— Against victimisation in South Africa

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— A sinister attack on Workers Aid for Bosnia

RMT appeals for financial support

BY ROY THOMAS

BOB CROW, rail union RMT executive member, speaking at the South East Regional TUC council meeting, said: 'We will bust the government's 1.5 per cent pay norm.'

Crow added that the signal membership still wanted to know if the Labour Party supported their struggle. The Labour leaders had accepted the signal staff had the right to strike, what the RMT wanted was a clear statement of support for workers in battle.

The main trouble RMT members have in dealing with the new Railtrack managers is in

finding a time to meet them. They can't get away from their other jobs, because the new top managers are only part-time.

Full-time signal workers are on £146 a week. The RMT is launching an appeal for financial support for their very low-paid group, who in a week where there is a two-day strike will end up with only £84 pay for the week.

There will be a demonstration of support for striking RMT workers on Saturday 30 July starting at 1 pm and ending up at Camden Town Hall.

Workers Press would urge every reader to organise support for the appeal and the demonstration.

Demonstrate in support of signal strikers!

SATURDAY 30 JULY

Assemble 12.30pm

Grafton Place, off Euston Square, Euston station, London NW1.

Rally at Camden Town Hall

Workers Press

Turning the clock back

FIFTY-TWO years after William Beveridge published his plan for universal social security in Britain 'from the cradle to the grave', what is left of the brave new Britain which he heralded and which the 1945 Labour government stood pledged to construct?

Official figures published on 15 July show that almost one British child in three now lives below the poverty line. This means they are the children of families whose income, after housing costs are taken into account, is less than half the national average.

In 1979, when the Tory government took office, 1.4 million children, or 10 per cent, were living below that level. Some 13 years later, in 1991-92, this figure had soared to 4.1 million, or 32 per cent.

Taking children and adults together, the number living below the poverty line went up from 5 million in 1979 to 13.9 million in 1991-92, or from 9 per cent of the population to 25 per cent.

And when you look closely at who is living — say, rather, 'existing' — on less than half the average income, you find that while 28 per cent of single parents were below the poverty line in 1979, no fewer than 74 per cent of single parents were in that plight by 1991-92.

Of all the shameful aspects of these years of Tory government, this turning back of the clock to the hungry 1930s is most shameful of all.

Step by step, the Tories have dismantled the welfare state and condemned millions to a life of misery and wretchedness.

* * * * *

BUT this is not all. The Tories have succeeded also in widening, to an extent unknown for half a century, the gap between rich and poor. While declaring war on the needy, they have encouraged the greedy to sink their snouts deep into the trough.

Consider the figures given in the government's own publication, 'Households below Average Income'.

Between 1979 and 1991-92 the average income for the population as a whole went up by 36 per cent. Between those years the richest tenth of the population enjoyed an increase of 62 per cent; the number of people earning more than £700 a week rose from 80,000 to 1.1 million.

In stark contrast, the real income of the poorest tenth of the population, after housing costs, fell by 17 per cent between those years.

The income of the poorest fifth of the population, after housing costs, has dropped by 3 per cent over those 13 years. In other words, one person in five in this country has had their real income cut.

And the Tory attack on the poor, on the most helpless and defenceless sections of society, continues. There are threats to punish those refusing starvation-wage jobs by taking away all their rights to benefit.

* * * * *

BUT this attack is not limited to Britain. Elsewhere in Europe, too, the capitalist class finds itself unable to guarantee the basic necessities of life to the growing army of unemployed, or to the young people who have little prospect of ever finding work.

At a time when the German finance ministry admits that long-term unemployment is going to rise, the German government is planning to cut dole entitlement to two years, and to give no dole whatever to those with no right to full-scale benefits.

The idea is to 'price people back into work'. The concept is unashamedly borrowed from Margaret Thatcher, as a strategy for meeting the strict criteria for Germany joining the proposed European monetary union by 1998, and to make big tax cuts possible.

This is how capitalism tries to solve its crisis: by turning the clock back; by throwing the burden on those who can least afford it. The only force that can defeat this strategy is the international working class.

Letters

Common life, common enemy

SAO PAULO is the biggest working-class centre in Brazil and in the world. Some 19 million people live there, compared with London's population of 9 million. There are 350,000 steel workers alone, and thousands of chemical workers and workers in associated industries — car and accessories factories and a myriad of others.

The city seems to have no past — the old buildings were largely destroyed to erect thousands of high-rise blocks of flats and offices. A blue cloud of pollution hangs over everything. Cars, buses and taxis rush along the roads as though frightened that they will miss tomorrow. Last year 150,000 people were killed by hit-and-run drivers.

On the journey from the airport you see the truck depot of TNT (the strike-breaking company used in the 1985-86 printers' strike in Britain). There are many other companies common to workers in countries throughout the world.

You could be in any city anywhere in the world — everybody is wearing the same blue jeans, T-shirts and trainers, produced by the same manufacturers. The shanty-towns on the way into Sao Paulo remind you of the 'cardboard cities' in London. There are beggars on the streets and on the metro, as in Hungary, Paris and London. In Brazil there are the richest and poorest of the world.

The first thing I was asked by Marcia, with whom I lodged in Sao Paulo, was: 'Please will you

send us material about the destruction and privatisation of the National Health Service in Britain — we are facing the same problems here.' Others asked me about the anti-trade-union laws in Britain.

Surely it is food for thought that we from Britain, the country with the first trades unions, are now asked, not about how the trade unions were built, but about the destruction of democratic rights and social services!

This must tell us that now, more than ever before, the workers of the world have a common life, common problems and must unite against the common enemy.

Dot Gibson
London SW4

Scottish national question

IT SEEMS odd to me that the first contribution to the debate on the Scottish national question should side with Terry Brothstone's viewpoint.

But the most surprising aspect of the careful article by David Eyre ('Taking the "Scottish road"', 9 July), is that it seems to come out of a vacuum. Brothstone at least has more historical sense and he knows that problems like the Scottish national question are rooted in culture, politics and history. But Eyre informs his readers that 'I have lived in Scotland all my life', though the relevance of this interesting fact is not clear.

What puzzles me is that Eyre seems unaware of the 'two Marxist traditions' in relation to the

Scottish national question from the early part of the present century. Surely anyone intervening in the debate about this question (as distinct from mere Scottish nationalism) should begin by saying where they stand in relation to these traditions, particularly as one of them is thoroughly Stalinist.

Far from viewing 'identity politics', à la the Socialist Workers Party, as hostile to the class struggle, socialists should be aware of, for example, Rosa Luxemburg's pamphlet 'In Defence of Nationality'. What Ernest Belfort Bax wrote about Engels is, after all, not without significance: 'It is noteworthy that Frederick Engels, notwithstanding his long residence in England and acquaintance with the English people, never in himself became completely anglicised. He always retained to the last his German individuality.'

Moreover, although I have not been able to trace the source of the quotation, the same Engels did not think that the agitation for a Scottish parliament or national autonomy was a bourgeois deviation. He argued that a Scottish parliament would be 'a progressive step in England where four nationalities live in two islands and where, in spite of one Parliament, three systems of legislation exist side by side'.

The cultural sediment of the past is important in shaping distinctive national working classes and their political struggles. In a fine and very controversial document that Terry Brothstone submitted to the Scottish Labour History Society in, I think, 1970, he argued: 'Our journal is published in Scotland, and its foundation came about through the realisation of the need to promote the "study and

understanding" of the history of the working class in Scotland.

'But such an understanding cannot be achieved without a general grasp of the history of the international working class, its gains and defeats; and our journal would not want to give the impression that it can.'

I am a Marxist and an internationalist, I am also a working class Scot. I have always identified with the republican, anti-imperialism of John Maclean, who came out of a specific national tradition going back at least to the French Revolution.

James D. Young
Falkirk

Middle East struggle

THANK you very much for sending your comrades to the picket outside the Turkish embassy and the excellent report of it in Workers Press (2 July).

We were particularly pleased that the report was on the same page as other articles on the Middle East and showed the international character of reaction and the struggle against it, especially the Kurdish struggle, in the region.

We would like to ask you for five further copies of Workers Press. These we will be sending to activists and supporters in other countries, so that the picket's coverage by your organisation will receive the maximum attention within the Iranian left.

M. Razi
Editor, 'Workers Socialist Notebooks' (journal of Iranian Revolutionary Socialists)

Workers Press: advance after union response

WE HAVE made a breakthrough with the response of a trade union that now orders Workers Press and sends us its press notes. So it's a good start, but it's only a small one. We need much more effort by you, our Workers Press readers, because successes like these show that, with just a little effort, we can expand the paper's sales and, therefore, its income.

Two more points. Please, please send in news stories and

photographs of the struggles of workers in your area, in your industry, and in your local health and public transport services.

A readers' group in north London has been setting up a stall in the high street and has raised £50 selling bric-à-brac and old toys in good condition.

Can you do something like that in your area? Think about how you can do it.

Circulation department

Coming soon

TUESDAY 26 JULY: Workers Aid for Bosnia public meeting in Kilburn. Starts at 7pm, Kingsgate Community Centre, 107 Kingsgate Road, London NW6.

THURSDAY 28 JULY: Support victimised Kazakh miners! Lobby of the Russian embassy. Two thousand strikers in Kazakhstan went on strike on 18 May to 6 June for improved terms and conditions. Hunger strikes and other sit-ins were held. At least 19 workers were sacked for their part in the action. A lobby for the miners, supported by

Camden trades council, Camden UNISON and Tower Hamlets trades council, is being held at 10am at the Russian embassy, 10 Kensington Palace Gardens, London W8 (Notting Hill tube).

THURSDAY 28 JULY: One year since the killing of Joy Gardner at the hands of the police and the immigration service. Commemoration organised by the Joy Gardner Campaign at 11.30am, Topsfield Close, off Park Road (where Joy was killed), London N8. And later a commemoration at 1.30pm, The Green, opposite the House of Commons, London SW1. Procession to the Home Office, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1, where a wreath will be laid.

SATURDAY 30 JULY: RMT demonstration in support of the signal workers. Assemble 12.30pm, Grafton Place, off Euston Square, Euston station, London NW1. Rally at Camden Town Hall.

Give us your books and bric-à-brac!

YOU can now get rid of stuff you no longer need and help the party! We have regularly held car-boot sales and so on in the past, but now we are trying to centralise this work so that it can be done on a more consistent basis. One bookshop is now prepared to sell books for us. You may be able to set up a similar deal in your area!

The kind of books wanted are: Trotskyist/Marxist, good crime and detective novels, 'Viragos' and other feminist fiction and non-fiction, good-quality paperback fiction, film, philosophy, psychology, art/design/-

architecture, poetry, drama/theatre, black fiction and non-fiction, 'Third World'. No hardback or pulp fiction, no education, no economics, no environment and no sociology!

If you have anything that you think could be sold to raise funds for the party, or have any books, please contact us urgently so we can make arrangements to collect or receive it.

Phone 071-582 8882. Alternatively, if you know of car-boot sales in your area, why not collect together some stuff and have a go yourself!

WORKERS PRESS £3,000 MONTHLY FUND

In so far: £1,421.75

'WE MIGHT have to call the paper "Workers' Loot"', said one witty comrade when we were discussing the need to set up sales of books and bric-à-brac to help raise desperately needed funds (see advert above).

Many dedicated supporters donate large sums of money regularly to help keep Workers Press afloat — but any regular reader of this column will know this is not enough. There is a persistent 'money gap' that makes for desperate situations where we have to scabble around for every

available penny when our time should be spent on developing contacts and improving Workers Press.

In the last few weeks people may have noticed, if they read this column, that I haven't really mentioned the money situation on the paper and have instead written about the aims of socialism.

This is not because the money that we need has been coming in. In fact, the reverse is the case. These have been some of the worst times on this paper financially speaking. The reason I haven't pointed this out is that I

thought it was more important to remember why we're socialists than moan at our loyal supporters or give succour to our enemies, who enjoy a good gloat when this paper is having a hard time. So I covered Rwanda and the Durham miners' gala instead. The corner is by no means turned. We have a lot of hard work to do and we need support in the 'Workers' Loot' project. Please come forward with more ideas.

Mike Cooke

Please send money, payable to 'Workers Press', to: PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB.



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A great night's music for Bosnia

BY SHIRLEY WILLIAMS
AND JIM SMITH

MUSICIANS from Bosnia, Britain, Egypt and Lebanon shared their talents and passion with an audience of 200, including Bosnian refugees and visiting Ukrainian miners' delegates, at the 14 July concert organised by Workers Aid for Bosnia at London's Royal Academy of Music.

Cellist Vedran Smailovic, from Sarajevo, who had played for 22 days in the ruins of Bosnia's national library and other targeted landmarks to commemorate 22 of his fellow

citizens being killed in a bread queue massacre, opened the concert with 'Adagio for Sarajevo', written for him by Nigel Osborne.

Having spoken briefly about his feelings at the devastation and suffering inflicted on his people, Vedran played with a delicate, moving poignancy that brought an awed silence to the hall. Strength, passion and precision were combined by pianist Aida Gavrilova, from Tuzla, who has played for Workers Aid before at a concert in Brighton, and performed works by Mozart and Shostakovich.

David Heath's 'Recall', played by Lebanese flautist

Wissam Boustany, was a piercing recreation of the agony of war, which, he pointed out, his country had suffered like Bosnia. Reminiscent of Edouard Munch's painting 'The Scream', at times it directly echoed shells and pain, barely music though played with astounding control on an instrument which conveyed anger and yearning.

Tranquil

The first half of the concert ended with Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, a normally tranquil piece played in an increasingly sharp and discordant way by Vedran Smailovic

and three British musicians, to reflect Bosnia's life and culture torn and battered under siege.

After the interval the same musicians played this popular work superbly, so its gentle perfection felt almost shamefully complacent, yet conveying the hopes of peaceful, healthy, happy human life for the future.

Zoran Jancic played works by Granados and Boris Papanopolu, Leila Ibrahimovic coolly rendered Bach's Prelude and Fugue, and Wissam Boustany came back, assisted this time by fellow-flautist Nicola Woodward and Egyptian pianist Amira Foud, for a beautifully melodic Cantique Jean Racine by Faure.

Fantastic originality and gaiety came from Peter Cowdrey's 'Orbestra', classically-trained musicians and singers, who collect instruments and themes from around the world, weaving melody and rhythms into such works as God of the Great Forest, evoking tropical insects and bird songs; Tsip Tsap Tsop, teasingly varied children's songs (complete with toy xylophones and rattles); and Chardak, an exciting, energetic east European dance-sound.

Light and entertaining as this was, it admirably fitted the humour and cosmopolitanism that is embattled Bosnia. Peter Cowdrey announced that they

hope to play in Sarajevo before long. Vedran Smailovic rounded off with a gentle, melancholy solo, 'Bosnian Melody'.

Admire

After this food for the soul, came the chance to refresh bodies with Bosnian, Caribbean and British food; admire Farad Ibrahimoc's graphic art exhibition; and talk together — musicians, Bosnians (for whom it was a happy reunion amid worries about the war), and Workers Aid for Bosnia supporters. The evening grossed £1,500, and there were several new people who asked to join Workers Aid for Bosnia.

Build-up grows for sixth Workers Aid convoy

PREPARATIONS for the sixth Workers Aid for Bosnia convoy are steaming ahead. The convoy will take aid to Tuzla and Hrasnica, and leaves France, Spain and Britain on 1 August.

In Britain new volunteers have joined the work in raising the necessary aid and finance.

■ In Newcastle, the Bosnian community and the Wallsend unemployed centre are campaigning in the local labour movement for help.

Local council workers spent several hours of their spare time repairing a truck whose brakes had failed.

■ In Scotland, a truck and a collecting team have visited Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee, from where the first convoy left from the Timex factory in August last year. Street and pub collections have met with a good response.

■ A new trade union supporter in Hull has organised a collection and a student in Norwich has held a collection and Workers Aid meeting in the town. Collections at a supermarket

have been held in Reading.

Such activities have not only raised money and aid but have brought new drivers and volunteers for the coming convoy. Lorry drivers from South Wales, Aylesbury, Bolton and Carlisle have rung in wanting to join the coming convoy.

A small haulage firm that used to make trips to Tuzla before the war has offered to take a 38-ton truck for the cost of the diesel.

The campaign is not confined to Britain. Similar work is under way in Spain and France, where a team from Britain is renewing contacts made on the first convoy last year.

Ten lorries are ready to go from Britain. But how many make the trip depends on raising the money for diesel, insurance, and the ferry during the next two weeks.

Each lorry costs £1,500. So please pull out all the stops. Get the collecting tins out in your area and raise as much money from the labour movement as you can.



A GROUP of Workers Aid for Bosnia supporters in Carlisle, Kendal and Ulverston are showing the way with fundraising in the Lake District. During a visit to Kendal by a convoy team including two Bosnian refugees from Gateshead, £405 was collected on the streets and in the pubs. The group has been getting its biggest response from pub collections. One supporter managed to raise over £200 on his own in visits to small towns in the area. A number of trade union and Labour Party meetings in the area have discussed Workers Aid for Bosnia and Labour Party supporters are now active in the campaign for the coming convoy. Latest request for information has come in from Barrow.

Monks — I'll still talk with Tories

TUC general secretary John Monks still insists that he is right to carry on discussions with the Tories. Speaking at the recent Tolpuddle Martyrs march in Dorset, he insulted the name of these fighters for trade unionism by claiming that success depended on 'persuading people and especially people with influence'.

'I make no excuse for talking to ministers, for sharing platforms, for discussing, for using every opportunity open to me to pursue the TUC case, to pursue your case,' Monks declared.

Monks has come in for much recent criticism for providing two high-profile

platforms to Tory ministers. The last one saw Employment Secretary David Hunt at TUC headquarters.

What is this 'TUC case' that Monks is eager to pursue? The acceptance of the anti-union laws, the break-up of trade unionism in factory after factory, acceptance of a growing army of low-paid workers without rights and without a living wage.

The deeper the crisis in the Conservative Party grows, the more it is forced to prepare a showdown with trades unionists and workers — and the more John Monks and company step forward to come to their aid.

Criminal Justice Act lobby

Sunday 24 July
12.30pm, Speakers' Corner,
Hyde Park (Marble Arch),
London W1

Lobby for victimised Kazakh miners

Thursday 28 July, 10am
Russian embassy,
10 Kensington Palace Gardens, London W8

CIS representative is to receive letter to forward to the Kazakhstan government, as there is no Kazakh diplomat in London. (See Coming soon, p2.)

Bosnian 'slave labour' on London sites

BY JACKIE VANCE

ADDED significance has been given to the Workers Aid for Bosnia campaign by allegations that Bosnian workers are undercutting the wages of building workers in London.

The 'Irish Post' and 'Kilburn Times' have carried prominent articles claiming that Bosnians are prepared to work longer hours on the building sites for much less pay and are being given preference over Irish workers.

Traditionally, the gangs of labourers who waited along north London's Cricklewood Broadway for the early morning pick-ups by sub-contractors were predominantly Irish.

Now it appears they have been joined by Bosnian refugees. The 'Irish Post' quotes John Flavin, chair of the executive council of the builders' union, UCATT: 'It appears that

many Bosnian workers are to be taken on under terms that can only be described as slave labour.'

The 'Kilburn Times' article quotes an Irish worker who says that the Bosnians are 'causing a lot of bad feeling'. He says: 'By sticking together as best you can without a union, the lads were managing to get pay of £40 per day or more from the gangermen.'

'But these Bosnian folk have arrived and are offering to work for just £20 or £25 a day.'

Casual

This type of casual employment in the building trade, known as 'the Lump', has always been particularly dangerous, having little or no safety precautions.

In their desperation for work, the Bosnian refugees endanger themselves and make it even more difficult for building workers to fight to improve

their working conditions.

There is also the real danger of the bosses whipping up rivalry between the Irish and the Bosnians on a racial basis. It must be remembered that in the last century the first anti-Catholic riots in Belfast had their origins in Protestant opposition to Catholics undercutting wages.

Workers Aid for Bosnia, par-

ticularly in their campaigns amongst Irish workers, will be fighting for the maximum unity of Irish and Bosnian workers.

■ The next meeting of the north-west London branch of Workers Aid is being held on Tuesday 26 July at 7pm in the Kingsgate Community Centre, 107 Kingsgate Road, London NW6.

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Inside left

Tarry eyed

...LLS back new Moscow links', the 'Morning Star's' front-page on 12 July, headlined 'Ukraine Belarus voters oust profiteers'. was illustrated with a photograph of Ukraine's ousted President Leonid Kravchuk. But as the article noted, before becoming the proclaimed 'father' of Ukrainian independence, he was the Communist Party's ideology chief. Working-class feeling for unity is the same as Stalinist 'nostalgia for the USSR', reported Fred Weir as he moves back to an historic 'Morning Star', 9 July). He said that Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev was favouring 'his version of a reinvented USSR'. 'Kazakh miners fighting for basic rights might want another version! German army to go abroad', the 'Star' on 13 July, alongside a comment, headed 'Britain dum-dum warning of a new 'US-German' war. On 15 July it reported a protest in Paris at the Bundeswehr marching down the Champs-Élysées. It hasn't reported plans announced last month for joint Russian-Russian manoeuvres. Fred Weir says: 'Washington will not oppose such a union' (of the former Soviet republics). Probably the Bush administration would support Serbia's President Slobodan Milosevic of its backing for a Yugoslav state. It's nothing new with socialism.

Non-political?

...ARTICLE in the 'Morning Star' on 12 July, 'Charities in Check', was against moves to stop charities from engaging in activities deemed 'political', such as lobbying MPs or condemning military regimes abroad. Richard Hughes said American neo-conservatives, extreme Zionists, and rich Tories had sought such moves for years. New guidelines issued by the Charity Commissioners could shackle bodies coming from the Nicaraguan Central Fund to disabled rights campaigns. 'Charities must never be prevented from enhancing our moral debates,' he concluded. 'Non-political' trades unions, 'non-political' charity is a new idea. You can raise conscientiousness for the 'deserving poor', but don't say anything about the cause for their plight, or their need to do anything about it! Most trades unionists are alarmed by Serb Chetnik atrocities in Bosnia, and 'ethnic cleansing'. The 'Morning Star', like the Foreign Office, pretends to be 'the warring sides' in Bosnia, calls the Bosnian forces 'rebels', and blames Bosnians for resisting aggression. A few months ago members of the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) region donated £255 for Workers Aid for Bosnia. Some officials, their ties close to the 'Morning Star', weren't happy. Stories of Workers Aid 'gun-running' dropped when union members who had loaded and unloaded the Workers Aid lorries were exposed. The union's emergency and general purposes committee decided to freeze the money, saying an appeal to branches had been accompanied by 'a clear statement that Workers Aid for Bosnia is not about humanitarian aid, but about political perspective'. And the national committee has resolved that emergency and general purposes should decide 'on an alternative organisation to send the money to'. 'If democratic of them, to let what members want done with their money! And a precedent for unions and employers would

Charlie Pottins

Brazil: demand for murdered uni

BY DOT GIBSON

THE ASSASSINS of socialists, trades unionists, favela (shack) dwellers, and street children in Brazil must be brought to justice by the workers' movement!

Brazil's Forum of Solidarity, formed by the National Association of Lawyers, the Central Union of Workers, the Workers Party, the United Workers Socialist Party, and 46 other organisations, is demanding urgent action for justice and to stop the killings.

On 11 June this year, at 11pm, two members of the United Workers Socialist Party, Jose Luis Sundermann, vice-president of the university workers' union FASUBRA, and Rosa Hernandez, a leader of poor agricultural workers, were found dead by their son Duda. The two, both 37, had been shot in the head.

Two days later 16 bullets were fired in a ferocious gun attack that killed two members of the Workers Party and the United Black Movement, Hermorgences de Silva and Renaldo Miranda.

Capitalist Brazil, rich in natural resources, has some of the richest people in the world — and many of the poorest. In the big cities, police and private security guards form death squads to kill homeless children. The Institute for Social and Economic Analysis estimates nearly 100 children a month are being killed.

In the countryside, landowners use terror and murder are used against peasants and agricultural workers. A Catholic Pastoral Land Commission recorded 1,730 killings of peasants, farmworkers, union leaders, lawyers and priests between 1964 and 1992.

One of the Sundermann family lawyers, Ibdal Piveta, said that all indications are that Rosa and Luis were killed because of their political activities.

Police investigating the deaths of de Silva and Miranda allege that this was a crime of passion. But the Workers Party and the United Black Movement refute such a suggestion. The two were investigating the de Vigario Geral and Candelares massacres, where:

■ Twenty-one people were killed when assassins invaded their homes in the favelas of de Vigario Geral. The action was indiscriminate, killing men, women and children. Eight were members of the same family.

■ Seven street children died at the hands of professional killers in front of the church of Candelares in Rio de Janeiro.

The International Trade Union Solidarity Campaign, PO Box 12, Barking, IG11 7UJ, Britain, calls for the widest support for the Forum of Solidarity.

■ Send resolutions of protest to Brazilian embassies. In London this is at: 32 Green Street, Mayfair, London W1. Fax: 071-493 5105.

■ Send copies of these and resolutions of solidarity to the Forum of Solidarity, c/o PSTU, by fax to: Sao Paulo 5756093.

First to step forward

THE 17-year-old son of Rosa Hernandez and Jose Luis Sundermann, Carlos Eduardo (Duda), said in an interview to 'Folha', weekly paper of the United Workers Socialist Party, that he suspects the crime was carried out because of his parents' activities with the trade union of farm labourers employed by the orange-growers.

He said that last August, during a strike in the Usina Ipiranga, his father received death threats:

'A director of the "usina", known as Joaquim, asked Captain Souza to hit my father. During the negotiations between the workers and the employers, the "usineiros" hit the table with their guns, trying to intimidate the workers,' declared Duda.

A spokesperson for the industry said that, in spite of the fact that Sundermann was one of the intellectual leaders of the strike, he never participated in negotiations. He also said that there was no such person as Joaquim working in the industry.

'Folha' discovered that Joaquim worked in the security department of the 'usina' and that he was dismissed on 1 June.

The head of the police department of Descalvado, Ricardo de Souza Ferreira, said that he had never been asked to hit Sundermann. However he did confirm that Sundermann had participated in all the meetings between the 'usina' and the 'cortadores do cana'.

Duda said that he will continue his studies and look after his 11-year-old sister. They will live with their family in the same region in which they were born.

At the memorial meeting held by the United Workers Socialist Party, a speaker stated: 'For every socialist and militant worker killed by the class enemy, 100 more will come forward.'

Duda was the first to do so — he told the meeting: 'Only 99 are needed because I am the first one to come forward.' He told 'Folha' that his parents had been killed because both of them were fighting in defence of the workers. 'Now we have to take up this fight,' he said.



Capitalist Brazil, rich in natural resources



The SACP's alliance with the ANC is virulently anti-socialist

Concerned workers fight Campaign against undemocratic practices

SAHIED MOHAMED (Mo), a full-time official of the Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers Union (PPWAWU), an affiliate of the South African trade union federation, COSATU, was dismissed on 17 May for campaigning for the Workers International To Rebuild the Fourth International in the recent elections.

Now the 'Concerned Workers Committee Against Undemocratic Practices in the Unions' has been set up to campaign against Mo's dismissal and to expose the use of Stalinist methods in the trades unions in South Africa.

Although the COSATU central executive committee met on 9-10 July it failed to discuss the matter. It was due to elect a panel to investigate the sacking, and angry trades unionists claim that this delay is an infringement of the rights of the sacked official and the union members he serves.

The action started on 18 February when a national investigation into Mo's activities was launched by the PPWAWU. One month later he was suspended by the national officials of the Western Cape branch, only to be reinstated by the executive committee of the branch one week later.

That meeting was declared inquorate because only 18 factory represen-

tatives were present. However after the national officers dismissed Mo on 17 May, the overwhelming majority of the branch executive committee, representing over 3,000 workers called for his immediate reinstatement. They urged political tolerance in the union, and made it clear that the official had done nothing wrong.

However, on 26 June the union's national executive committee upheld the dismissal and now COSATU must elect a panel of investigation.

The Concerned Workers Committee complains that the sacking is an example of Stalinist methods in the unions and they call for workers to unite internationally in a struggle against such methods.

The South African Communist Party and the African National Congress are in deep crisis, and Mo's sacking is their warning to those who dare to challenge their 'leadership' of the South African working class.

The tri-partite alliance — the ANC, SACP and COSATU — is under direct pressure from the working class. Throughout the negotiations period the SACP and its ally, the ANC, lost a lot of support due to their treacherous deals with De Klerk. Even before the elections the metal workers' union, the third biggest affiliate of COSATU,

justice trades onists!



... has some of the richest people in the world — and many of the poorest

ght against sacking s in the South African trades unions

olved to pull out of the alliance, declaring that there was a need for a workers' party.

The new government is being expected as an openly anti-working-class instrument which is increasingly coming into conflict with the workers. Workers have now witnessed the murderous role of the SACP/ANC in driving them out in Natal/KwaZulu by vying over political control in the region to the murderous Inkatha.

Opposition is also coming up inside the SACP/ANC. Members believed leaders when they explained their 'two-stage' theory. Now that the 'democratic' elections are over, many members are calling for the implementation of the second 'social-stage', only to come up against the nature of the SACP/ANC alliance virulently anti-socialist.

Unlike the 'Communist' Parties in the ex-USSR and eastern Europe and the West, the SACP was able to survive in its old form due to the long communist aspirations of the working-class vanguard. This 'commitment to communism' — in reality Stalinist SACP betrayed it many years ago — is now proving to be a big liability to a party which is trying to discard even its 'communist'

The combined effect of these pressures is weighing down on the SACP like a ton of bricks, threatening it with disintegration. It is reported that there are already three broad factions:

- The orthodox Stalinists, who lead the party;
- The radical-orthodox Stalinists, who fear that the leadership is moving too far to the right;
- The self-proclaimed left-faction, which has a social democratic policy and supports the formation of a new workers' party.

The Concerned Workers Committee is calling upon all workers, especially those who have loyally supported the SACP/ANC to join the campaign for the reinstatement of Sahied Mohamed and against Stalinist methods in the trade unions.

Protest to COSATU head office, attention Sam Shilowa, fax no: +2711 339 5082 and + 2711 339 6940.

Protest to PPWAWU head office, attention Obed Zimande, fax no: +2711 331 3750.

Send copies of your protests and messages of support to the Concerned Workers Committee Against Undemocratic Practices in the Unions to +2711 331 3750.

Gardeners' world full of visions

TOM OWEN looks at the changing meaning of the 'garden' for English literature and capitalism's development

WHEN Radio Four decided to revamp its schedules, a furore was caused by the loss of 'Gardeners' Question Time' to Classic FM. My encounter with this programme at its 10.30am spot was the result of shift-working insomnia and a one-band radio. I must admit that it was hypergogic listening in that surreal state between dream and the cruel reality of waking to the working world. Somebody-Sourbutts and Dr Stepan Something-or-Other would balance bucolic wisdom with scientific gravitas in allotment halls and village institutes across the British Isles.

The outrage of the gardeners prompts me again to look into the English love of gardens. The early scientist and political realist, Francis Bacon (1561-1626), wrote in his 'Essay on Gardens' that 'God Almighty first planted a garden. And indeed it is the purest of human pleasures. It is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man; without which, buildings and palaces are but groz handyworks

... It is this garden, of course, which became the source of the original division of labour, never mind original sin. Although paying lip-service to the Edenic cultivation of 'God Almighty', Bacon spent all his considerable intellectual energies examining our 'groz handyworks', closely observing human behaviour, in the family, in social, economic and political life. He also was the first English philosopher to map out a methodology for natural scientific procedures.

His prescriptions for a 'princely garden' are fascinating because they map out symbolically the way in which European culture was to deal with the relationship between 'cultivation', the 'natural world'

'The garden of England had to be "improved". This meant the extension of enclosures and the development of land as a productive capital asset.'

and human settlement. He writes: 'For gardens... the contents ought not to be under thirty acres of ground, and to be divided into three parts: a green in the entrance; a heath or desert in the going forth; and the main garden in the midst; besides alleys on both sides.'

It is the relationship between the 'garden', 'the alleys' and the 'desert and heath' which is to mark out for the next four centuries the significant shifts in the economy of, particularly, European culture and civilisation. If we read this in another way, the alleys, gardens and heaths and deserts are communication and transport, agriculture and other forms of industry, including the arts, and the still unclaimed wildernesses of this planet and beyond.

The pre-Baconian garden remained as a metaphor for a post-lapsarian state, a corrupted world where, in the words of a distracted Hamlet: 'Things rank and gross in nature possess it merely.'

Shakespeare used the horticultural metaphor of pruning and cutting as a way of cultivating a healthy body politic in the face of the constant threat of chaos and

Tudor ascendancy to the throne.

The garden became a central metaphor for the English proto-bourgeoisie, the Puritan revolutionaries. After all, Oliver Cromwell was a horticulturalist!

In his longest poem, 'Upon Appleton House', Andrew Marvell (1621-78), parliamentarian and tutor to the daughter of Lord Fairfax, the leading general of the parliamentarian forces, employs a dazzling array of floral and military conceits to not only praise his patron, but to reflect on the 'iron times' of the civil war and revolution. His great contemporary John Milton, to whom he became assistant in 1657, writing — while blind and often in hiding — at the time of the restoration of the monarchy, examined the failure of the Puritan dictatorship to establish paradise on earth in

other great houses could be roofed.

A novelist like Jane Austen could feel confident, despite her misgivings about the marriage market, that the alliance between the gentry, the aristocracy and the rising middle class would be the shape of things for a millenium. In 'Pride and Prejudice' the heroine finds her engagement to the aristocratic Darcy made perfect by the landscape and parks of his Derbyshire residence, including a hint of the picturesque, or in Bacon's terms 'the heath'.

None of these writers, or indeed their contemporary landscape artists like Reynolds or Constable, could have foreseen the cataclysmic changes that were to shape the British landscape in the coming 50 years.

Ironically, it was a school of poets, now referred to as the 'Romantics', who transformed the view of what constituted the 'natural', at the point at which 'nature' as had been vanishing



Scene at Hartwell, by Balthazar Nebot, a formal garden of a great country house before the rise of 'natural' gardening and picturesque landscaping, such as that performed by Capability Brown

terms of the loss of Eden and 'the fall of man'.

Milton's vision, of the degraded world and the reconciling of fallen humanity through divided sexual relations and alienated labour, is one that resurfaces many times in English letters and politics. But the post-Restoration aristocracy and merchant speculators of 18th-century England had more pressing and optimistic concerns. The garden of England had to be 'improved'. This meant the extension of enclosures and the development of land as a productive capital asset. It also meant the virtual end of the English peasantry, as compared with its French and European equivalents.

The English aristocratic development of an agricultural capitalism alongside its colonial 'settlements' and plantations established a kind of historical optimism. Landscape design in the hands of figures like Capability Brown, designed terrains that were intended to last for thousands of years. They diverted rivers, moved villages in Derbyshire, and enslaved a generation of lead

into history.

Wordsworth and Coleridge saw 'the desert and heath' as the only source for the cultivation not of agriculture, but of the mind and soul. Wordsworth also addressed what was left of the British peasantry, the leech gatherers, shepherds and solitary crofters, who he believed exemplified what was threatened by encroaching urbanisation. He found few of these virtues in the rising working classes.

Indeed in his guide to the English Lake District, he includes his letters to the press protesting against the extension of the railway system into this, his private wilderness. One of his major concerns was that the railway would give access to the Lakes to the untutored masses of Lancashire cotton workers and miners.

From then on the wilderness and the deserts of Britain were to be found in the burgeoning industrial centres. Few gardeners in these centres could have contemplated a princely garden of 30 acres. But they did bring into being the urban allotment, to supplement their diet

British Stalinists and the war, 1939-41

PERSONAL COLUMN

'WHAT we know and what we still need to know' is the alluring sub-title of a paper submitted by Monty Johnstone to the 'Opening the Books' conference on British communist history, held in Manchester last January.

Johnstone's contribution, on the perennially fascinating subject of 'The CPGB, the Comintern and the War, 1939-1941', was not among the batch of 23 papers I received last month (see this column, 2 July).

It has only just come my way, and I think it deserves a column to itself for the light it throws on one of the most interesting — and still, in certain respects, most mysterious — periods in the whole history of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

All students of British CP history, and especially those who have read '1939: The Communist Party and the War', ed. J. Atfield & S. Williams (Lawrence & Wishart, 1984) and 'About Turn: The British Communist Party and the Second World War', ed. F. King & G. Matthews (Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), will be eager to digest the fruits of Johnstone's further research in long-hidden archives in Moscow and London.

Here is a summary of Johnstone's paper, with emphasis placed on 'what we still need to know':

1) *Dimitrov's diaries*. The Communist International's change of line was the direct result of instructions Stalin gave to Comintern secretary Georgi Dimitrov on 7 September 1939, six days after Germany attacked Poland and four days after Britain and France declared war on Germany.

The basic facts about that meeting are known from photocopies seen by two Russian historians, but by no one else, of entries in Dimitrov's diaries.

But the diaries themselves have been returned from Moscow to Sofia, and Dimitrov's adopted son Boiko Dimitrov is opposing their publication.

2) *Channels of communication*. The US Communist Party's leader Earl Browder had been given a powerful short-wave radio receiver, on which he heard of the Comintern's opposition to the war. The Belgian and Czechoslovak CPs were also informed by radio.

Though it seems that the CPGB had a radio link with Moscow up to 1937, and again from 1942 — Johnstone gives an apparently trustworthy source for this statement — there was no such link in September 1939, and the Comintern's instructions were transmitted through other channels.

Apart from the person of Dave Springhall, who got back from Moscow on the evening of 24 September 1939 with the Comintern line in his head, exactly what those channels were is not yet known.

3) *Comintern messages to the CPGB*. Reporting to the CPGB's central committee on 17 December 1939, R. Palme Dutt said a comrade returning from Moscow had brought a message from Dimitrov praising the British party as 'now completely on the line' and the 'Daily Worker' as 'doing good work'.

The text of this message has not yet been found. Nor have the texts of two other communications from the Comintern, received in the same period, one raising 'questions' and 'points', the other relating to the Young Communist League.

Yet another missing document is the Comintern reply to proposals to hold a closed party congress limited to 100 delegates on 10-11 February 1940, on the question of a general secretary (a position left vacant since the ousting of Harry

Pollitt in the previous October) and on whether Pollitt and J.R. Campbell should return to the political bureau.

No such congress took place, but it is not known whether this was because the Comintern ruled against it, or because no reply was received in London, or because it proved too difficult to arrange.

4) *CPGB policy fluctuations in the summer of 1940*. The main crux here for historians of the CPGB is the political bureau manifesto published in the 'Daily Worker' on 22 June 1940, the day Marshal Pétain signed a separate peace with Germany, and the day before General de Gaulle made his celebrated broadcast from London.

There was now no reference to imperialist war. Instead, the manifesto was strongly anti-fascist and even 'defencist' in tone. Johnstone calls this an 'extremely abrupt and significant turn', and speculates about whether it was home-grown or was the result of orders from Moscow.

He recalls Stalin's extreme shock at the speed with which France was knocked out of the war, and his fear that Britain might be similarly brought to its knees and that Hitler might soon attack the USSR.

This, he says, was a period of 'uncertainty bordering on panic', and the French CP also changed its position, with the approval of the Comintern secretariat, attacking the French ruling class for having failed 'to organise a real defence of their country'.

Johnstone senses that, in a veiled form, the CPGB now once again had 'two different lines on the war identifiable with Pollitt and Dutt respectively', and that the 22 June manifesto was a compromise document, from which Dutt, e.g., could select the elements he favoured, while ignoring others.

By 15 July, Johnstone speculates, Dutt had succeeded in reversing the 'defencist' line of Pollitt, who apparently had returned to the political bureau (exactly when he did so seems to be one of the things 'we still need to know'). But the anti-fascist 'defencist' line remained highly popular with CP members and sympathisers.

Hence the success of Ivor Montagu's book 'The Traitor Class', attacked by Dutt for its 'very strong flavour of national defencism' and critically reviewed by Dutt's supporter William Rust when it was published in September 1940 — despite which criticism it sold 25,000 copies in three months.

5) *The Comintern's last intervention*. This came in two parts, the first on 24 June 1941, two days after Germany attacked the USSR.

The CPGB's political bureau had expressed 'no confidence in the present government, dominated by Tory friends of fascism and coalition Labour leaders'. The Comintern secretariat criticised the CPGB's 'incorrect positions', notably its statement that 'the cause of the Soviet Union is the cause . . . of socialism' and its attacks on Churchill:

'Your attacks on Churchill . . . are not correct. You should direct your fire against capitulationist anti-Soviet elements. To demand . . . the replacement of the Churchill government by a People's Government means to bring grist to the mill of pro-Hitlerite anti-Soviet elements.'

A further message on 27 June insisted that the war being fought by the Soviet Union was 'neither a class war nor a war of socialist revolution'.

On 4 July Pollitt once more became CPGB general secretary.

Peter Fryer

Television

Attractive idiots and clowns

Review by Paul Day

OH the glories of the British summer: the gentle sound of willow on leather, the familiar sight of comedy series.

Because the television season starts in the autumn, the companies work overtime to show repeats amongst the sporting highlights over the summer in a bid to make money out of old shows to finance forthcoming attractions. As ever, repeats offer a mixed bag, but they are by no means all unwelcome.

Most welcome to this reviewer was the repeated highlights of 'The Morecambe and Wise Show' (BBC1, Saturdays), timed to honour the tenth anniversary of Eric Morecambe's death.

I make no apologies for returning to Eric and Ernie so soon after my colleague Roger Horrocks (4 June) for they were, in many ways, a living link between the old end-of-pier Variety shows and the modern back-room-of-pubs 'alternative' comedy circuit. Many 'alternative' comics pay tribute to them as representing what was finest about an earlier comedy generation.

When they started in television the variety theatres were already closing, unable to compete with the mass audiences attracted to radio and (latterly) to television itself. They had been working theatres as a double-act since their late teens, and were a well-established partnership.

Their earliest forays into

television were not a success. They sought to film their stage performance, seemingly unaware of the potential of the medium they were now using.

But they stuck at their craft, found themselves a new writer, Eddie Braben, and, seemingly overnight, found themselves the best-loved comedy act in the country. It is from these Braben-written shows that all the repeated material is culled. The eminent guest stars are queuing up to appear with them (John Mills, Vanessa Redgrave . . .).

Appeal

Their appeal lies in their apparent harmlessness. The gags, as Horrocks noted, fairly creak along, but what makes them watchable is the central relationship.

Here are two middle-aged idiots. One thinks he's a superstar genius, the other prefers not to think. They bicker and fight and share a bed. Their relationship is stable, yet with inherent internal wranglings.

This is part of the attraction: Morecambe and Wise are not hurtful, they rarely make others the butt of their jokes as they are content to take it out on each other. And yet we know they don't mean it. When a gag comes off, no one looks more pleased than Ernie. When an ad

lib is fired to cover a fluffed line, they both delight in it. (Compare this with the otherwise worthless 'The Imaginatively Titled Punt and Dennis Show' — which borrows its format from Morecambe and Wise — where Steve Punt and Hugh Dennis simply look smug at each gag.)

There is no complacency about Eric and Ernie — the audience is allowed to know how hard they are working, and share their delight when that work achieves its results.

An interesting light was shed on this, thanks to Worcestershire's dismal failure against Warwickshire in the Benson and Hedges Cup Final.

To fill time the BBC repeated a documentary made after Eric's death. Bryan Burdon, then working with Ernie Wise in panto, described Ernie as a consummate professional, saying that he had 'made me look about ten times as good as I really am'.

I do have quibbles. It looks pasted together, and some of the editing has been truly awful, resulting in the loss of some great material. But that said, I could watch this rubbish all day and all night.

While Morecambe and Wise worked within fairly narrow but firmly established limits, Channel 4's 'Little Napoleons' failed ultimately because it could not decide what it wanted to be.

The initial premise — the Labour Party, to court middle-class black and Asian middle-class businessmen, chooses two lawyers to stand for council seats — was promising. The cast (Saeed Jaffrey, Norman Beaton, Simon Callow, *et al*) was excellent. Yet the series was a mess.

Established

Having established the corruption of the council chamber in the first episode, with the Labour leader (Lesley Manville) doing deals with the Tories, the writers then shied away from hitting specific targets.

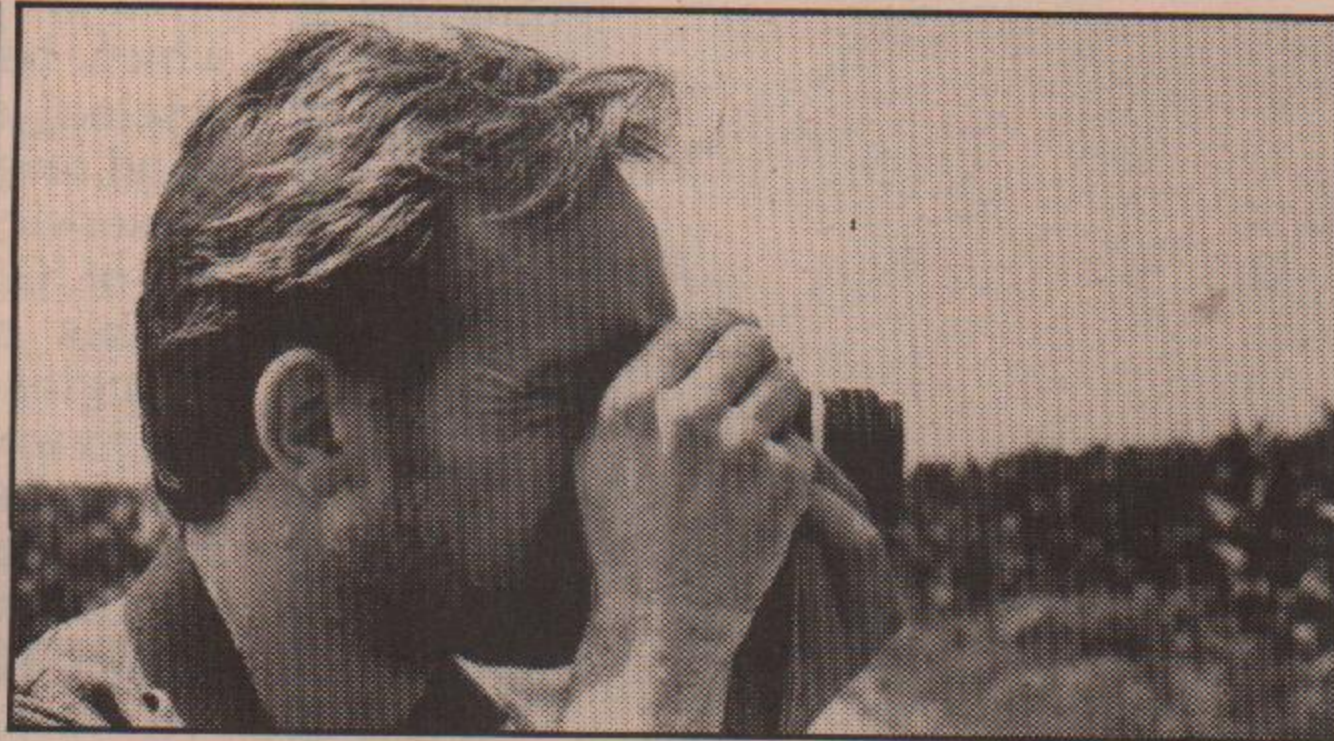
Once in power the arch-rivals Jaffrey and Beaton became reluctant partners — to the detriment of their earlier dramatic conflict. Judith (Manville) was shown to have a stereotyped overbearing Jewish mother of the 'What's wrong with my gefilte fish?' variety.

Minor characters, excellently portrayed, wandered on and off screen seemingly undecided whether they were comic relief or gripping sub-plot. Eventually even Beaton and Jaffrey seemed to give up trying and resorted to the easiest option of clowning about. (They were hysterically funny, but that's not the point.)

It was a sad waste of talent, which can be rectified if they are lucky enough to get a second series.

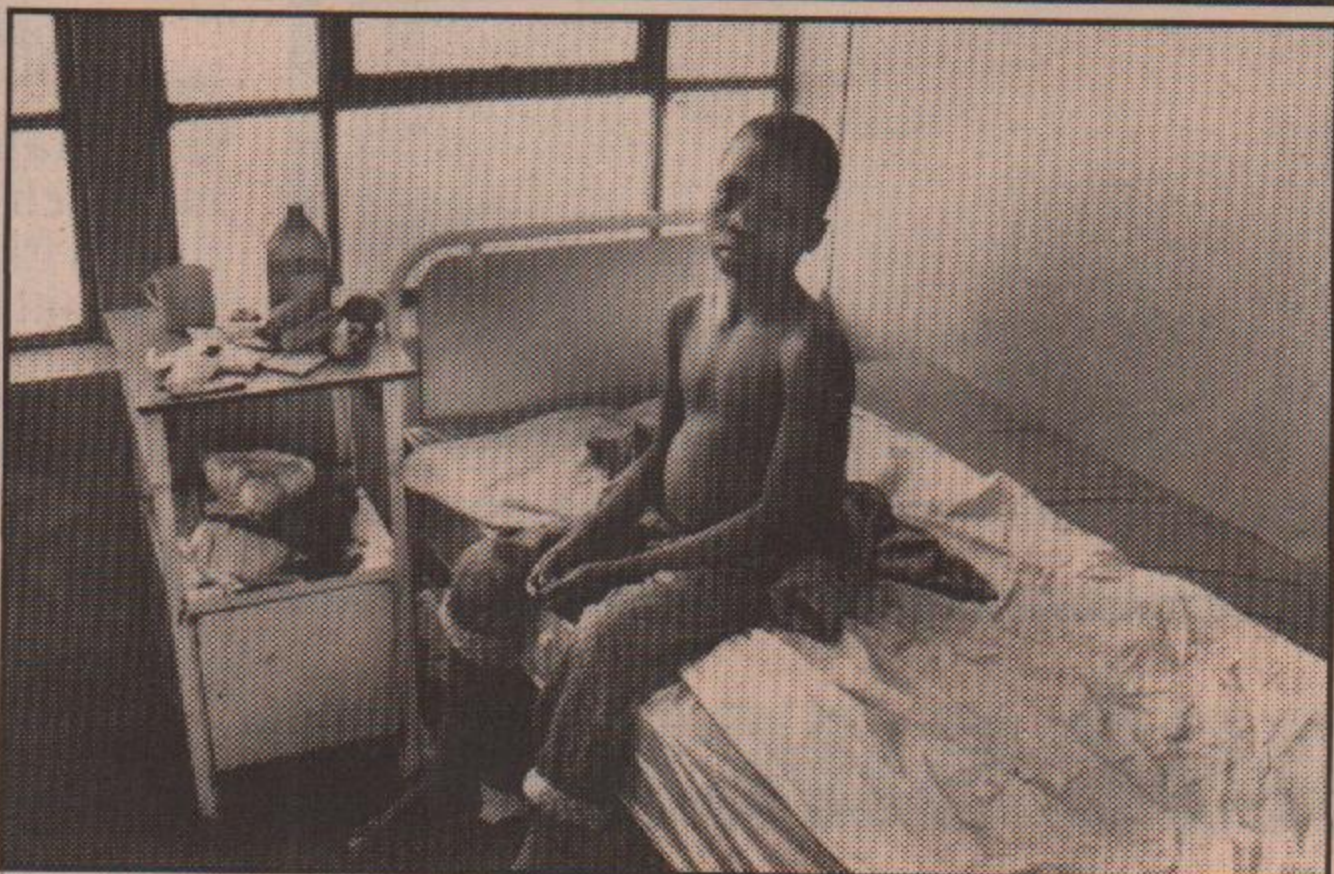


Saturday: The fun doesn't stop when arguably the worst actor of all time, Ray Milland (above), falls in his attempt to murder the late Princess Grace Kelly of Monaco, in Alfred Hitchcock's Hollywood stiff-upper-lip 'English' film 'Dial M for Murder' (Channel 4, 8.35pm).



On a small screen near you . . .

Monday: Journalist John Sweeney (top) travels to former Yugoslavia to investigate a colleague's suspicious death in 'Travels with my camera: Dying for the Truth' (Channel 4, 9pm).



Thursday: Abiam Danso is one of the first patients followed in 'Stories from an African Hospital', documenting daily life in Ghana's Komfo Anokye teaching hospital (Channel 4, 8pm).

Strange visit on eve of election

BY PETER WINDELER

INDEPENDENT tenants' candidate Charles Osigwe was in the middle of a good campaign in the May local council elections for the Hulme ward in Manchester when the person who proposed him begged him in some distress not to stand.

Why had she suddenly changed her mind?

She had been visited by two police officers, one a man and the other a woman, who said they believed her signature on the nomination paper to be forged.

If she denied this, they said, she could be a party to the forgery and hence liable to prosecution. Such a forgery would be a very grave offence, they told her.

Strangely, the police said they understood that she thought that she was proposing a 'white' man to stand and that they knew Charles was black.

Charles says he can't understand this assertion since his surname, Osigwe, is obviously

not that of a white person.

The woman who nominated Charles was so intimidated by this visit that, although she did not withdraw her proposal, she begged her friends not to vote for him because she feared another visit if he was elected.

Charles came second in the election, beating the Tories and Liberals. He got 200 votes compared to Labour's 800. After a campaign run on shoestring by himself, he managed to gain a quarter of the Labour vote with its national campaign machinery and money.

Hulme is an inner-city ward with 80 per cent unemployment, and traditionally held by Labour.

Over the years the area has deteriorated and disillusionment has set in amongst many residents — particularly against the ruling Labour group in the town hall. Charles decided to stand to give residents a genuine voice.

'It was very much a spur of the moment decision,' he says.

'You look around Hulme and see young people walking the streets aimlessly without any hope for the future. Many are

highly educated but cannot find work to match their qualifications. I myself have an MSc but cannot find work and there are many in my situation.

'Once you give your address as Hulme, or if you are black, employers do not want to know. I have talked to many local people and a lot are very depressed and feel that they are going crazy because of the lack of opportunities.'

Once he had decided to stand, Charles obtained a proposer and seconder and eight other people to nominate him as required by the local election regulations.

He then set about his campaign. He drew up a campaign leaflet in which he highlighted local problems such as jobs, the need for funds to help residents, and funding to allow local people to start their own businesses and improve their community.

He was against rent rises and the council tax. Housing and the drug problem were also areas which concerned him.

Charles also took up a regeneration project to replace the infamous high-density housing in Hulme. It is funded by a

£35 million European Union grant. Although the project is supposed to provide work for local people no local firms or workers are to be used. The housing that is replacing the demolished dwellings is of the same type — high-density and high-rise!

Instead of building the low-rise terrace-type housing wanted by local residents, there will be a repeat of the blunders that gave the area many of its problems — dark and isolated walkways making a haven for muggers and drugdealers.

Soon after Charles's leaflet about the regeneration project, the council called a meeting to announce that it was giving a contract to a local firm.

The response to Charles's campaign surprised him. His leaflets were passed on and many people telephoned him to say how sick and tired they were of Labour and how much a true alternative was needed.

Of those who rang Charles, 12 said they would stand in wards in the next elections. They were just waiting for someone to 'kick it off'.

Herb Lewin, this is your (politically active) life

Last week, we reported on a celebration of the 80 years (so far) of Herb Lewin's life, where money was raised 'to aid the families of the multi-ethnic miners and other workers of Tuzla, Bosnia'. Here we print an appreciation of Herb based on a speech given at that event by his wife, PAULINE LEWIN

HERB LEWIN was born on 22 July 1914 to immigrant parents who met as workers in the same sweatshop. Growing up in Port Chester, New York, he helped care for his brothers and sisters and drove a delivery truck for his father's small dry-cleaning store.

At 19 he left home to attend NY State Forestry College on the campus of Syracuse University. He supported himself there as a 'New York Times' representative, selling subscriptions and delivering the paper. It was there that he met his first wife, Marie.

While at Syracuse, during 1933-37 he was an active member of Young People's Socialist League, to which he had belonged in Port Chester. He completed three years of college, participating in many actions and activities, including a strike of laundry truck drivers.

In 1937, he came in contact with the Trotskyists, who had joined the Socialist Party be-

born while Herb was in jail for a six-month sentence, because he refused to give evidence against the leaders of 1937 laundry drivers' strike. In the same year, he began work at a General Motors parts plant in Syracuse. Starting with less than a handful of men, he and his friends were able to sign up and form a United Auto Workers union local (branch) in less than three years. Herb still has card No.1, which he proudly shows off.

In 1942, the aircraft industries were flourishing in Buffalo. The SWP leadership asked Herb and Marie to move there to help in the building of unions and the party. Herb worked in Bell Aircraft until 1944, after the break-up of his marriage. He returned to his parents' home, after being classified as '1A', which meant he was expecting to be drafted. Money ran out, and he got a job in Bethlehem Shipyard in Staten Island and joined the Bayonne, New Jersey, branch of the SWP.

Induction

When Herb received his notice to report for army induction, he showed it to the shipyard foreman, notifying him he was leaving. To prevent him from losing a good worker, the company got Herb a deferment. Herb never became a GI.

In the middle of 1945, Herb and Pauline met at a New York SWP social and ended up a pair. They moved to Allentown, Pennsylvania, and found jobs at Consolidated Vultee Aircraft. They worked with the Allentown-Bethlehem and Bucks county comrades. When World War II ended, the plant closed, and they moved to Philadelphia, Pauline's hometown.

Herb started work at the Westinghouse plant in Lester, Pennsylvania, at the end of 1945. In a little more than a month,

Westinghouse went out on strike and Herb was appointed a picket captain.

During this period, the upsurge of strikes continued. The strike at Westinghouse was solid, but General Electric on Elmwood Avenue was using scab labour. The Philadelphia area unions organised a massive march, with a young veteran from Philco Corporation carrying the US flag at its head, to protest at the scabbing and help the General Electric strikers. As they turned towards the plant, the police started clubbing the flag-bearing vet. A group of marchers formed a protective circle around him, whereupon a mounted police squad attacked, chased and beat the marchers.

Herb was saved from severe physical damage only by a photographer snapping pictures of two cops beating him on the head with clubs. One of these photos won the award for International Action Photo of the year and is on the cover of the book, 'Labor's Untold Story'.



Hard fought strikes in the United States characterised the period 1934-47

In 1948, Herb, working as a sheet-metal worker, and Frank Carner, an engineer, were fired from Westinghouse as security risks. Their union struck for three days and forced the company to take them back. Pauline and Herb's son, David, was born 2 January 1949.

During almost 30 years at Westinghouse, Herb was active in the shop, the local, in strikes, on committees, and, primarily, fighting for the rank-and-file and helping develop young

members to become active. He encouraged the African-American members to form a caucus and worked with them on the Fair Employment Practices Committee, which forced Westinghouse to hire more African-Americans.

He urged the union to send first a van and then buses to attend civil-rights marches — speaking at various churches to get support.

When the men in his department staged a sit-down strike against a new woman machinist, Herb was the only man to keep working. He contacted the union officials, who then stopped the sit-down strike by telling the men to leave if they continued.

While at Westinghouse, Herb ran as the SWP candidate for the offices of governor and senator.

After he retired from Westinghouse and had a short period of rest and relaxation, Herb became a substitute vocational training teacher. He taught sheet-metal and machine-shop work.

He was forced to retire at 70, but maintained his membership of the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers. During a teachers' strike, he was sent to Longstreth school and he showed the pickets how to deal with a scab-run school.

In the 1980s Herb and Pauline joined the International Workers Party — Fourth International, because of its position of unifying the left. They had left the SWP in 1963. In 1988, Herb ran as presidential candidate for the Peace and Freedom Party. Herb took courses at the University of Pennsylvania, joined a student socialist group and actively participated on and off campus against apartheid.

Wherever Herb was, in the shop, on the campus, at demonstrations, at meetings, if he was able to, he was selling his revolutionary socialist literature and supporting the struggles of the working and oppressed peoples everywhere. And at 80 he still does!

■ The report in last week's paper incorrectly calculated the pounds equivalent of the money collected at the meeting. The correct figure is £215.

During the early years of the Algerian war in the late 1950s he opposed the PCI's uncritical support of the Algerian National Movement (MNA), and advocated setting up a Trotskyist faction within that nationalist party.

He became a full-time party worker again in 1960 and remained on the PCI's political committee until 1980. He was put in charge of the PCI's clandestine organisations (i.e. those where the party was banned) in 1968. He was responsible for party work among theatre workers, where he had many famous friends, and finally for the work in the struggle against the Algerian war and in rebuilding the Fourth International. He was one of those who built the section in Quebec, Canada.

Raoul was faithful to himself and to his conception of communism. He refused to stay in the PCI, with whose leadership he had long profoundly disagreed, when its leading members decided that Pierre Broué belonged 'outside'. He took part in the founding conference of the Le Marxisme aujourd'hui (Marxism Today) discussion groups and remained with them to the end.

Raoul was a fascinating person because of his enthusiasm, passion and conviction. Above all he was a convinced internationalist, one of those very few French people with a genuine knowledge of the British movement. To his last breath he remained true to the man he had been during the war with his worker-comrades in Puteaux-Suresnes and the exploited Vietnamese in the camps and barracks to whom he brought hope.

became 'Raoul' and was put in charge of the PCI's model workers' district, Puteaux-Suresnes, the jewel of the organisation. 'Raoul' worked in the Farman factories.

Subsequently, together with 'Gilbert' (Hoang-Don-Tri), he organised and led 15,000 Vietnamese workers. He put enormous effort into this, looking after deserters, teaching people to read and write, organising the resistance and keeping the 20 or so camps in touch with each other. He achieved outstanding results and the Trotskyists were the militant political force which aroused those workers. Repression came in the form of a huge surprise raid on the political activists, many of whom perished in the Poulo-Condor penal colony. With Marguerite Bonnet he ran the party's colonial commission until 1948.

Opposition

In 1950 he took a position supporting the so-called 'Lambert group', the PCI majority, in its opposition to Michel Pablo, the secretary of the Fourth International. For a time he was a full-time journalist, sending in a scoop on the 1956 Hungarian revolution and the role of the workers' councils, and a hair-raising report on the circumstances surrounding the assassination in 1961 of Patrice Lumumba, Congo's deposed premier.

Bronwen Handyside reports

Two nations



From the cradle to the grave — literally

SHEFFIELD Health Authority warned this week that babies born after a pregnancy of less than 25 weeks could be refused treatment because of soaring NHS costs.

'If we were to continue the way we did last year, with the 30 per cent increase we experienced, then I see no way that we can actually fund that increase in this year,' said John Boyington, the official responsible for 'purchasing' neonatal care.

'We might find ourselves pushed to a position where we had to make some arbitrary purchasing decisions which excluded certain children from treatment.'

'I would have thought if we were forced into that position — and I sincerely hope we won't be — I would have imagined we would have to look very hard at the 23-24 week babies being treated.'

'If we had to introduce an arbitrary ban, clearly that may well mean that children who were receiving treatment would not be able to receive it in the future.'

On the way to the grave

WHAT happens to you if you make it from 24 weeks into old age? There has been a steep rise in complaints about abuse of elderly people and standards of care in private nursing homes.

More inspectors and tighter inspection of homes was recommended by the nurses' regulatory body, as reports of abuse nearly doubled in three years.

The cases involved physical and verbal abuse, 'wholly inadequate' systems of drug administration, ineffective management, lack of effective record-keeping, and 'almost non-existent' training.

The private nursing home sector is rapidly growing, and present inspectors are responsible for up to 2,000 beds each.

Cases mentioned in the report included: a 60-year-old male nurse who forced a severely demented and very frail woman to take pills by holding his hands over her nose and mouth so that she could not spit them out. When she kicked him, he kicked her back.

Another case involved a dying woman forced to take a bath and wash her hair every day despite her distress and pain — 'to keep her clean and maintain her dignity'.

The NHS ombudsman reported a few weeks ago that there was much confusion among the elderly about who was responsible for financing long-term nursing care under Care in the Community. Market research company Mintel estimates that 40,000 homes are being sold each year to meet nursing care bills as the state refuses to fund long-term care for old people with assets of more than £8,000.

So not only are the old left vulnerable to abuse in the lucrative industry of nursing care — they are also having to pay for the privilege.

Well done that man

ON a rather lighter note. The pot-holer who saved the boss several million pounds by crawling into a 14-inch diameter pipe to repair a leak in a nuclear reactor has been rewarded with — wait for it — a bottle of champagne.

A spokeswoman for Nuclear

Electric said: 'He has been given a magnum of champagne. Whether he gets anything else still to be decided, but we must well put Mr Partridge on the company's roll of honour.'

Engineer Kevin Partridge spent more than five hours hanging upside down in the narrow pipe at the Hinkley Point nuclear reactor in Somerset fixing the leak. Engineers would otherwise have had to shut the plant and take the turbine apart over 10 days — at a cost of £2 million.

More electric shocks

KEVIN might be interested to learn of the huge pay increase being dished out to directors of the privatised electricity companies. Chief executive Henry Casley at Southern Electric saw his pay increase last week by 18.3 per cent to £285,000.

He might also like to compare notes with the relatives of 80-year-old Winnie Oliver, who is said to have died of shock when she got an electricity bill 16 times higher than usual.

Winnie, who was diabetic, stopped eating when Southern Electric sent a bill demanding £813 when her usual quarterly bill was about £50. She fell into a diabetic coma and died of heart attack the same day.

Jane Cullen, chair of the charity which administered the almshouses where Winnie lived, said the elderly woman had been quite well until she got the bill.

'She went into a state of shock and just got worse and worse. Winnie was the sort of person who was particularly about her affairs and always put enough money aside for her needs. When she got the bill she panicked and was not able to see the ridiculous side,' Cullen said.

Toffos in press-up debacle

WHO says there is no justice? hope everyone followed the case of the four Eton schoolboys who were forced to do press-ups while they were being robbed by two Asian youths.

The four Etonians, who sport a uniform with a tail-coat which went out in other circles in the 18th century, were stopped when they sneaked out of school to buy booze. The prosecutor told the court the four must have stuck out like sore thumbs.

They were chased into a dead-end and forced to hand over their cashcards, money, watches and documents, as well as the cider they had bought.

Peter London told the court: 'I was made to do some press-ups by a youth with long greasy black hair. On the second one his boot came down on my back, which hurt.' Never mind Peter, it was probably better than being flogged (and worse) by your elders at Eton.

Young Peter told the court how he, Marcus Waley-Cohen, Oliver Cox, George May, and Rufus Alcott went into a 'rough' area of Slough and were waylaid by a gang of youths who called them 'Toffos'.

Oliver told the jury he picked out one of the accused at an identity parade because he looked 'suspicious', but he was not sure it was the same person. But then 'they' all look the same when you come from Eton, anyway.

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

Obituary

'Raoul': Claude Bernard

Pierre Broué remembers, Claude Bernard or 'Raoul', a life-long fighter for the Fourth International. The WRP regrets the news of Raoul's death. There will be other appreciations of his life in future issues of Workers Press.

'RAOUL' was born Claude Bernard in Tours, France, on 21 December 1921. He died in his favourite holiday region of Médoc, on the Atlantic coast near Bordeaux, on 7 May 1994. He spent his youth in Angoulême, 70 miles north-east of Bordeaux, where his father, a woodcarver, had become a tobacconist to make a living.

It was at Angoulême that he met the inseparable companion of his youth, Max Clemenceau, who recruited him into the Young Communists. He left when Max was expelled for refusing to honour posthumously a bourgeois parliamentary deputy.

A pupil at the Lycée Lakanal in Sceaux during 1937-39, he joined the Revolutionary Students Federation (FER), which was at that time inspired by the left wing of Marceau Pivert's PSOP, a breakaway from the Socialist Party. Around then he met severely wounded fighters from the Spanish Civil War, veteran communists from Germany and Austria, who made a big impression on him. At the time he was midway between anarchism and communism.

The decisive meeting for his political life was with a Vietnamese student called Hoang-Don-Tri, who introduced him to the International Communist Party (PCI) shortly after his return to Paris in October 1940. He was accepted as a member in 1941. During the war Max Clemenceau joined him and the PCI in Paris. Claude Bernard

A sinister attack on Workers Aid for Bosnia THE METHODS OF Dr GOEBBELS

A SERIES of foul accusations against Workers Aid for Bosnia, and against the Workers Revolutionary Party, are being hawked around the labour movement by a sordid sect, the International Communist Party.

They are circularising every working-class organisation they know to try and stop the build up of Workers Aid to the beleaguered Bosnian working class.

According to these slanderers 'it is well known' that Workers Aid for Bosnia has been taking 'strategic military equipment into Bosnia for use by the Izetbegovic regime and its imperialist backers' and that 'its trucks are being operated on the basis of commercial contracts paid for by European arms dealers and others.'

Not a single shred of evidence is offered to back these charges. For a simple reason: none exists!

Workers Aid for Bosnia has delivery notes for everything that was taken to Bosnia.

But the ICP operates on the principle of Joseph Goebbels: you repeat a grotesque lie often enough in the hope that people will eventually say 'there must be something in it'.

They continue the infamous methods of Stalinism when it declared that Leon Trotsky was

Statement by the Political Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party

in the pay of Hitler and that his followers should be treated like Nazis.

This group circulates not a single word denouncing Milosevic, Karadzic and their fascist 'ethnic cleansing': in the guise of opposition to 'all' those aiming to restore capitalism to the former Yugoslavia, they actually support these fascists.

These great 'internationalists' are against Serbian workers fighting for revolution against Milosevic including in their demands self-determination for Bosnia.

Slanderous

The accusation of gun-running is a slanderous assertion without any foundation. The ICP has made great play about a satellite dish destined for Tuzla that they claim was taken there by Workers Aid.

■ In the first place, this was not 'military equipment'. The satellite dish was for Tuzla Telecom — to help open up telephone communications between Tuzla and the outside world.

■ In the second place, we have never disguised the fact that

Workers Aid agreed to take this piece of equipment. Because the equipment arrived too late, in the event it was carried to Tuzla by another organisation under UN clearance.

This itself blows apart the ICP's ludicrous allegation that Workers Aid was carrying equipment to Bosnia because, thanks to divisions amongst the imperialists, the UN was not able to deliver arms and had to rely on Workers Aid.

The second prong of the ICP campaign is their description of Workers Aid for Bosnia as 'Slaughter and his WRP'. Here they continue a vicious campaign against the WRP in general and its secretary Cliff Slaughter in particular.

This group has a long and sordid history of such activities. Their opponents in the working class movement are routinely denounced and hounded, Stalinist fashion, as 'imperialist agents'.

They also denigrate those

many thousands of ordinary workers throughout Europe and beyond who have rallied to Workers Aid. By their actions these workers have given hope to workers in Slovenia, in Hungary, Croatia and Bosnia and not least in Serbia.

What the ICP sets out to do is to say that the WRP is taking money under false pretences for our own purposes by pretending that we have merely 'humanitarian' aims.

■ We are proud that we set out to lead the fight for international working class solidarity with the Bosnian working class, aiming to draw the widest support in the working class for this action. This has been achieved and convoy teams consisting of workers and young people from several European countries have made journeys to Bosnia.

■ Aid alone, however necessary, cannot solve the crisis facing the working class of Bosnia.

■ We launched Workers Aid to bring solidarity from the work-

ing class to the workers of Bosnia and the whole of ex-Yugoslavia, which they need to settle accounts with fascism, reactionary nationalism and 'ethnic cleansing'.

■ In our opinion, the fight for the rebuilding of working class internationalism is inseparable from the fight to rebuild the Fourth International, but we have worked alongside many who do not hold this view.

United

Never seeking to impose these views on others, we have been able to work with the widest layers in the working class movement in a united front campaign, including many trades unionists as well as a solid body of Labour MPs.

Our aim has always been that the labour movement should initiate and organise aid and solidarity with the Bosnian people.

The ICP tries to present as

dupes all those trades unionists, unemployed people, members of the Labour Party and other political organisations, intellectuals and others who have given unstinting support to Workers Aid for Bosnia.

Such people, far from taking part in 'commercial activities' have sacrificed greatly to take assistance to Bosnia, and others have sacrificed equally by taking part in the difficult journey to Tuzla.

We have no intention of engaging in a discussion with the ICP. Their filthy activities are beyond discussion.

We call on all organisations in the labour movement, as well as all individuals, to join with us in the broadest campaign against these methods of slander and character assassination.

Please send your messages to Workers Revolutionary Party, PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB. They can be faxed to us on 071-582 8834.

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Demonstration against the banning of newspapers in Djakarta in Indonesia

Opposition to Sinn Fein leaders' sell-out

BY JOHN STEELE

THERE is dissent and anger within some sections of Sinn Fein at the demand for a permanent IRA ceasefire in return for a deal which retains the Unionist veto and gives Sinn Fein leader Adams a place at talks with the imperialist parties.

This week-end 500 Sinn Fein delegates meet to agree on a reply to the Downing Street declaration by the British and Irish governments. But there has not been a squeak from those who consider themselves to be socialists, not even from those who once liked to style themselves as 'Marxist Republicans'.

This silence is worth remarking on. When these 'Marxist Republicans' were imprisoned in Long Kesh, the second part of their book, 'Questions of History' was refused publication by Sinn Fein because it criticised

the 'stages theory' line of the party. This theory holds that socialism can be attained only by separate and distinct political stages and the freedom of the working class must be subordinated to the 'final' stage.

The prisoners wrote, 'to fight imperialism through the process of stages outlined by Gerry Adams will seemingly prove problematic', and finished, 'In the light of developments prompted by the economic transformation since 1958 can it be said that the theoretical programme of the Republican movement is not fallacious?'

Now, when the leadership is attempting to implement this very process, there is no opposition and some are even writing in praise of the sell-out!

However, one leading Republican has come out strongly against both the Downing Street declaration and Sinn Fein's involvement.

Bernadette McAliskey, a former leader in the civil rights

campaign, is not a member of Sinn Fein but for many years has shown no discernible differences with its programme.

In a speech to the Labour Briefing annual general meeting on 2 July, reported uncritically in the July issue of 'Socialist Outlook', she slams the actions of the Adams leadership as a 'fundamental error of principle'.

Interestingly she likens it to the Palestine deal made by Yasser Arafat which she also condemns. '[I]t will lead to a strengthening of Israel and a weakening of the Palestinian struggle. It confuses the issue and divides the people,' she says.

McAliskey angrily denounces Adams for the secrecy of the talks process. 'I have to say no deal made in secret is binding on me. The struggle to create democracy also means a struggle for democracy in our own ranks,' she says.

She correctly states 'the declaration is a reinforcement of partition, . . . [it] is a joint agree-

ment to rebuild the structures of the northern state.'

She also points out that there is no talk of demilitarising the British army, of disarming the loyalist death squads, or of dismantling the state array of repression. And McAliskey is one of the few to recognise that Britain is ready to take on sections of the Protestant community. '[T]he Brits are preparing to intern them if they resist,' she says.

McAliskey's stand against the declaration and the assimilation of Sinn Fein into the British structures must be supported. There is an important and principled fight to be waged on this issue inside the Republican movement.

But McAliskey is unable to offer any alternative. Her politics are based on a democratic period of Republicanism long since vanished in the intensification of the capitalist crisis and they have nowhere else to go but the same dead-end as Adams.