

TORIES PLAN TO MAKE SICK PAY

INJURED workers — already suffering the trauma of a serious accident — are in future going to have to personally sue their employers to get compensation money.

This is the latest Tory plan, if an initiative probably to be announced in the coming Budget later this month becomes law, according to the 'Daily Telegraph' (14 November).

Until now victims of industrial accidents have been able to get money from the Industrial Injuries Scheme, which is one of the last with non-means-tested universal welfare payments.

It is right that employers should be prosecuted when their actions result in the death or injury of workers. But what is proposed here is that workers merely sue employers for damages in the civil courts. The Construction Safety Campaign, for example, says such employers should go to jail — particularly when the accident results in death — and that means CRIMINAL charges brought by the state.

'It's a big blow,' said Tony O'Brien, secretary of the CSC. 'What about the workers who don't have unions to bring actions on their behalf? This follows on the heels of the deregulation of the health and safety laws.'

This deregulation means that even less employers than the present paltry few will be found 'negligent'. And if the employers aren't negligent then they can't be sued for compensation and the worker would be deemed 'careless' and would get nothing!

Lop

The Industrial Injuries Scheme costs £600 million a year and the government wants to lop this off its bill.

Sickeningly, the proposer of the measure is chief secretary to the Treasury Jonathan Aitken, who had trouble explaining who had paid his bill at the Paris

BY MIKE COOKE

Ritz in the Mohammed Al-Fayed sleaze scandal that came out in the 'Guardian' last month.

The ruling class is demanding that the state cuts back its debts.

The 'Daily Telegraph' (15 November) said: 'Ministers lack the determination needed to curb the ever spiralling cost of social security.'

Muster

'Instead they can only muster the courage to nibble at the edges of the problem. One method is to transfer to employers or employees costs and benefits that were previously paid through National Insurance.'

'Thus employers are now required to shoulder most of the burden of statutory sick pay...'

The concern, of course, for the 'Daily Telegraph' is the costs to the employers and not the workers.

'Under the leaked proposal workers will be expected to take out personal insurance and sue their employers for negligence to get compensation,' observed 'Today' (15 November).

Another worry for the employers would be that the best

way to get such insurance would be through decent trade union organisation!

It is the responsibility of all in the trade union and labour movement to organise more effectively against these attacks — of which the scrap-

ping of the Industrial Injuries Scheme is the latest.

The working class needs to fight to bring all workers into the trade union movement, but not as it is.

There must be a fight throughout the movement to

change the trades unions and other working-class organisations.

They must become bodies for the defence of workers' interests, and of advancing those interests, not ones that defend the labour bureaucracy.

Appeal for help for Bosnia's people

At a recent conference held in Tuzla, north-east Bosnia, a call was put out for help for the people of that country. The appeal had been put to the meeting by two teachers, Janos Borovi of SNUIPP, the teachers' trade union of France, and Jos Geudens of ACOD, the teachers' trade union of Belgium

'ON THE eve of the third winter at war, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina are in danger of starvation.'

'We, the participants in the Tuzla conference, "Is Europe possible without multiculturalism?", held on 3-5 November 1994, organised by the Verona Forum, the Forum of Tuzla Citizens and Circle 99, come from 15 countries of Europe,

North America and South America.

'We send out this solemn and urgent call to all our brothers and sisters of the world — do not leave the brave people of Bosnia and Herzegovina alone and hungry!

'They are isolated by the big powers and the United Nations. We must come to their aid; their fight against nationalism and fascism is also our fight.'

'We call on trades unions and other workers' organisations all over the world to show international solidarity by sending food (first of all — flour, oil and sugar) to the workers in Tuzla and other multicultural areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina.'

A report of the conference and the discussion paper submitted by the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International will be published in next week's Workers Press.



Construction Safety campaigners outside Watford magistrates' court on 7 April 1993 protesting over the death of site worker Michael Brennan. The Tories are weakening workers' health and safety rights, the CSC says employers should face prosecution

WRP stands 72 candidates in Namibia!

NAMIBIA's parliamentary and presidential election campaign is in full swing. Polling takes place on 7-8 December.

The Workers Revolutionary Party is standing 72 candidates for parliament. The fight put up by the WRP for equal TV and radio time during the last election has meant that this time all parties, irrespective of size or whether they have MPs, have the same broadcasting time.

This is an important factor in this huge country, with a scattered and largely poor population speaking different lan-

guages. It is estimated that only 15 per cent of the people have television and they mainly live in the capital, Windhoek. Radio is therefore an important during electioneering.

Erica Beukes, a WRP candidate, told Workers Press: 'We speak on the radio for about five minutes every other day and broadcast in five languages. Already we have received telephone calls from Luderitz (850km from Windhoek) and Oranjemund (1,000km from Windhoek).

"Open the books!" has be-

come the central issue of our campaign. For instance, we are specifically demanding that the workers must have access to the accounts and affairs of Consolidated Diamond Mines.

'It is now known that this company is involved in tax evasion. It is holding back public funds which should be used for employment. On hearing the election broadcasts trades unionists in Swakopmund have begun to demand the opening of the books in the salt factory.'

But the WRP says that this demand must be accompanied

by the development of democratic trades unions, independent of the state and built on the foundation of international solidarity. That is why they see the development of International Trade Union Solidarity Committees as one of their main tasks in the election campaign.

The WRP needs funds for the election for petrol, printing and telephones. Please send donations to: Workers International, PO Box 735, London, SW8 1YB.

See WRP (Namibia)'s open letter to SACP, pages 4&5.

Why Clause Four must be defended

WORKERS PRESS welcomes the point made by a number of speakers at last weekend's Defend Clause Four meeting in London that the clause is an issue that concerns the whole of the working class — not just those in the Labour Party (see page 7 report).

Tens of thousands of workers have been hit by the government's privatisations programme. Many of these people are not members of the Labour Party. Others belong to unions that are not affiliated to that party. Further, many are not even members of a union.

Yet all these workers have been badly affected by the sale of nationalised industries and the contracting out of services by local authorities. They have seen their wages and working conditions drastically reduced. Many have lost other valuable rights and thousands have lost their jobs.

All such people must be drawn into a common, united fight in defence of Clause Four. We agree with those speakers at last weekend's meeting who said that there must be no truck with a watered-down version of Clause Four, as 'Tribune', the traditional Labour 'left' paper, and others now propose.

* * * * *

THERE is a further reason why Clause Four concerns every worker, every working-class family. The anarchy of capitalism, and its insatiable drive for profit, means unemployment, homelessness, misery and poverty for millions of people — young and old alike.

Obviously only a small proportion of these people are in the Labour Party. Yet those hit by capitalism's crisis all have a common interest in seeing the back of this decaying social system.

The implementation of Clause Four would not bring about socialism. That requires the expropriation of the capitalist class by the working class and the control of the wealth of society by the working class.

But the implementation of Clause Four would, under present conditions, strike a powerful blow at the ruling class, and at the same time strengthen the fight of the working class.

That is why we are for the widest possible campaign in defence of Clause Four.

Such a campaign must centre around the demand for the renationalisation, without compensation, of all the industries privatised by the Tories.

And along with this must go the return to local authority control of all the services contracted to private firms.

Letter

Office politics

FOLLOWING Mary Ide's article last week on the strike by Transport and General Workers' Union office staff, I thought readers might like to know about the situation within the

shopworkers' union, USDAW. USDAW's office staff applied some years ago for recognition as a branch of the clerical section of the GMB general union. Recognition of their union was refused by their employers — the USDAW bureaucracy!

This situation has caused worries among USDAW's membership. Two years ago USDAW

More letters,
page 7

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branches sent their conference a resolution demanding recognition of the office staff's union.

Refused

In spite of this resolution being overwhelmingly carried, the union bureaucracy refused to act on it.

As a result the GMB branch

is turning again to rank-and-file USDAW members this year to get their union recognised. It is clear that there is support within the branches for the recognition of a sister union, but this is just part of the fight low-paid shopworkers face against the leadership of their union.

Paul Day
London SW12

Danger of Greece's nationalist upsurge

This article, on the class struggle in Greece, was written by a Greek soldier who did his military service in a camp close to the border between Greece and Turkey

GREECE is trying to claim it is a peaceful country, aiming for the establishment of peace in the Balkans. But the Greek ruling class has been seeking to expand into Balkan markets, and develop its political power.

In fact the 'historical conflict' between Greece and Turkey is a powerful economic struggle for control of the Balkans. The weapon used by both sides is religious influence (Greek orthodox or Muslim).

The national populations of the area, through nationalist upsurges, are threatened with bloody war as their governments and capitalist classes seek profits.

In Greece the nationalist upsurge, initially the creation of a few politicians and the mass media, first came to the fore two years ago over the question of the name of the former Yugo-

slav republic of Macedonia.

Reactionary forces — ultra rights, fascists, royalists — came forward with their propaganda openly through the media. The ruling class, which had no revolutionary movement to block it, tried, through its loyal servants the politicians and journalists, to mislead the exploited about their real problems.

One of the most important sources of this propaganda, and an example of the degeneration of this kind of nationalist sovereignty, is the army.

Relations between the army and the people were shattered in 1967 when the generals imposed a military dictatorship. Since the return of bourgeois parliamentary democracy in 1974 the army has tried to approach the ordinary people by boosting the image of the highest-ranking Greek officers.

Yet the role of the army has not changed. It is central to class society. It was not, it is not, and it will not be, 'neutral', as is claimed.

Military service in Greece is compulsory. Every young person, on reaching 18, must join the army by law. The justification for this legal bondage is the 'threat from the east', that is,

Turkey. Every soldier loses some of his/her civil rights and is forced to serve the military hierarchy. They are made to leave their jobs and homes for 17 or 23 months.

Within the microcosmic 'society' of the army, all relationships are developed through military institutions. But the divisions, under-development, and alienation created by class society, are reflected there too.

Thus the richest soldiers enjoy special privileges. They serve in camps close to their homes, and often have furloughs, etc.

The poorest soldiers also form a social group, in which the military hierarchy try to impose ideas and values such as discipline: when the soldiers return to society, they will thus be ready to serve, in the same way, the boss, the party leader, the trade union bureaucracy and the police.

The army is not just a link in the whole system, but also a place in which every person's character and personality are restricted. Soldiers' attitudes and behaviour are constricted, to be made homogeneous.

This is managed, basically, through the uniformity imposed

throughout military life and the 'holy communion'; the enforced acceptance by the soldiers of values and ideals such as intolerance, religious hatred, and nationalist fanaticism. Of course, these 'values' take the form of absolute constants, and all controversy is banned.

Officers try also to divide the soldiers by age. The officers treat the older soldiers better than the younger ones. This diverts the soldiers from their real interests and needs. The older ones defend their 'rights', the younger ones consider the older soldiers better-placed than them; both are prevented from fighting their common enemy, the institution of the army itself.

Given this, no revolutionary should defend internal 'clean-ups' and 'democratisation' of the army. The army is reactionary by nature. Its historical role is to defend the profits of the bourgeois state in nationalist wars and class battles.

We must not fight for a 'better army' but destroy it entirely. This can only be achieved through the struggle of the oppressed, that is the soldiers, for themselves. That is their historical role.

Show solidarity with Kazakhstan miners

KAZAKHSTAN's Independent Miners' Union is suffering direct repression by the government of Nursultan Nazarbayev, former Kazakh Communist Party president and now leading the way in introducing Western capitalism to the country.

The IMU's activities have been declared illegal, its bank accounts seized, and its leaders threatened with imprisonment.

A number of workers' organisations in Russia have already shown solidarity with the union by demonstrating and picketing the Kazakhstan embassy.

The miners want support for their struggle for democratic rights, human rights and their own right to exist as a trade

union. Between 18 May and 6 June the miners in the IMU struck for better pay and working conditions (Workers Press, 18 June). But on 3 June the courts declared the strike illegal, even though the union — unlike management — had followed the labour disputes procedure to the letter.

At that time the union sent out requests for financial help for its members and especially those sacked.

The Kazakhstan Communist Party for decades suppressed independent trades unions in a country where management, the state and the trades unions were merged. The Independent Miners' Union led the fight for

independent unionism and does not restrict itself to merely the defence of wages and conditions. It is fighting against corruption, for freedom of the press, and for democracy in Kazakhstan.

While Nazarbayev was still making up his mind, the union opposed the August 1990 coup attempt in Moscow against Gorbachev. It has promoted demonstrations against radioactive pollution and its sources.

The union, formed during the 1989 miners' strikes, has fought for human rights. It became the main promoter of the international conference on human rights in Karaganda, Kazakhstan, in 1991. This conference

denounced the crimes of the Soviet Union, which used Kazakhstan as the destination of mass deportations and the site of one of the main 'gulags'.

The union has led numerous demonstrations to defend the people against the Kazakhstan state, which was carrying out the agreements made with the International Monetary Fund and the multinational oil companies. This the state could not tolerate and hence the actions it has taken against the union.

Letters and telegrams of support to: PO Box 59, Karaganda 470061, Republic of Kazakhstan.

Protests to: Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of Kazakhstan, Alma Ata, Kazakhstan.

COMING SOON

SUNDAY 20 NOVEMBER: Benefit for Mordechai Vanunu, Israeli nuclear prisoner of conscience. 7.30pm, Jackson's Lane Community Centre Theatre, 269a Archway Road, Highgate, London N6 (opposite Highgate tube). Vanunu is an Israeli kidnapped by Israel's security services after revealing details of that country's secret nuclear weapons programme. He was sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment and has now served eight years in solitary confinement. Proceeds from benefit to go to the Campaign to Free Vanunu. Prices: £7 (£5 unwaged). Tickets in advance £6 (£4 unwaged) from box office.

SATURDAY 26 NOVEMBER: Manchester Martyrs commemorative rally 1994, at Long-sight Library, Manchester, at 2pm. Sinn Fein and other speakers from Ireland invited. The Manchester Martyrs were three Irishmen held responsible for the death of a policeman in the city in 1867, during a successful attempt to rescue two Fenian leaders. Organising group calls for Troops Out Now! and United Ireland Now!

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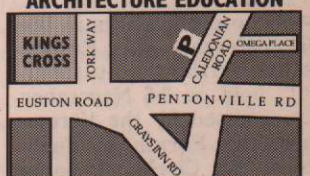
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One year too long!

THE 'prison for profit', Campsfield detention centre, near Oxford, is Britain's largest immigration detention centre. It is run by the private security firm Group 4 and has a razor-topped fence 20 feet high and more video surveillance than any of her majesty's prisons.

Since Campsfield opened last year, the number of detainees it has held under the immigration laws has more than doubled.

Mass

Without Campsfield, the government's mass detention of Jamaican holiday-makers last Christmas would not have been possible.

Campsfield is a symbol of the racist British state's visions of a 'Fortress Europe'. In this

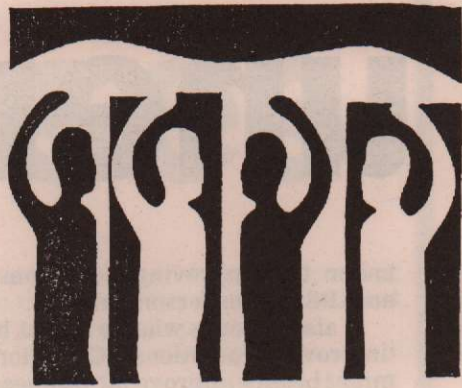
Europe black people are to be excluded — 99 per cent of the 200 Campsfield detainees are black. Most are refugees seeking political asylum, fleeing persecution, even torture or death.

Limit

But they are imprisoned without charge or time limit, and given no proper reasons. The detainees are treated worse than convicted criminals.

Others at Campsfield are so-called 'overstayers', caught by the state forces that harass individuals and divide families. The killing of Joy Gardner while police were trying to deport her has highlighted the brutality of immigration arrests.

Group 4 runs Campsfield on contract to the government. A former Group 4 director is also



Campaign to Close Campsfield

a former Conservative Party chairman and government minister, Norman Fowler.

On 9 September, nine Algerian detainees on hunger strike at Haslar jail, Gosport, said: 'Look to us with humanity and understand our situation... the

feeling of helplessness and sadness which tells us there is no prospect from any horizon.'

Some Labour Party leaders support Campsfield and have given no indication of opposing the Tories' programme of opening more immigration jails and

detention wings, such as at Rochester jail.

Stop immigration detentions!

Stop deportations!

Repeal immigration laws!

Close Campsfield and similar prisons/centres!

■ Campaign to Close Campsfield, c/o 111 Magdalen Rd, Oxford. Tel: (0865) 724452/726804.

Coming events

Saturday 26 November: Demonstrate outside Campsfield, near Kidlington (Opposite airport), 12 noon.

Tuesday 29 November: One Year Too Long demonstration and start of march to London, from Campsfield.

Wednesday 30 November: 9am at Carfax, centre of Oxford going to Benson.

Thursday 1 December: To Henley.

Friday 2 December: To Slough.

Saturday 3 December: To Harmondsworth Immigration Prison, 12-1.30pm, then to Southall.

Sunday 4 December: 11am Putney bridge via King's Road to present petitions with floats and drummers at 1pm in Whitehall.

London trades councils support Workers Aid

BY ROY THOMAS

A SPIRITED report last Saturday from Croydon teacher Carmel Dolan, who drove a lorry on the Workers Aid for Bosnia convoy during August, helped persuade the Greater London Association of Trades Councils (GLATC) to give its support for

the campaign.

The GLATC, at its meeting of delegates from London's 30-odd trades councils, passed a motion from Croydon, south London, calling on all organisations to which it is affiliated to 'prove to the Bosnian people that trade union members and workers' organisations are concerned at their welfare and are involved in their just struggle for peace'.

The decision represented a defeat for those who have sought to oppose Workers Aid for Bosnia.

A number of delegates who had spent many years in the Communist Party opposed support for the working people of Bosnia on the grounds that they were all 'extreme fundamental Muslims', and that the real heroes were the Serbs!

That GLATC has now given its support to Workers Aid is in itself a tribute to the work done by the campaign in the trades unions in London over the last year.

This work has broken down the pro-Serb nationalism which was behind the efforts to sabotage Workers Aid some months ago in the Transport and General Workers' Union.

Inquiry to be held into cell deaths

BY SETH DRYSDALE

THE Police Complaints Authority is to investigate the deaths in Leeds police cells of two men in the last three weeks.

Retired brewer John Moorhouse was arrested on 21 October by off-duty police for alleged motoring offences. Moorhouse, a diabetic whose history of strokes had left him virtually mute, was found dead later that night in the cells of the new multi-million-pound Killingbeck police headquarters.

Arrested

A second man, yet to be named, was arrested for alleged drunkenness at 8pm on Guy Fawkes night, 5 November. He was taken to the new 76-cell block under the magistrates' court complex, which replaced the notorious Victorian cells — commonly known as the Bridewell — under the town hall.

'The old Bridewell gained a damning reputation among

campaign groups after two local men, Paul Orange, 25, and Allan Clements, 26, were found dead in their cells within five months of each other in 1991,' reported the 'Yorkshire Post' (7 November).

No police officer was ever charged with a criminal or disciplinary offence arising from the deaths, although both cases were investigated by the Police Complaints Authority.

The investigations and subsequent reports on these cases, like all those the PCA deals with, are secret. They are officially protected by so-called 'public interest immunity' and section 98 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984). The PCA makes no details of their investigations available to the public unless ordered to do so by the court.

This semi-secret government-appointed body soaks up £3.6 million a year. According to the PCA chairman, Sir Leonard Peach, its task is 'simply to indicate whether or not we are satisfied with the [police] investigation'.



Workers Aid was boosted by support from London trades councils last Saturday

Photo: Alan Clark

Whole truth must be known about Porton LSD tests

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

BRITISH soldiers were used as human guinea-pigs in experiments with the hallucinogenic drug LSD at the government's Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment (CBDE), at Porton Down in Wiltshire.

Labour defence spokesman Dr David Clark, praising Porton's director Dr Graham Pearson's 'openness' in admitting this, says it raises other questions such as whether the service personnel undergoing the tests were really volunteers, whether they received excessive doses, and what long-term medical or psychological effects they might have suffered.

In a letter to Clark, Pearson repeats what he told a researcher last year: 'The work carried out at CBDE Porton Down was solely to determine what protective measures were appropriate and were largely concerned in assessing the effects of LSD on troops in a military setting...'

mid) was very expensive, would be difficult to disseminate, and 'would not present a significant battlefield hazard', Pearson says.

The Porton Down director's letter comes after a television documentary shown in September revealed that at least one national serviceman was killed and others suffered long-term illness from experiments with nerve gases at Porton. Post-war work on these gases, assisted by ICI, was later handed over to US military laboratories.

Interest

What little is known about military interest in LSD and other drugs suggests that Dr Pearson of Porton Down, or his political superiors, could be more 'open' about other questions, besides those raised by MP David Clark. The story goes back a long way.

In October 1942, at the request of MI5's psychological warfare branch, the National Research Council set up a committee to investigate the feasibility of using drugs in the interrogation of political prisoners. America's Central Intelli-

gence Agency (CIA) started looking into the use of drugs and hypnosis shortly after it was set up in 1947.

At this time, LSD was not available, having only been discovered by Swiss scientists researching plant ergot for medicinal use. In 1950, articles about Chinese 'brainwashing' started appearing in the US press. Edward Hunter, who wrote them, was a CIA agent and psychological warfare specialist. The CIA and US army had already approved a project called 'Bluebird' looking into brainwashing of prisoners.

In 1953, CIA chief Allen Dulles authorised two agents to go to Switzerland and purchase 10 kilogrammes of LSD. Sandoz pharmaceuticals, which held the patent, said it had never made that much. Apparently the US military attache in Switzerland was a little shaky on metric measures and had confused kilos and milligrams! But Eli Lilley started manufacturing synthetic LSD.

US research on LSD was not primarily concerned with possible battlefield use, which would be difficult, but with possible application, alongside techni-

ques like sensory deprivation, for 'mind-bending' or 'behaviour modification'. Its possible use in disorienting enemy civil populations, by introduction to water supplies, was also considered.

US experiments were carried out on people who were unaware they were being used — military personnel, mental patients in Canada, prisoners and others.

Trips

As well as LSD, a more powerful drug called BZ, which causes prolonged 'trips' and sometimes violent behaviour, was tried. Some people suffered long-term mental illness, others died or committed suicide.

Were British scientists and government facilities involved in such work?

Answering queries from independent researcher Armen Victorian on 7 October last year, Dr Pearson began: 'My reply only covers research work carried out by CBDE on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, as we do not have any information on whether research was carried out on LSD by other government

departments and other governments.'

The Porton Down director added: 'Work and studies on LSD took place between 1961 and 1972 and included 72 service volunteers who were involved in laboratory and field trials.'

The assessment was that, although LSD could be synthesised, it was very expensive, it would be difficult to disseminate, the effects were not predictable, and 'the conclusion was reached that LSD would not present a significant battlefield hazard' ('Lobster' magazine,

no.26, December 1993).

Since, as Dr Pearson goes on to say, NATO allies were sharing information, how come Porton Down had to carry on experimenting with LSD after the US work had been completed? What about the implications of the battlefield? And was other research carried out at installations other than Porton Down?

The labour movement, the health professions, former service personnel, and all those concerned with democratic freedoms must demand the whole truth about these experiments.

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Inside left

Bandwagon

UNTIL recently, Phil Hearse was editor of 'Socialist Outlook', a paper which supports the 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International' (USec), led by Ernest Mandel. He had been with that political tendency for over 20 years.

At a Workers Aid for Bosnia meeting in London last year, Hearse fiercely denounced Workers Revolutionary Party members, threatening: 'If you want a split, you'll get one!' It was an odd outburst from the chair of the meeting, especially when all that had happened was a comrade had asked whether the convoy report-back meeting in Manchester would be a one-day or two-day event.

Things became clearer, though, on 31 October 1993, the day after the report-back meeting, when USec supporters rejected the meeting's decisions and split from Workers Aid.

A year later came USec's turn for a surprise. On 4 November this year, 'Militant' carried a full-page statement, 'Why we've joined Militant Labour', by Phil Hearse and Kathy Kirkham. 'We have come to the conclusion that "Socialist Outlook" cannot play a significant role', they said.

'The real battle for dominance in the far left is between Militant Labour and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). . . . We rejected any thought of joining the SWP. . . . Unlike Militant Labour, the SWP has never led a single major struggle.'

Hearse and Kirkham said nothing about the SWP's 'state capitalist' theories; nor about Ernest Mandel's ideas, which the pair were until recently defending. **The Fourth International isn't mentioned.**

The only reference to international issues is an admission to differences with 'Militant': 'In particular we disagree on the national question in Ireland and ex-Yugoslavia . . . They don't say why.'

One might suppose these were minor academic questions, rather than life-and-death struggles. As Mandel's man, Hearse was prepared to split Workers Aid for Bosnia over tactical and organisational issues. Now he joins 'Militant', which cares little for Bosnia, and (except for a few individual opposers) opposes Workers Aid.

Still, what's the war in Bosnia, compared with 'the battle for dominance' in the left? 'The aim is nothing, the organisation everything', was the credo adopted by Edward Bernstein, father of revisionism in the Marxist movement at the end of the last century. It seems to sum up the outlook of today's opportunists.

Partners

GLANCING at a leaflet in my mail, I thought for a moment it was from a dating agency; 'Seeking social partnership', it said. But it was advertising 'an interview with John Monks, TUC General Secretary', hardly the stuff of romance.

The leaflet was for this weekend's 'Unions 94' conference, which includes 'keynote speakers' Monks, Labour Party leader Tony Blair, and Sam Shilowa, general secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

Those who rushed in their £15 fee (or £25 for delegates) for one of 'the first 275 tickets' were offered a free gift, such as a copy of 'Labour's High Noon', published by Lawrence and Wishart, or a three-months subscription to 'New Times', fortnightly paper of the ex-Communist Party Democratic Left.

Democratic Left secretary and occasional BBC 'Any Questions' panelist Nina Temple is co-organiser of 'Unions 94' with Mike Power, another Democratic Left supporter. Maybe I was right the first time. It's a date between right-wing Labour and former CP 'Euro-Stalinists'. They're well-matched.

Charlie Pottins

Australia: children as unemployment

FROM NICK BAILEY
IN AUSTRALIA

CHILDREN are suffering most from unemployment in Australia. One in ten of 'traditional' families has two parents out of work, according to figures for June released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Nineteen per cent of Australia's children under 15 (704,000) live in families with no wage earner. And most of the parents in such families have spent up to 14 months looking for work.

One example of what this means is given by Sandra and Alan Rolfe, with their two teenage children, Melissa and Kylie.

Sandra cannot work because of her high blood pressure, and Alan lost his job as a painter four years ago because of his deafness. 'Nobody has offered him anything since,' says Sandra. 'We've had a very hard time.'

The little money they receive from Alan's disability pension goes on food, rent on their home in Sydney's western suburb, and clothing. They are trying to save any extra money to keep their daughters at school up to Year 12 (sixth form).

The family is forced to take hand-outs from an Anglican charity.

The rate of unemployment in single-parent families was much higher, at 58 per cent, says the ABS report. The average time spent out of work by such parents was 53 weeks. For two-parent families the husband spent an average 73 weeks looking for work, while wives spent 64 weeks.

The number of two-parent families with no member of the family working increased by 50 per cent between 1989 and 1993. Since then it has dropped by just 1 per cent, and the ABS does not predict a rapid fall with the easing of the Australian recession.

'When you come out of recession things get better for a small percentage of people: there is always a group who continue to suffer

under the improving conditions,' an ABS spokesperson said.

It also depends what is meant by 'improving conditions'. Conditions might briefly improve for business, but the long-term trend felt in Europe and the US of rising unemployment is now biting in Australia.

Melbourne's hospital workers fight against cuts

THE Victoria state government's attack on hospitals in its capital, Melbourne, has met with anger from health service workers. On 25 October, about 6,000 came out on a demonstration against funding cuts (see Workers Press, 5 November).

The militant march consisted of nurses, porters, lab workers and some transport workers. Support was shown by many passing motorists and truck drivers who sounded their horns. The march ended up at the health minister's office. Marchers demanded that health minister Marie Tehan — a member of Australia's right-wing party, the Liberals — come down and face them. But, ironically, health minister Tehan was on leave with a cold!

Morale in the hospitals is at an all-time low. 'The real concern is the quality of care we're giving patients,' said a registered nurse from St Vincent's hospital, Luke Hickey. 'It's bordering on the unsafe now.'

Surgeons at a number of hospitals are warning of disturbing drops in clinical standards since the budget squeeze started. They cannot come out in the open for fear of disciplinary action, but they say that they now see patients for the first time when they arrive at the operating theatre because most hospitals now admit them on the day of surgery and not the night before, as formerly.

St Vincent's is facing a 7 per cent cut across all departments, having a budget shortfall of £4.8 million. Monash Medical Centre is facing the closure of 100 beds (£4.8 million short) and the Alfred hospital is



Six thousand health service workers on the march against funding cuts in Aust

desperately trying to make up a £4.1 million shortfall. The Royal Melbourne is £5.8 million out of pocket and the Austin hospital £1.6 million.

Alfred chief executive Bill Cricker said: 'We have to balance the budget and so we're looking at

reducing the volume in areas where it costs us the most — HIV and cardiac have become very expensive areas of medicine in the last few months and we are extremely concerned with our ability to cross-subsidise these services.'

Last year this hospital treated

Working class must ha

The Workers Revolutionary Party (Namibia), section of the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International, is standing in Namibia's national elections next month. Last week Workers Press published the WRP (Namibia)'s election manifesto. This week we reprint the party's open letter to all members of the South African Communist Party

Comrades,

WE SEND you with this letter the manifesto of the WRP for the coming national elections which are being held on 7 and 8 December.

In the interests of working-class internationalism, in the name of the world-wide struggle of the working class to reconstruct its movement as a class for socialism, we ask you to discuss and decide on this question:

Which party should South African workers support — including members of the South African Communist Party — in these general elections?

We ask you, through your trades

unions and political parties, and as individuals, to express your solidarity with our party and support us for the following principal reasons:

■ We are a working-class party — the only one in this country even claiming to be so.

■ We are a party founded on Marxism, the only theoretical basis for the working class to prepare the socialist revolution.

■ We are a proletarian internationalist party. History itself has demonstrated conclusively that the whole idea and practice of socialism in one country led in the Soviet Union, under Stalin and his succes-

sors, to the restoration of capitalism in the land of the October Revolution.

In struggles across the world, as in Africa, this Stalinist line led to the subordination of the working class to the bourgeois-nationalist movements. By breaking up the internationalism of working-class movements in this way, the Soviet bureaucracy sought to improve and preserve its privileged relationship with newly-formed regimes and imperialism itself.

All that is now finished. We have to start to rebuild the workers' movement and above all its internationalism.

In the Workers International we are convinced that this can be done only in continuity with past struggles for Marxism and workers' internationalism against the betrayals of Stalinism.

That fight, led by Trotsky, against the Moscow frame-up trials of the 1930s, judicial murders,

assassinations and the falsification of the history of the Russian Revolution, was embodied in the founding of the Fourth International in 1938. Our movement is committed to rebuilding that International. The comrades in South Africa fought under this banner in the 1994 elections in Durban and Cape Town.

For South Africa, as for Namibia, everything depends on the working class having its own party, which is independent from the nationalist and capitalist parties.

Workers everywhere, including Namibia, are greatly inspired by the persistent struggles of the working class in South Africa. This working class has already forced a strategic retreat by the white ruling class. But the offensive of the working class will not be halted by the myth of a 'government of national unity'.

The great problems of the people in southern Africa can be resolved

... suffer most ... level rises



... Victoria state Photo: Nick Bailey

4,000 cardiac patients and 1,000 HIV sufferers — so the 'cutbacks' could mean the deaths of 5,000 people.

Staff at the Monash have refused to close beds and adopted a resolution that no staff should apply for redundancy.

These cuts have come as a result

of revised spending plans from the state government on 1 July. The Alfred is to receive £136,000 less for the treating of HIV patients, £137,000 less for cardiac valve surgery, and £48,000 less for inserting pacemakers.

All that the trade union leaders offered in the way of policy on the 25 October march was for the marchers to apply pressure on the government, and if that didn't work vote them out at the next election.

The chair of the Committee of Chairmen of Senior Medical Staff of Major Hospitals, Dr John King, has called for the government's bonus pool for hospitals that treat more than their quota of patients to be increased by £14.5 million.

This pool has been capped by the government at £20 million. The major hospitals are to receive £15.5 million of this on the ground that they achieved an extra 5 per cent 'throughput' this year. Some hospitals have increased 'patient turnover' — another phrase reflecting the tendency to treat people like lumps of meat — by more than 20 per cent and almost half the bonus money was used in the first three months of the financial year.

Tehan has said that the pool was not bottomless and she placed a limit on how much money was available. Victoria state premier Kennett is opposed to more money for health care. A spokesperson said Kennett and Tehan were 'satisfied that the current allocations of funding, which allows for an additional 30,000 patients to be treated this year, represents reasonable growth'.

The secretary of the Department of Health and Community Services, Dr John Paterson, has said that any extra money should be spent on hospital refurbishment and capital improvements, not increased health care ('throughput').

The government's director of acute health services, Dr Michael Walsh, says the bonus pool fund should be spent more evenly across public hospitals over the whole financial year, and not in the first few months. But he says health

care should be rationed according to the money the state government is prepared to spend on it.

With the state government's attack on the health service it is not surprising that doctors are looking toward a federal pay structure, which the nurses have recently achieved. However the doctors are also talking the language of economics. They want a federal productivity deal under enterprise bargaining. This is what in Britain is called performance-related pay.

Victoria's government, under premier Kennett, has abolished state pay awards, so all doctors' pay is decided on a hospital-by-hospital basis with individual contracts.

■ SOME patients in Victoria state spend more than 48 hours in emergency departments before being found beds on a ward.

A government survey showed that, in April, more than 30 patients spent 48 hours in emergency and more than 600 spent over 12 hours, at five of Melbourne's main hospitals. There are not enough hospital beds so people are having to spend more time on rock-hard narrow hospital trolleys.

'It's not necessarily bad that patients stay in the emergency-care area,' one smug Health and Community Care spokesperson said. 'That's where the skill and expertise is.'

And the situation is not getting better. Between April and July the number of emergency patients waiting on trolleys for more than 12 hours at the Alfred had increased by more than 40 per cent.

■ A federal government inquiry has blamed hospital waiting lists on the number of specialists. Yet the solution proposed is not to train more specialists, but to get nurses and GPs to do their work.

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons' president, David Theile, retaliated by saying that the 'overwhelming cause' of long waiting lists was scarce hospital resources, including shortages of beds and theatre operating time.

... have its own party

only by the working class, because they require revolutionary measures, that means the overthrow of the political and economic power of

'For South Africa, as for Namibia, everything depends on the working class having its own party, which is independent from the nationalist and capitalist parties.'

the great capitalists and landowners, and not by 'unity' or 'partnership' with them.

In South Africa, as in Namibia or Zimbabwe, our politics must be directed at a solution in the interest of the working people in the whole region, and at the same time in the

whole of Africa and the world.

It is for this fundamental reason that it will be in the immediate and long-term interests of the South African workers to give every support they can to the fight for the political independence of the working class in Namibia.

At this point in time, that means supporting politically and materially the Workers Revolutionary Party and its programme in these general elections. Such international support from the workers of South Africa will have a profound impact throughout the region and internationally.

And at the same time it will strengthen the fight in South Africa itself for the political independence of the working class, through the building of a true proletarian party.

The same multinationals and banks which own the wealth and exploit the people in South Africa, own the wealth and workers here.

There are many of them, such as Anglo-American and De Beers and others. By strengthening the WRP and the workers in Namibia, you therefore strengthen your own fight against the capitalists of South Africa.

'Workers have no country,' said Karl Marx. Let us return to the fundamental principles: 'Workers of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world to win!'

We ask you to send all messages of support and, where possible, financial assistance to the following address from which further information about the Workers International can be obtained.

Yours in the struggle for world socialism.

Hewat Beukes
WRP (Namibia), PO Box 1519,
Windhoek, Namibia.

■ Donations can also be sent through the South African Appeal, PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB.

City Lights

I wouldn't get ill

PLEASE arrange not to be ill in the coming period. For the Tory government is about to make sickness a luxury when later this month it announces the final details of its incapacity benefit, due to come into force next April.

Whatever the level the government sets the benefit at, the sick and the disabled face a bleaker future.

The government has already made clear that, although those currently drawing invalidity benefit will not be penalised, those who fall sick in the future will be worse off. This comes just when the sick and disabled are faced with the introduction of value-added tax on fuel.

Organisations representing the disabled say that the compensation available for the VAT charges will not match the increased expenditure that people will have to make.

But the biggest obstacle facing many long-term sick is actually qualifying for the new incapacity benefit. The social-security department estimates that 85 per cent of all current claimants will need extra medical evidence to qualify for the new benefit.

In addition to tough new medical tests, claimants who draw the benefit for a year will have to prove that they are incapable of any work — not simply incapable of continuing their old job, as was previously the case.

The new incapacity benefit will be payable at two levels which come into operation once statutory sick pay runs out after 28 weeks. Although actual levels have yet to be fixed, on current assumptions they will be at a lower short-term weekly level of £52.50 for weeks 28 to 52 — previously £57.60 — followed by a long-term incapacity level unchanged at £57.60.

But sick people whose spouses do not work will not be able to claim an additional benefit for them, unless they are looking after small children or are over 60. Where they do qualify for benefit, this will be cut from £34.50 to £26.90.

Age-related additions will also be cut completely for those over 44 and reduced for younger people. Any earnings-related element of the benefit will be scrapped, hitting older claimants who earned an average salary or above before falling sick.

The insurance company Zurich Life suggests that a 40-year-old married sole breadwinner with two children, earning £25,000 per year, would currently qualify for £9,023 per year if struck by serious illness. From April next year, this will drop to £5,210 per year after the first 28 weeks, and to £5,983 after 52.

The Labour Party's commission for social justice, the think-tank set up by the late John Smith, in its report calls for greater private provision to cover times of illness. But in fact nearly all existing private schemes are hedged round with qualifications that mean there is no cover for long-term illness.

Threat to GATT agreement

THE victory of the Republicans in the mid-term US Congressional elections has cast a new shadow over the talks on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). It could mean that the agreement struck earlier in this year in the 'Uruguay round' of trade talks is not finally ratified by the end of the year.

Last week Peter Sutherland, the GATT director-general, said that the US would strike a 'mortal blow' to the world trading system and undermine any possibility of econo-

mic recovery by postponing a vote on the deal, which took seven years to negotiate.

None of the major participants in the talks — the US, Japan, the European Union, and Canada — has yet ratified the accord seven months after the signing ceremonies in Marrakesh, Morocco.

Sutherland was expressing fears amongst many of the 124 members of GATT, that sweeping Republican gains in the election would postpone a vote in Congress due 3 December.

Their fears were reinforced by the call last week from Senate Republican leader Bob Dole for 'more explanation' from President Clinton on the treaty.

ONE of the things that delayed the GATT negotiations last April was the demand made by France and the US that labour standards should be placed on the agenda.

They failed but it was agreed that this question would be raised at the new World Trade Organisation, the body set to replace GATT.

It is easy to see what lies behind the fears of some capitalists in Japan, North America and western Europe. In Shenzhen in China some workers earn as little as one yuan (12 US cents) an hour for working 12 to 13 hours a day, seven days a week.

In India millions of children some as young as seven, work in carpet and textile factories for a pittance. In Peru some children are sold into slavery.

Along with appallingly low wages goes the absence of anything like safe standards at work. In manufacturing, the risk of being killed in a factory accident is six times higher in South Korea than in the US, and 15 times higher in Pakistan.

Some capitalists bleat that such conditions give industry in the backward capitalist countries an unfair advantage. But many of the multinational companies have no intention of pressing for conditions to be changed — for the simple reason that they are the owners of the factories and mines where such barbaric conditions exist.

Canary in the mine

FOR the first time in almost 10 years a US money-market mutual fund has crashed. The loss was small but it has sent ripple through the \$2,000 billion industry Community Bankers' US Fund. Denver was an \$80 million fund with over 100 investors, all of which were small banks. Washington has warned that there will be no bailouts for such bodies, much to the shock of the small investor.

'This is the canary in the mine,' said a Washington official commenting on the collapse. It was a clear warning of grimmer things to come, he said.

The funds make much of their money out of speculation in derivatives, types of financial instrument. In effect, the funds were gambling on the future movement of interest rates and/or commodity prices. Because the fund investors did much speculating in government securities most investors thought they were underwritten by the government, hence the shock.

Community Bankers speculate in an exotic derivative called 'structured note', which ensure that yields lagged behind changes in interest rates. This was highly profitable in the years 1990-93 when interest rates were falling (and prices rising). But once they started to rise — and a further rise of US interest rates seems imminent — profits turned into losses. Hence the crash and the fears that this is not the end of the story.

Threadneed

State of ignorance

IT'S well known that bourgeois journalists, working against the clock, don't always have time to check their quotations.

The question that occurred to me last weekend, as I read the 'Independent on Sunday', was this: when they're referring to Karl Marx, as they often do, do they ever have time to check that what they attribute to him is well founded?

Indeed, I wonder whether it even occurs to these lazy and ignorant hacks that it might be a good idea to consult Marx's published writings, which after all are not all that difficult of access.

Or do they follow the frivolous rule of thumb proclaimed a few years ago by a more than normally irresponsible television 'personality': 'When I don't know the author of a quote I always say it's by Marx.'

WHAT started me thinking along these lines was the following piece of nonsense in the 'Independent on Sunday', from the pen of one Nicholas Bagnall:

'Marx, having begun by believing that civil society could do without the state, concluded that society was the state.'

The only sense, dear Mr Bagnall, in which Marx believed that 'civil society could do without the state' was that, after the future society had achieved a level of productivity where people would voluntarily work according to their ability and take from the common store according to their needs, the state would dissolve of itself and disappear.

As Engels put it in 'Socialism: Utopian and Scientific' (1877): 'In proportion as anarchy in social production vanishes, the political authority of the state dies out.'

And again, in 'The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State' (1884): 'The society that will organise production on the basis of a free and equal association of the producers will put the whole machinery of state where it will then belong: into the Museum of Antiquities, by the side of the spinning wheel and the bronze axe.'

Marx's references to 'civil society', which are rather few and date from comparatively early in his career, contain nothing whatever to justify this howler of Bagnall's.

The most important of those references is contained in a letter of 28 December 1846 to the Russian critic P.V. Annenkov (in which Marx clearly uses 'civil society' as synonymous with 'society').

'If you assume given stages of development in production, commerce or consumption, you will have a corresponding form of social constitution, whether of the family, of the estates or of the classes — in a word, a corresponding civil society.'

'If you assume this or that civil society, you will have this or that political system, which is but the official expression of civil society.'

And where, dear Mr Bagnall, did Marx '[conclude] that society was the state'?

This second Bagnallian howler is truly outrageous.

It ignores the fact that Marx and Engels saw the state as having a beginning and an end: as coming into existence when society divided into irreconcilably opposed classes and withering away when that division is ended.

It ignores the fact that they saw the state as a power 'arising out of society, but placing itself above it' (emphasis added).

And it ignores the fact that they saw the state as an instrument for the repression and exploitation of the oppressed sections of society.

These are Marx's basic conclusions about the state and its relation to society — conclusions perfectly familiar to anyone who has so much as glanced through any one of half-a-dozen writings by Marx and Engels, or

PERSONAL COLUMN

through Lenin's 'The State and Revolution', in which their theory of the state is carefully summarised and analysed.

A splinter under his skin

REVIEWING Harry Ratner's autobiography 'Reluctant Revolutionary' (Socialist Platform, £5.95) in 'Socialist Organiser' (10 November), Mark Osborn can't resist a juvenile side-swipe at the writer of this column.

What he calls 'a strange introduction by Peter Fryer' is, he finds, 'the least convincing thing in the book'. He goes on: 'Fryer came out of the CP in 1957 and spent some two and a half years in the Trotskyist movement. . . .

'After a long sabbatical Fryer "returned" a few years ago. In this introduction he seems to say that the continuity of the living forces of Trotskyism is to be found in that WRP splinter which produces Workers' Press!'

'But this idiocy is just trimming.'

I didn't, as it happens, 'come out' of the Communist Party in 1957, but was expelled from it in 1956, for reasons which Osborn is either unaware of or, for some reason or other, doesn't choose to tell his readers.

As to that 'long sabbatical', it did include a period of several years researching for and writing a book on British black history; Osborn 'seems to say' that the time thus occupied would have been better spent in selling 'Socialist Organiser', but I have my doubts about that.

However, it's that weasel phrase of Osborn's, 'seems to say', which really sticks in the craw.

What a superlatively facile method this is of reviewing a book — or rather, of rubbishing an introduction.

You don't have to quote one paragraph, or one sentence, or even one single word. 'Seems to say' followed by anything that comes into your head ('that the moon is made of green cheese', would do nicely), followed by 'this idiocy': here's a cheap and cheerful formula for demolishing an opponent.

Since that 'WRP splinter' has clearly got under Osborn's delicate skin, let me add that as a supporter of the Workers' International I do regard the rebuilding of the Fourth International as of paramount importance, and I don't see how anyone who disagrees with that proposition can claim to be a Trotskyist.

Christmas help

LIKE everybody else I know, I'm looking forward to Christmas with decidedly mixed feelings.

Presents, cards and stamps cost money and, even when the piggy bank is opened, spreading its meagre contents over all the necessary purchases will take some careful planning.

For those of us who live in London, help is at hand in the shape of a Christmas bazaar whose proceeds will go to Workers Aid for Bosnia.

The bazaar will be held on the afternoon of Saturday, 10 December, at the Bryant Street Community Centre in Newham, London E15.

A Christmas hamper is one of the prizes awaiting holders of programmes bearing lucky numbers. New and second-hand toys will be on sale, as well as home-made cakes, books, records, good-quality clothes, and Christmas cards.

Peter Fryer

Protests at Japan having UN security council seat

SHIN TANUMA, a worker from Japan, reports on a series of protests in that country by revolutionary and militant workers and students. Workers Press looks forward to many more such reports as a step towards building solidarity between workers in Japan and Britain

I SEND greetings to Workers Press and its readers and a report on the current class struggle in Japan. The Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International sent a solidarity letter in August to our international anti-war movement assembly in Japan. I send this report to strengthen the solidarity between us.

On 23 October, Japanese revolutionary and militant workers in the Anti-war Young Workers' Committee and students from the 'Zengakuren' all-Japan league of student unions demonstrated against the government's plan to take a permanent seat on the United Nations security council. There were protests in five provinces: Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Hokkaido and Okinawa.

They protested under the slogans: 'Stop sending troops to Rwanda/Zaire!'; 'Stop increases in consumer tax!'; 'Oppose the US imperialists' occupation of Haiti!'; 'Stop changing the Japanese constitution for the worse!'

The Japanese government, like Helmut Kohl's in Germany, which with Japan was defeated in World War II, made clear its desire to take a permanent seat on the security council when Japanese foreign minister Kono spoke at the UN.

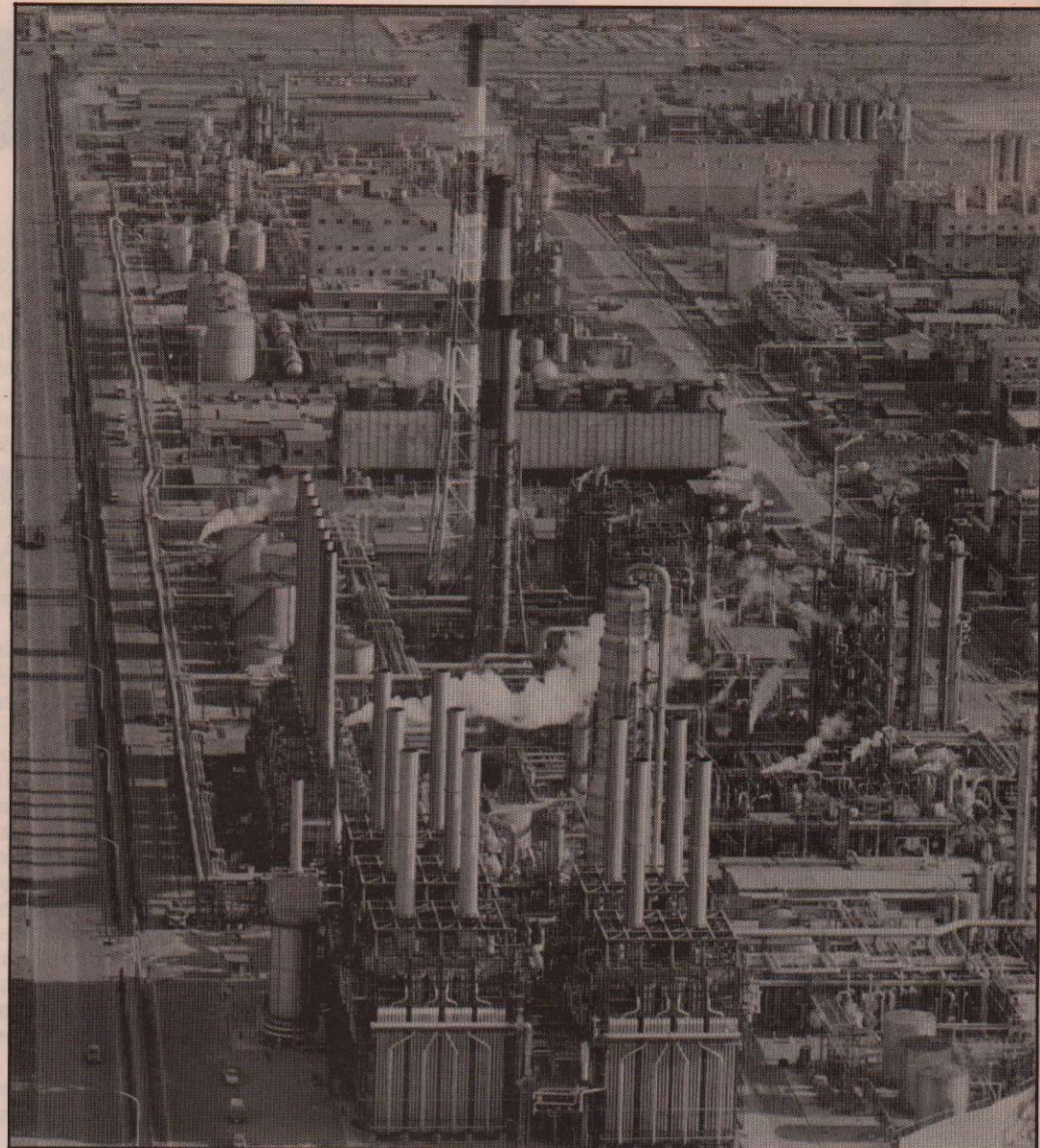
Tool

Clearly the UN has functioned as a tool to carry out the national state policies of the five great powers with permanent seats on the security council: the US, Britain, France, Russia and China.

This has been shown by the failed attempts — promoted by UN secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali — 'to solve regional wars' by sending in UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) troops.

President Clinton sent US and multi-national troops to occupy Haiti in his own interests under the cloak of a 'UN decision'.

And the US state is constantly looking for every opportunity to bring down Saddam Hussein's Iraq, most recently when it began a series of military



Japan's imperialists seek to expand their political and military power to match their economic muscle, as shown by this Tokyo petrochemical plant

operations near the Kuwaiti border.

President Boris Yeltsin forced UNPROFOR military intervention in Georgia in exchange for Russia's agreement to the US's occupation of Haiti.

And France used the name of UNPROFOR to justify its military intervention in Rwanda to support the former military regime there.

The Chinese bureaucracy has allowed all these military interventions by the security council because it is seeking to get help from these same countries to help in the capitalist transformation of their economy.

Japanese imperialism seeks to be a powerful country among those with permanent seats on the security council, countries that have been using the United Nations to carry out their own state national policies in their own interests.

Japan's imperialists aspire to domination of the Asian and Pacific region as a political and

military power corresponding to its economic strength. It uses the phrases 'non-military support' and 'humanitarian aid'. Needless to say, this aspiration is the embodiment of the same class interest of a Japan ruling class that seeks to build anew the 'Dai toa kyoei ken' — the Greater East Asia Co-Prospere Scheme [Japan's system of control in the years 1941-44] — in order to break through the severe Japanese recession.

The Japanese Socialist Party — part of the coalition government — has completely capitulated to the ruling class's idea of its 'place in the world as an economic power'. This party has overturned its previous opposition to the legalisation of the Japanese military under the constitution, now arguing that it is only a light army without nuclear weapons. The Socialist Party's platform has been changed from 'non-armament and neutrality' to 'non-nuclear armament'.

The Japanese Communist

Party has also completely surrendered to the idea of Japan's 'place in the world through the UN'. This party merely stresses that Japan should contribute to the world according to its anti-war constitution. It says that, since the UN is currently led by the US, taking a permanent seat would be a diplomatic move in favour of the US.

Thus the Japanese Communist Party does not debate and fight against the capitalist state as such. It merely tells voters that it is more independent from America than the other parties.

In this situation, none of the workers' or students' fights are organised. The recent demonstrations by the revolutionary and militant workers and students denounced the corruption of the Socialist Party and the anti-US nationalism and parliamentarism of the Communist Party. These protests have been based on the activities of the Japanese Revolutionary Communist League (Revolutionary Marxist Faction).

Peace and carrots: a workers' cafe shuts

A recently closed workers' eating house in Sheffield had a rich history, writes TOM OWEN

I HAPPENED to notice not long ago that Butler's cafe was closed 'due to illness'. But now it is closed for good; the white polish is on the windows, and where it stands across from the Jessops Hospital for Women the small rows of houses and shops look even more forlorn.

Butler's was an eating house for workers from the cutlery and small engineering companies situated in the West Bar area of Shalesmoore, Sheffield. The fare was that of the traditional diet of working men and women in the 1940s and early 1950s.

In fact Butler's did not even have a chip fryer. Everything, except the morning bacon, saus-

age and egg, was boiled. Cabbage, carrots, mashed potatoes, and peas were stewed for hours alongside mutton and shin beef.

Butler's owner appeared on the national and local news last year complaining about the damaging effects of Sheffield's Supertram project and the double yellow lines that had been slapped down outside his cafe.

The journalist who picked up this story must have been well-informed, because Butler's cafe was made famous by Pablo Picasso.

During the 1950s the Stalinist 'Peace Fighters' organised a huge rally at Sheffield city hall. Ex-engineering workers still have the doves that the artist

drew on stage and distributed to the audience, comprised mainly of skilled engineering workers, teachers, and a few academics. To the credit of those in the audience, not one dove has appeared in the auction houses.

It is said that Picasso wanted to visit a cafe. But the cafe culture of 1950s Sheffield being rather different to that of Paris, the minders were at a loss where to take him. He decided on Butler's, and did a series of sketches of Sheffield cafe life.

Butler's cafe outlived the Sheffield Communist Party and its once all-powerful 'metal faction'. Those workers who were at the centre of one of the most important sections of the British working class were cruelly beguiled. They had been turned into 'peace fighters' and directed by the grand theory of

'power blocs'. To quote 'the master', Stalin:

'The current peace movement has the aim of drawing the popular masses into the struggle to preserve peace and avert a new world war. It does not therefore seek to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism; it limits itself to democratic aims in the struggle to preserve peace.'

In this respect the present movement to preserve peace differs from the one which existed during the First World War which, in trying to transform the imperialist war into a civil war, went further and had socialist aims' (Stalin, 'Derniers Ecrits (1950-1953)' Editions Sociales, Paris, 1953, quoted in Claudel, 'The Communist Movement: From Comintern to Cominform', 1975).

Defend Clause Four campaign

'A matter for every class-conscious worker'

A CALL for the defence of Clause Four dominated a 200-strong meeting called by the Campaign Group of Labour Party MPs in London last weekend.

There were representatives of many Labour Party constituencies, as well as labour and trade union bodies. Opening speaker was Nick Nichols from the executive of the communications union NCU.

He said that this was the beginnings of a campaign that was the most important in the Labour Party's history. He condemned the hypocrisy of union leaders such as Alan Johnson, of the Union of Communication Workers, who had spoken out against Clause Four but was opposed to the privatisation of the Post Office.

The key to the fight for the defence of Clause Four would lie in the unions, Nichols said.

'There is a campaign being waged in the party for its very soul' said Arthur Scargill, leader of the National Union of Mine-workers. He said the attack on Clause Four was being waged under conditions where in real terms 5 million people were unemployed and 10 million were on or below the poverty line.

Labour had always won elections in times of crisis or great industrial struggle. He attacked Labour frontbencher Martin O'Neill who had announced that Labour did not intend to renationalise the coal industry.

'I do not simply want to see Labour win elections,' declared Scargill. 'I want them to introduce not just nationalisation, but the common ownership of the means of production.'

He further attacked the proposals of 'Tribune' and the 'New Statesman and Society' to have Clause Four re-drafted. He said that the Clause must be defended with not a single alteration.

Member of the European Parliament Stan Newens spoke of the last time that the Labour leadership, spearheaded by Hugh Gaitskell, had attempted to remove Clause Four from the Labour Party constitution. Newens also condemned those in the Labour Party who proposed a 'revision' of the clause.

Representing Wolverhampton North East Labour Party, Bob Lockett said that his constituency party had already unanimously carried a resolution defending Clause Four and announced that a campaign would be launched in the Wolverhampton area which everybody was invited to join.

Phil Edwards, from Tower Hamlets trades council, said he had been at a meeting of London trades councils that morning which had discussed an unemployed march for next year. 'Why wasn't the leadership of the Labour Party organising and leading the struggle against unemployment?' asked Edwards.

Fight

He spoke about the situation in east London and the fight against racism and fascism and he also drew attention to the refusal of the Labour Party to admit 600 refugees into the party in the Manchester area.

He stressed that the fight in defence of Clause Four must not

be restricted to members of the Labour Party. A committee for the defence of Clause Four had already been formed in east London and that it was organising a defence of Clause Four was being planned in east London and that it would be open to all to attend.

Member of the Anti-Racist Alliance Kingsley Abrahams said he had tried to recruit black people into the Labour Party. He had spoken at a meeting of the Marcus Garvey Association the previous evening. The privatisation of the buses came up in the discussion but the Labour Party had no commitment to renationalisation.

Ted Knight, of the Norwood Labour party and Croydon trades council, said Blair had set out to destroy the class basis of the Labour Party and to create another bourgeois party along the lines of the Democratic Party in the US.

Blair wanted state funding of political parties so that the link with the unions could be ended.

Knight insisted that there must be no 'discussion' of Clause Four. We were for its complete retention, he said.

Stressing that the fight was not one confined to Labour Party members, Knight said: 'We must bring in others outside the Labour Party.'

'This is a matter for every class-conscious worker,' he said

to applause. 'We do not demand that all those who take part in the defence of Clause Four should join the Labour Party.'

Knight said he was a member of the delegation from the Manufacturing Science and Finance union at this year's Labour Party conference. The MSF had voted against Clause Four but a fight was now on in the union to change that position.

A regional conference was being held in London and a national rally would be held, Knight told the meeting.

Confident

'I feel confident we can organise to win this fight,' he declared.

Speaking for Peckham Constituency Labour Party, Trudi Saunders said there must be a fight to:

- Ensure Labour renationalised all those industries privatised.
- Pledge Labour to end all contracting out of services to private firms by local councils.

Please send all information you can to Workers Press about forthcoming meetings, reports, discussion, pictures, etc.

Turkish state's war on Kurds

KURDISH journalist Vehbiye Tuzun says she was kept blindfold for 12 days and tortured, while held incommunicado by Turkish security police.

Vehbiye says she was sexually assaulted, stripped, and hosed with high-pressure freezing cold water. She was made to lie naked on a concrete floor, and was given electric shocks to her breasts and genitals.

The prosecutor threw out all charges against Vehbiye and ordered her release, without bringing charges against the police. A medical report issued on 18 October certified shoulder pain and pelvic infection among other complaints, consistent with the alleged torture.

The 23-year-old journalist, Urfa correspondent for the paper 'Ozgur Ulke', was held at two different places. In the second location, presumed to be the gendarmerie headquarters in Diyarbakir, she was kept ten days in a cell on a floor where many other detainees were also being held. Once, when being taken to the toilet, she recognised the voice of a colleague, Nezahat Ozen.

Nezahat, newspaper distributor Mehmet Balamir, and 'Ozgur Ulke's' Diyarbakir office manager Kadriye Ozcanli have been formally arrested and committed to prison. Nezahat Ozen says she was tortured in police custody, including being hung up by the wrists.

Other newspaper staff are still being held. The newspaper appears to have been targeted as part of a general clampdown by the Turkish authorities on Diyarbakir, the capital of Kurdistan. Several young people have been detained at roadblocks and taken away, without the police admitting to anxious parents that they are detained. Others have been taken away in dawn raids on homes.

Prisoners shot

ON THE night of 4 and 5 October riot police stormed Diyarbakir E-type prison where political prisoners were on hunger strike and barricaded in their cells. One prisoner, 19-year-old Ramazan Ozuak, was killed and many others injured (see Workers Press, 22 October). The prisoners were later transferred to Gaziantep prison.

The mothers of some prisoners now in Gaziantep went to Ankara to see the general director of prisons, Zeki Gungor, and the justice minister. Both denied that firearms had been used at Diyarbakir. Zeki Gungor agreed to let some mothers see their sons, telling them: 'If you establish that firearms were used, I shall resign.'

On 27 October, in the presence of the prison director, Ayten Onur saw her son, Ahmet Hakan Onur, at Gaziantep. He had a bullet lodged in the right side of his chest, and another bullet wound in his shoulder. He said he had been taken to Diyarbakir state hospital, but that his treatment had been interrupted.

Ergun Ozdemir was also brought to see his mother. He had cuts and bruises, but no bullet wounds. Both men were very thin, presumably as a result of their hunger-strike. Ahmet Hakan Onur stated that Mehmet Deviren still has a bullet in his back.

He went on to say that some prisoners had infected wounds, but were refusing treatment until the authorities met their demands for the storming of Diyarbakir prison to be properly investigated, for those responsible for human rights violations to be brought to justice, and for improvements in conditions.

The mothers had asked the general director of prisons about Salih Kaya. He claimed Salih Kaya had been released. The director of Gaziantep prison said that no such person was in his prison.

However, Ergun Ozdemir

told the mothers that Salih Kaya had had a brain haemorrhage and was paralysed on the right side. Prisoners said he had been taken to Gaziantep and then taken away, and they had no further information about him.

Another political prisoner, Yasin Aydin, stated that Salih Kaya was with him in the prison van when they were taken from Gaziantep to Yozgat four or five days after their transfer from Diyarbakir, that Salih Kaya died on the way to Yozgat and that his body was taken away. This has yet to be confirmed.

There is no conclusive list of names, but it is believed that 308 political prisoners were taken from Diyarbakir to Gaziantep. There are now 298 known to be in Gaziantep or other prisons — which would leave ten prisoners unaccounted for. In Ankara, eight mothers went on hunger-strike in protest.

Parties under fire

ALONGSIDE its war on guerrillas of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), the Turkish state is attacking constitutional parties. Huseyin Koku, president of the People's Democracy Party (HADEP) in Elbistan, 'disappeared' on 20 October. He had been constantly followed and harassed by police.

In March this year Koku was detained by police on the day of local elections. He was tortured and since then has had difficulty walking and needs constant medical treatment. He was released by the court after three months in custody.

On 20 October, Koku, who is married with six children, was on his way to the doctor when a car pulled up beside him in the centre of town.

The men inside the car, in plain clothes, were seen showing him their identity cards and then making him get into the car. When his wife inquired with the police in Elbistan on the first day of his disappearance as to her husband's whereabouts, they confirmed he was in police hands.

However, when she repeatedly went to the station during the following days, the police denied they were holding him.

The family, their lawyer and HADEP officials have since made inquiries with relevant authorities in Elbistan and Kahramanmaraş, but have not received any information about Huseyin Koku. They are very concerned for his health and safety.

HADEP (the People's Democracy Party) is the successor to HEP (People's Labour Party) and DEP (Democracy Party), which were both closed down by the constitutional court for 'separatism'.

Like the other two parties, HADEP has a predominantly Kurdish membership and works for the civil and political rights of the Kurdish minority.

The intensification of pressure against officials and members of HADEP coincides with the setting of a date for by-elections on 4 December.

By-elections need to be held because 22 seats in parliament have become vacant, the majority of them as a result of the banning of the pro-Kurdish Democracy Party (DEP) in June this year. Another seat has been vacant since the killing of DEP deputy Mehmet Sincar on 4 September 1993 in Batman in circumstances strongly suggesting security forces involvement.

In the weeks preceding local elections in March this year, a number of DEP candidates and activists were victims of extrajudicial executions mainly in the southeast, before the party decided to boycott the elections. As well as the assassination of Rebihi Cabuk, president of HADEP in Yuregir/Adana, 101 officials and members of these parties have been killed in the past three years.

Letters

Another letter — see page 2

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To support or not to support

WE HAVE always said that the Labour Party could never be turned into a party for the working class and, as the crisis of capitalism worsens, the Labour Party leadership would more and more openly support the ruling class.

But the establishment must ensure that Blair and the Labour Party burn their bridges. This is why Blair held a breakfast meeting at Blackpool with bankers and financiers at a modest £350 per head. It was at this breakfast that Blair made his attack on Clause Four. The establishment demanded it.

Breakfasters interviewed leaving the hotel said: 'This Blair can count on our support.'

At another establishment meeting Blair stated, amongst other things, that the anti-union laws would not be removed. He raised his eyes from his notes,

An irresponsible attitude to working class

REPLYING to Nick Brown ('Letters', 5 November), I think the responsibility of a revolutionary party is to try and persuade workers to break from reformism/social democracy at every opportunity. But that does not mean at any cost.

It does not mean, as Nick says, that we should hasten the Labour Party's ditching of Clause Four by calling on them to remove it. That would be irresponsible.

The WRP is currently discussing what kind of party should

looked straight at his audience, and said: 'Mass picketing is illegal. These laws are here to stay.'

The attack on Clause Four has come from the heart of capitalism. It is not Blair tinkering with the constitution.

This is why I must disagree with Nick Brown on the Clause Four issue ('Letters', 5 November). Yes we must break the working class from the Labour Party's grip.

This will not be done by simply saying the Labour Party leadership is betraying the working class. The very nature of the Labour Party makes them do this. Karl Marx said that just giving something a name does not make it so.

I remember a Labour Party rally and dance where I and a group of Young Socialists asked Hugh Gaitskell, then leader of the Labour Party,

be built, with whom, and how: this is the vital question of the hour. We want to join the fight alongside the working class as it struggles with the reality of the Labour Party leaders and what they really represent.

I'm sure I can say to Nick that he should join our discussions on the future of a proper working class (internationalist) party. Not by telling workers that we want the Labour Party to turn against them — they will do that without our help. Yes, we must expose the

about nationalisation, etc. He told us that we were now moving towards a classless society.

As proof he cited the removal of the words 'Third Class' from railway coaches, leaving only Second and First (one down, two to go).

I can only assume that Nick's comment about calling on the Labour Party to remove Clause Four and to change their name is a flippant one. If it is flippant I would ask Nick not to be flippant on the question of breaking the working class from the Labour Party and social democracy.

If Nick is serious, then in my opinion he is wrong. Recently I spent two days running the Workers Aid stall at Leeds University's Freshers' Fair. I spent some of my free time talking to the young people on the Labour Society stall.

They told me they were not

Labour Party at every opportunity, but don't let's be grateful the working class is saddled with Tony Blair and his colleagues, just so we can gloat and say 'We told you so'.

We must remember that the working class is not yet ready to break from the Labour Party. I wish it were. We must be patient and ready for those who want to expose their leadership, especially those who want to retain Clause Four.

Alan Clark
London SE28

Norman Harding
Leeds

Rwanda: the enemy is imperialism

The following contribution to the discussion on how the working class must respond to the war in Rwanda comes from the South African section of the Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International and is a response to the statement from the Workers International (Workers Press, 30 July)

RWANDA's former government was backed by French imperialism, whereas the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) is backed by the US. Both are bourgeois forces vying for control of the Rwandan economy on behalf of the imperialists.

Rwanda was part of German East Africa from 1899 to 1916. After World War I the world was redivided among the imperialists. This led to the creation of 'Ruanda-Urundi' under Belgian control through the imperialist League of Nations.

The Belgians applied the old divide-and-rule tactic by emphasising ethnic differences favouring the minority Watutsi tribe over the others. The Watutsi were historically cattle-owning overlords who had for many years subjugated other tribes.

They were given preference in education and job opportunities in government. The Belgians converted the mainly subsistence-farming economy into one based on coffee exports, and most of the population was pushed into the rural areas, causing severe overcrowding.

Wave

In 1959, during the wave of anti-colonial struggles, there was a mass uprising against the ruling Watutsi elite: about 100,000 Watutsis were massacred and hundreds of thousands driven into exile, to Uganda, Zaire and Congo. These exiles allied themselves to Yoweri Museveni's guerrilla forces in their war against Ugandan presidents Idi Amin and Milton Obote. The RPF was formed out of these exiles, and reportedly remains close to the Museveni regime to this day.

On 28 January 1961, the Belgians allowed the new elite to declare a republic. By 1 July 1962, two politically independent states came into being: Rwanda and Burundi — with Burundi still dominated by the Watutsi tribe.

Time after time, mass uprisings in Burundi were met with massacres of other tribes by the ruling Tutsi elite.

In Rwanda, the new government became the new elite, ruling on behalf of imperialism. The Tutsi exiles, later the RPF, waged a guerrilla war against

the Rwandan regime over a number of years until the United Nations brokered a peace agreement in August 1993 — the Arusha accords — which promised a coalition government and a reduction of the army and its role.

The UN sent a 'peace' force of 2,500, but withdrew it when hostilities broke out. The UN wanted an all-black African UN force since the imperialists didn't want any of their own forces to get shot!

Had Rwanda had any major economic or strategic military value to the imperialists, they would no doubt have intervened immediately and decisively.

Divisions

When the Rwandan president's plane was shot down on 6 April 1994, the government played on the tribal divisions and called for the wiping out of the Tutsi tribe and whoever supported them. Over 500,000 Tutsis and their supporters were massacred.

Then the RPF started to regroup and counter-attack. As the RPF gained ground, many hundreds of thousands of the population fled the country to Zaire and other neighbouring countries, fearing retribution.

The French only intervened when it became clear that the RPF forces were sweeping through the country. They intervened in order to set up havens for the perpetrators of the massacres, the former Rwandan government and their Hutu chauvinist forces, to try and prevent a comprehensive defeat and to ensure France a finger in the pie.

The enemy is not Hutu or Tutsi but the imperialist forces that keep the population of Africa politically and economically enslaved. The enemy is also those local bourgeois forces that act to safeguard the interests of the imperialists and keep the population in slavery through suppression and massacres.

The imperialist powers have divided us by drawing lines in the sand. We call for the formation of workers' and peasants' committees based on a socialist programme to act against all bourgeois and imperialist forces, uniting across the imperialist-drawn borders, as part of

the movement to rebuild the Fourth International, which is the World Party of Socialist Revolution.

The imperialists have created the objective and subjective conditions for the massacres against the Rwandan

people, and for those in the other African states. Let us appeal to the international working class to try all means available to send aid to the Rwandan workers and peasants.

Let us listen to what the Rwandan workers and peasants

have to say. Let us try, through discussions with them, to lift the veil on who the real enemy is and help plan how to overcome the short- and long-term problems.

These are all problems — the epoch of imperialism, the

period of capitalist decay. The time for the building of socialism is now.

The Rwandan workers and peasants must not be left to fight alone in the struggle to overcome the Balkanisation of Africa by the imperialists.



Rwanda massacre victims: the enemy is not Hutu or Tutsi but imperialism, which keeps Africa politically and economically enslaved

British planes help Indonesian war

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

BRITISH-supplied Hawk ground-attack planes have been used for the past several weeks in Indonesian attacks on East Timor, according to Jose Ramos-Horta, a leading member of the East Timor resistance.

The British government's hypocritical pretence that the planes are only used for training pilots was also dismissed by Mark Higson, a former Foreign Office official, who said the public was being 'lied to'.

At least three people were killed and over 70 arrests made as Indonesian forces last weekend broke up a demonstration in Dili, the East Timor capital, commemorating the massacre of hundreds of people at a funeral there three years ago. Indonesian troops invaded the former Portuguese colony in 1975. Up to 200,000 people may have been killed during the occupation.

Occupied

In the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, where US President Clinton, Australia's Labour prime minister Paul Keating, China's Jiang Zemin, and other leaders were attending a Pacific economic summit hosted by Indonesia's dictator, General Suharto, East Timorese students occupied the US embassy compound, demanding their people's rights be discussed.

At a demonstration outside the Indonesian embassy in London organised by Tapol, the campaign for human rights in Indonesia, together with the British Coalition on East Timor and the Campaign Against Arms Trade, journalist John Pilger stressed the importance

of international solidarity, and Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn attacked the use of aid to subsidise arms deals.

Liem Sioei Liong of Tapol said: 'Indonesia doesn't have any external enemies, so arms sales will only be used to oppress its own people, and those of East Timor.'

Campaigners against the arms trade invaded British

Aerospace plants at Warton in Lancashire and Stevenage, Hertfordshire, to focus attention on the company's sales of Hawk aircraft to Indonesia. The first Hawks were sold there ten years ago but another 24 are to be supplied in a £500 million deal.

Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd faced questions in the Commons last week over allega-

tions that £16 million of British aid promised for a road scheme was tied to a £2 billion military contract. There had been an earlier 'sweetener' in the form of £60 million to build a gas power station in Kalimantan (Borneo).

There have been allegations in Indonesia that international funds for rain-forest conservation were diverted into the government's pet project, the development of its own arms and aircraft industry, with British technical assistance.

A Foreign Office statement last week claimed — days after the High Court ruled Douglas Hurd had acted unlawfully over £234 million aid for Malaysia's Pergau dam — that 'it is not government policy to link aid and defence sales'. Baroness Chalker, the overseas aid minister, claimed: 'Our programme is targeted on human resource development, the environment, good government and transportation.'

The British government's claims that arms sold to Indonesia could not be used for internal repression had been torn to shreds, even before the news that Hawks are in action in Timor, when it was revealed that armoured personnel carriers were being supplied.

Ironically, while certain individuals and companies have been making millions out of arms deals, and obtaining the prestige contracts for roads and airports paid for by aid, it looks as though the British public as a whole has lost out.

The World Development Movement (WDM), which took Douglas Hurd to the High Court over the Pergau dam, says it is costing taxpayers nearly £1 million a day in losses and subsidised interest rates to underwrite arms sales, mostly to underdeveloped countries.

Suharto's other friends

BRITISH Tories and other imperialists find it profitable to sell arms to Indonesia, or exploit oppressed Indonesian workers, while occasionally affecting squeamishness about General Suharto's military dictatorship.

Other world figures, with less obvious vested interests, see nothing wrong in courting the dictator. In a letter sent to Suharto on 17 August, Indonesian independence day, but only released by the Indonesian government press bureau this month, Palestinian 'president' YASSER ARAFAT declared:

'It would be a great honour for us to convey this brotherly invitation to your Excellency to visit us in Palestine at an opportunity which does not effect other programmes.'

Arafat praised 'the brotherly material and spiritual support which Indonesia under the leadership of President Suharto has given to the just struggle of the Palestinian people,' evidently unaware of the obvious comparison with East Timor.

South Africa's NELSON MANDELA visited Jakarta for talks with Suharto this summer, at a time when strikes sweeping South Africa might have given him enough to worry about.

Mandela is reported to have returned with substantial funding for his African National Congress; and insubstantial talk of 'peace' in East Timor for any worried liberals.

Jailed

Most of Mandela's admirers, liberals and Stalinists alike, just looked the other way. We don't know whether Suharto offered advice on industrial relations. Indonesian trades unionists are being jailed for 'inciting' strikes.

Let's not forget the last great bearded hope of the romantic Stalinist 'left', Cuba's FIDEL CASTRO.

At last week's demonstration at the Indonesian embassy, a Workers Press reader who remembers, as I do, the early days of the Cuban revolution (we were both arrested demonstrating against US imperialism during the 1962 missile crisis) reminded me that Cuba's delegate at the UN voted against condemnation of the Indonesian government for the Dili massacre. Our reader wrote to the Cuban embassy asking them to explain. They never replied.

Charlie Pottins

Workers Press

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