WEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

International Transportworkers' Federation backs Liverpool

GWEFUL SUPPORT TO SACKED DOCKERS

THE International Transportworkers' Federation (ITF) is calling upon its affiliated unions to give full support, 'including boycott actions', against any vessels using the port of Liverpool.

This historic decision was taken by nearly 100 ITF inspectors at their annual seminar on 15-19 January in London.

A letter to the Liverpool dockers from Kees Marges, ITF Dockers' Section secretary,

The inspectors, 'based in 40 countries all over the world: from North America to New Zealand, from Finland to South Africa, from Japan to Germany and from Russia to Chile', are 'key figures in the ITF worldwide campaign against the use by shipowners of substandard ships sailing under a flag of convenience'.

The resolution — carried unanimously after Jimmy Nolan, chair of the Merseyside Port Shop Stewards' Committee, addressed the seminar on 18 January — condemns the sacking of the 500 Liverpool dockers by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company and

'We call upon our respective unions throughout the world to organise financial and moral support and where possible, to organise industrial action including boycott actions in their respective ports and countries against any vessels known to be loading/discharging cargoes to and from the port of Liverpool.'

In his letter to the dockers Marges added: '[T]he strong wish of the whole of the ITF and its 430 affiliates from 120 countries representing 5 million transport workers is that your fight against casualisation of labour and against deunionising of the port will be successful.'

Saying that 1996 is the centenary year of the ITF, Marges recalled that the federation was founded when British seafarers carried out solidarity action with striking Rotterdam portworkers in 1896.

Solidarity with sacked Liverpool dockers is an excellent way to celebrate this anniversary,' said Marges.

Employers should not succeed in replacing well-trained and experienced dock workers by casuals. Employers should not get the chance to the London Stock Exchange!

BY DOT GIBSON

replace unionised workers by non-union labour. Sacked workers who are a victim of this sort of employers' policies should be reinstated!'

He recalled what one inspector had said in the discussion, which 'expressed the feelings of all: "The trade union movement in the UK has lost many battles, this needs to

Marges assured the dockers: 'The ITF will do everything possible to help you to win this battle. In addition I can inform you that in consultation with the ITF's general secretary a contribution of £5,000 from the ITF's International Solidarity Fund will be made available for the hardship fund.'

Delegation

A delegation from the Liverpool strike committee to the Italian port of Salerno reports that dockworkers there have instituted an overtime ban on Gracechurch Container Line and Bouchard Line which operate a service between Liverpool and Salerno.

Members of two Italian dockworkers' unions also agreed to financial support by introducing a £5 levy on each of their members.

Ali Memon, ITF inspector Bremen, Germany, reported that when the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company wanted to hire tugboats from a German company, the crews had refused to staff the boats when they heard about the sacking of dockers in Liverpool.

Share values of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company continue to fall. To 'rub salt into the wound' 50 Liverpool dockers mounted a picket on

Community march and demonstration

in support of 500 sacked Liverpool dockers and their families

Saturday 3 February

Assemble Myrtle Parade (near Philharmonic Hall), 10.30am March to St George's Hall, Rally St George's Plateau, 12noon Invited speaker: Arthur Scargill



THE Tory threat to close St Bart's hospital in Smithfield met angry resistance when 400 marchers took to the streets of London last Saturday.

They were protesting against plans to close the hospital by 1999. The march was led by the mayors of several London boroughs and a protest petition was delivered to No.10 Downing Street.

Campaigners have been lobbying for four years in Britain and have now launched their fight in the European parliament to save this ancient hospital.

'Rationalisation' plans are already causing chaos as departments are closed and their work transferred elsewhere.

The Save Bart's campaign can be reached at 0171-600 5478.

Photo: Dave Lawrence

Bosnia report: 'I suspect a fraud'

BY CAZIM SARAJLIC From Front slobode, Tuzla

THE BIG imperial policeman, NATO, headed by the big imperial power, the USA, landed with a military technique not seen before on the small and unlucky country of Bosnia last year.

According to the Dayton 'peace', these multinational forces should implement peace in a former multi-cul-

tural, multi-ethnic and multinational Bosnia and Herzegovina in the next year.

The international community should teach us how to live, anew, together. It seems that 200,000 Muslims have been killed, slaughtered and burnt to force the international community to say: 'A big tragedy has happened!"

If it had not been for the Bosnia-Herzegovina army and our stubborness things could well have gone the other way. Our soldiers, even under the arms embargo, could have reached the river Drina. But the world's map creators said: 'Stop! It would be too much for

Staring at the dead plum tree in my yard at the bottom of Gradovrh hill, I meditate: 'Everything is the same, but you aren't there, Bosnia, a country damned to sleep ...

I suspect a big fraud. Translated by Faruk Ibrahi-

Bosnia Solidarity Campaign meeting No cover up of war crimes in Bosnia

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC2.

Monday 29 January, 7.30pm

Speakers: Zoran Pajic (Kings College and former professor Sarajevo University) and **Kyran Connolly** (NUJ president)

Workers Press Meeting

Saturday 10 February, 10.30am-4pm

Change of venue: The Falkland Arms, 31 Bloomsbury Way, London WC1. Tube: Holborn.

OUR readers are cordially invited to the 10th anniversary meeting of Workers Press. This is a time for us to review the past ten years, to consider the present and make plans for the future. The editorial board will present a report. We want to know your views, criticisms and proposals. Workers need their own paper, to report on and unite their struggles here and internationally. At this meeting we want to open up the discussion and practically begin the campaign for such a paper. For us in Workers Press our purpose — socialism — is the same purpose as every worker and those intellectuals whose lives are dedicated to the socialist cause.

Crisis in the labour movement The need for a new socialist party

CHANGE OF DATE & VENUE: Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Saturday 16 March 11am-5pm We have changed the original date for the conference

because of the demonstration against the Tory Asylum Bill. Millions of workers will vote Labour in the next general election — to defeat the hated Tories — knowing in their heart of hearts that the Blair leadership will continue to attack them on behalf of big business. The working class needs **its own** socialist party — a party that will organise the fight in its own interests. Many people are already organising themselves. We need to unite, we need to discuss, we need to prepare. That is the purpose of this meeting. If you agree with the following demands then you should come along!

▶ Down with privatisation! A full and open workers' inquiry of the companies' books!

▶ No to casual labour! Demand permanent work for all!

▶ Down with anti-trade-union laws! Restore trade union rights!

▶ Down with the cuts in social and public sevices! A full and open workers' inquiry into the state's finances!

▶ Down with the racist immigration laws! Demand the right to asylum!

Down with the Criminal Justice laws! Demand basic democratic rights!

An injury to one is an injury to all! Build workers' internationalism!

Vote for Brenda Nixon!

WORKERS PRESS has no hesitation in calling on all its readers to support the Socialist Labour Party candidate Brenda Nixon in the

coming by-election in Hemsworth.

Those with a vote will have an opportunity to register their protest against the Tony Blair leadership and against a candidate imposed on the constituency from Labour HQ in Walworth Road. This by-election will provide an important indication of how ready the working class is to break with Blair and the Labour leaders.

SOME will no doubt plead 'don't split the Labour vote and let in the Tories'. But it is Blair and his capitalist backers that really threaten the unity of the working class.

But many of those who plead 'don't split the vote' are playing a dirty game, with 'left' faces and 'right' actions. At Labour conferences they come forward with left-sounding resolutions but never really challenge the right-wing leadership. These 'lefts' do everything in their power to shore the leaders up when they're in trouble from the membership.

Besides, Hemworth is a rock-solid Labour seat. If the Labour vote was split right down the middle both candidates would have 3,000 votes to spare each!

And who have allowed the Tories to remain in office since 1979? Labour! Right down from 1979 to now, the Labour leaders have steadfastly refused to organise working-class resistance to the relentless attack that has come from No.10 Downing Street. An attack not just on traditional working class people, but on all those who have been robbed of health and other public services, proper education, secure jobs, pensions, welfare, etc.

Only a handful of notable exceptions in local government (e.g. Ted Knight) and a few Labour MPs (e.g. Terry Field and Dave Nellist now associated with Militant Labour) gave any political voice to the movement against these attacks from within the Labour Party. The Labour leaders bent over backward during the 1984-85 miners' strike and shamelessly propped up the hated Thatcher government in

the name of 'law and order'.

BUT at this point we are against Scargill's proposal to stand Socialist Labour Party candidates in every constituency at the next general election. This does not rule out support for a campaign of targetting a hit-list of 'Labour traitors'. Some immediately spring to mind: Blair himself, Jack Straw, Frank Field, etc.

But, we stress, Hemsworth is not a general election. Nixon, reflecting a widely held view in the working class, has said she does not support standing against Labour in every seat in a general election. Hemsworth is a by-election where a right-winger is standing for Labour. There is absolutely no chance of 'letting the Tory in' or even the Lib Dem candidate.

OUR decision to back Nixon does not mean we are uncritical of the way Arthur Scargill is trying to organise his 'Socialist Labour Party'. He is organising on the basis of invitationonly, secret meetings.

We have already made criticisms of its draft programme and its proposed constitution (18 November and 23 December). Scargill is trying to resurrect 'Old Labour' as it existed before Blair. This is impossible. We must go forward to a new working-class party that meets the real needs of millions of workers in a period of mounting economic and social crisis.

Whatever Scargill's intentions, workers must impose their own form on the moves being made throughout the working class to find a political expression. We will continue to explore our differences with Scargill and will support all moves from within the working class to enforce its own will and its own interests in forming a new revolutionary

We invite all readers to come to the 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference on Saturday 16 March called to discuss and organise around just

Support Brenda Nixon at Hemsworth!

Letters

Help Frank

I AM writing to seek support for

a campaign in support of Nige-

rian asylum seeker Frank Daboh,

initiated by my wife Julie Skin-

in Rochester jail and is fighting

active member of the Nigerian

Democratic Movement before his

arrest at a rally on 7 November

1994. The rally had been broken

up by police (some in plain

clothes), using tear gas, rubber

made from the 600 people on the

rally. Some were later released,

but those, like Frank, who were

in prison, was beaten and

received only one meal a day. He

was never charged with any

taken part in, and organised, strikes, rallies and demonstra-

tions against the Nigerian mili-tary government. He was on the

regional committee of CD and

was that organisation's publicity

many activities including the

production and distribution of

in Lagos while he was being

posters, handbills and leaflets.

As such he was responsible for

He escaped from Kirikiri jail

Before his arrest, Frank had

Frank was held some months

caught on the stage were not.

A number of arrests were

deportation in the courts.

bullets and batons.

Frank is currently being held

In Nigeria, Frank was an

Daboh

transferred to another, unknown, location. He took advantage of the vehicle's journey being inter-rupted by an obstruction to get

A colleague obtained false documents and an airline ticket for Frank and he was able to

away. Shots were fired.

escape Nigeria.

He arrived in Britain on 13 May 1995 but was immediately arrested by immigration officers. He has remained in custody ever

The Immigration and Nationality department have told Frank that they believe his involvement with CD to have been at too low a level for him to be at risk of per-

Further, they have claimed that Nigeria's military ruler General Abacha is presently moving the country towards civilian rule. Frank disputes both of these claims made by the United Kingdom authorities.

If Frank were forced to return to Nigeria, it seems likely he would be arrested immediately. His subsequent fate would be a matter of speculation, but his life could well be in danger.

It would certainly seem hard to argue that he would not be persecuted for his political

Any support you can give to Frank would be welcome, including writing to him at HMP Rochester, D Wing, 1 Fort Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 3QS. His prison reference is TB0562 and his Home Office reference is

Peter Skinner MEP

Widdecombe: church, chains and bomb

PETER Fryer in his Personal Column on 13 January rightly exposed Anne Widdecombe's hypocritical justification of the Tory government's decision to deport dissident Mohammed Ma'asari.

He could also have given other examples of the dexterity with which this recent convert to Roman Catholicism is able to lay her loudly-trumpeted Christianity in order to serve her

own political career in the Tory party on behalf of big business interests. As a Home Office minister she sturdily defended the continued handcuffing of pregnant women in prison, even to the extent of misleading parliament.

WE WELCOME LETTERS

SEND THEM TO: WORKERS PRESS, PO BOX 735, LONDON SW8 1YB OR FAX 0171-387 0569

> Less well known, perhaps, was Widdecombe's role as a cofounder (with Lady Olga Mait-land) of the ultra-right 'Women and Families for Defence'.

> Then in 1987, in her maiden speech to the Commons, while still a member of the Church of England, she called for the retention of nuclear weapons, a policy now enthusiastically embraced by that other well-known Christian, Tony Blair.

> > London SE 19

Bill Boakes

Bring new discussion into Workers Press

SCARGILL's plans for a Socialist Labour Party has opened up a lively discussion among workers about the nature of its political leadership.

At a recent trades council meeting in Tower Hamlets, a worker and Labour Party member said he believed Scargill's call to be premature.

While he had no faith in Tony Blair, this worker thought ordinary members could change the Labour Party back to socialist policies once it had been elected to government.

A meeting will arranged in our area to pursue this discussion.

I believe it to be extremely important for Workers Press to closely follow this kind of discus-

For a start I suggest that all contributors to the paper concentrate on bringing this debate into

We perhaps should have one page a week given over to the discussion on the new party.

Martin Westwood

SAOIRSE (LONDON)

PO Box 3923, LONDON NW5 1RA

IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS IN BRITAIN

Please send birthday cards to all POWs. Cards are welcome at

any time.			
Name	Prison	Number	Birthday
Liam McCotter	Belmarsh	LB83693	2 January
Jan Taylor	Whitemoor	EN1977	18 January
Paul (Dingus) Magee	Belmarsh	BT3783	30 January
Nicholas Mullen	Whitemoor	MR0639	2 February
Liam Quinn	Whitemoor	49930	6 February
Joe McKenny	Frankland	L46486	7 February
Pat Hayes	Frankland	EN1978	27 February
Pat McGlynn	Frankland	EN1946	25 March
Patrick Kelly	Whitemoor	EN1194	12 April
Denis Kinsella	Full Sutton	EN1944	12 April
Eddie Butler	Full Sutton	338637	17 April
Joe O'Connell	Full Sutton	338635	15 May
Micheal O'Brien	Full Sutton	BT3782	11 June
Peter Sherry	Belmarsh	B75880	30 June
Stephen Nordone	Frankland	758663	2 August
Vincent Wood	Full Sutton	EN1049	7 August
Thomas Jack	Frankland	EN3177	10 September
Vincent Donnelly	Frankland	274064	25 September
Sean McNulty	Frankland	CL3440	13 October
Harry Duggan	Frankland	338638	31 October
Sean Kinsella	Full Sutton	758661	5 November
Paul Norney	Frankland	863532	11 November
Brendan Dowd	Whitemoor		17 November
Hugh Doherty	Full Sutton	338636	7 December
Noel Gibson	Full Sutton	879225	11 December
Liam O'Dwyer	Belmarsh	MT2485	14 December
Derek Docherty	Full Sutton	EN3887	31 December

Framed prisoner:

Danny McNamee Belmarsh

L481616

Prison addresses:

HMP Frankland, Finchdale Avenue, Brasside, Durham DH1 5YD. HMP Full Sutton, York YD4 1PS.

HMP Whitemoor, Longhill Road, March, Cambridge PE15 0PR. HMP Belmarsh, Western Way, Thamesmead, London SE28 0EB.

Workers Press also calls for the release of supporters of the Irish Republican Socialist Party in addition to the Sinn Fein supporters listed above.

Saoirse activities:

Saoirse London will be having a benefit social at the Victoria Tavern on Thursday 1 February from 8pm onwards: £3 waged, £2 unwaged. On Sunday 4 February Saoirse will be picketting Downing Street, 12noon-1pm, nearest tubes Charing Cross or

On Sunday 11 February, 1-3pm, Saoirse branches thoughout England will be picketting Belmarsh jail in south London to highlight the continued barbaric treatment of Republican prisoners there and to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the death of hunger striker Frank Stagg

Further Information: Saoirse, PO 3923, London NW5 1RA Phone/fax: 0181-985 8250.

Stop the Asylum and **Immigration Bill**

National demonstration Saturday 24 February

Assemble 11am **Embankment**

Rally Trafalgar Square

Supported by the TUC

DOCKERS CHARTER

No.3 January 1996 issue out! 50p
Published by the Liverpool Dock Shop Stewards Committee. Cheques

to 'Meyseyside Dockers Shop Stewards' Committee' and sent to J.Davies, Secretary/Treasurer, 19 Scorton Street, Liverpool, L6 4AS. Include 50p p&p. Large orders phone: 0151-207 3388.

Critique conference 96 The crisis of capitalism and the death of social democracy

3 February 1996, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC2. Registration 9-9.30am. £10 waged £5 unwaged. Information/crèche (before 30 January): phone Hillel Ticktin 0141-339 8855 ext. 4377

Football articles wanted

CAN any reader of Workers Press donate books, magazines, videos or anything else to do with football?

One of our members in Crawley, Sussex, has agreed to sell them on his market stall and donate the money towards the expenses for preparing to build the conference (and the work beyond that) on the need for a new socialist party called by Workers Press.

To offer articles phone Workers Press: 0171-387 0564.

Germany next for social strife? HELMUT SCHMIDT, a retired

Social-democratic chancellor of Germany, has produced a drastic programme to prevent the 'creeping erosion of the country's economic basis'.

In a recent article in the political weekly Die

Zeit, Schmidt points out that Germany has long ceased to be the world-champion export

More than half of the Gross National Product, he explains, flows through the hands of the state, while taxes and other impositions are at record levels.

Nevertheless, the state's income falls far short of its expenditure. Germany's borrowings on the world market put her on a par with Mexico, second only to the United States.

He blames political intervention by the (conservative) government for record and growing levels of unemployment. But while taking account of voices from the media and industry calling for the break-up of state welfare arrangements, he proposes instead his own 'prescription block' of remedies.

For immediate action, Schmidt calls for all state expenditure of whatever kind and all forms of tax relief to be examined with an eye to a wide-ranging programme of cuts.

In this way he hopes to free the hands of the finance minister to tackle the over-valuation of the Deutschmark on world markets which is crippling German

(This itself hardly takes account of the state of the world economy, particularly the actions of the US government, which keep the German currency high.)

Pensions

For example, spending departments of the government must no longer, Schmidt says, be able to divert monies collected for old-age pensions into early retirement packages for redundant employees. Let them live off

He demands that regulations protecting able-bodied unemployed people from being sent to low-paid manual jobs must be suspended. Penalties for working while drawing benefits must be

BY BOB ARCHER

ibility in the labour market, allowing machines to be kept running without premium payments, and for loopholes in the legally-binding wage agreements where they are 'inappropriate' (i.e. when the employer wants to pay less).

Binding

Schmidt says binding agree-ments that automatically cover whole areas and braiches of industry are now 'poison for many threatened firms in the

In the medium term, Schmidt wants massive deregulation, doing away with a mass of rules and regulations which stifle enterprise. This would affect everything from the tax laws to building regulations.

Together with demands a radical reduction in the bureaucracy in the national, regional and municipal government and in the various branches of social insurance.

Vacancies should not be filled and tenured 'officials' should be replaced by mere 'employees'. He offers the assistance of the SPD in carrying this out.

He calls for technical innova-tion to be encouraged in order to develop new products for the world market to replace the mass-production goods which can now be made in low-wage

proposes much Schmidt higher research spending in genetic engineering, aerospace, high-performace ceramics, solarpowered transport and so on. He reserves his real venom for the 'widespread rejection of reforms and innovations' and the 'psy-chotic fears of misguided idealists' with their 'suspicion of new research and new technologies'.

Schmidt reaffirms that 'social progress depends on economic and technical progress'.

ven real teeth.

He calls for much more flex
Like the Republicans in the
United States, he claims that



'environmental protection has become hysteria'

Schmidt calls on business managers, the unions and the 'political class' to rally round the chancellor and launch a broad campaign to convince all and sundry to pull together.

The article looks like a desperate attempt to save a basic minimum of the 'social market economy' which has served Germany so well since the 1950's.

Schmidt warns that 'Roman

conditions' (one assumes he means chronic civil war) or 'endless strikes, like in Paris, or class struggle, as in England' will result from any other approach.

In fact the space for manoeuvre between the working class and the ruling class in which the Social-democratic Party (SPD) has traditionally moved has disappeared.

All the SPD can offer is to carry out the attacks on jobs and living standards in a more controlled way, keeping a few basics like pensions and the health service as intact as can be.

Although many workers may be swayed by hopes of preserving past gains through compromise, the basis for the 'social market economy' is actually shattered by Germany's economic crisis.

This is why the SPD has been running round like a headless chicken for the last 18 months.

Party leaders Oskar Lafontaine and Gerhard Schroeder

recently floated the idea of pumping a big dose of money into the economy even at the risk of further indebtedness.

Quoting Helmut Schmidt many years ago, they said '5 per cent inflation is better than 5 per cent unemployment'.

Few commentators took this suggestion seriously. The SPD's own fiscal expert, Henning Voscherau, said 'in fact it is not a real option'. Schmidt's 'programme' is an attempt to pull Lafontaine into line behind other European social democrats, like Blair, Wim Kok and Gro Harlem Brundtland.

However, many SPD activists, although they themselves are middle-class products of political life in the 1960s and 1970s, are close enough to the working class to know there is going to be angry resistance to this road.

Division

The division in political circles in Germany is between those who want to let market forces rip, slash taxes and social expenditure, shut 'uneconomic' plant and let unemployment do its work, and those who want to achieve the same ends in a more orderly manner.

Thus many Social democrats find themselves close to the 'social' wing of the conservative CDU, while the right wingers in the CDU may find friends among the born-again free-marketeers in the Free Democratic Party.

Moreover, the political élite that lubricates and staffs the 'social market economy' is, itself, one of the overheads that many business experts want to cut. This social layer is in a state of considerable confusion. The events in France of last December also weigh heavily on the minds of all German leaders.

Whatever happens, the working class is going to be involved in major social and political struggles which will burst through the shell of class collaboration imposed by the 'social market economy'

Rats desert sinking

SOME Serb politicians are ready to sacrifice nationalist war criminal Dr Radovan Karadzic as a scapegoat, and offer themselves to the new US imperialist master as the 'moderates' with whom to do business

Serbia's President Milosevic, who sent in the Yugoslav National Army and backed Karadzic to start the war, is one. But Serbian right-wing opposition parties play to the nationalist mob as he did, are just as keen to sell out to foreign capital.

In the Bosnian Serb 'republic' vice-president Nikola Koljevic welcomed NATO deployment. His part in directing artillery fire on Sarajevo civilians diplomatically forgotten, US-educated Koljevic has been tipped as an replacement for 'acceptable' Karadzic.

The Bosnian Serbs have finally realised that you cannot build a dignified life on the ideology of blood and territory,' says Dr Miodran Zivanovic of the opposition Liberal Party.

'Our main goal now is to take these war criminals, like Karadzic, and put them on trial. The Bosnian Serbs must punish those who carried out these crimes,

Karadzic world, we will bear the guilt of

the atrocities they committed in Elections are due late this

spring. Karadzic is not allowed to stand under the Dayton agreement. US officials expect General Mladic to retire under pressure from Belgrade.

Chris Hedges in the New York Times (4 January) says it isn't clear whether Karadzic will be replaced by someone from his own nationalist circle in Pale or by 'a more compromise-minded figure' from Banja Luka.

'But the demonisation of Karadzic as an extremist who corrupted the cause of Serb nationhood has appeal across the spectrum now — in part because it allows Serbs to distance themselves from the war's brutality.

This has become a battle between a small political clique, led by Karadzic and backed by the Serbian Orthodox Church, and the majority of Bosnian Serbs who want to build a Westdemocratic state based on

human rights and free enterprise,' says Mladen Ivanic, of the Serbian Intellectual Forum, which recently broke from Karadzic.

Banja Luka feels it paid the price for Karadzic's determination to take Sarajevo...

'It soon became clear that the siege was doing us a lot more harm than good. The front lines around Sarajevo never moved from the start of the war, yet we shelled the city indiscriminately every day, and all this was transmitted to the outside world by the international press.

Isolated

'In the end we were totally isolated, we could not even get help from Belgrade or the Russians,' says Dragutin Ilic of the Milose-

vic-backed Socialist Party. 'We had no money and no allies in the end. It became suicidal to continue the war. The leadership knew it was ruling a small, poor state but thought it

did not need the rest of the world. This was very foolish.

'As Karadzic's grip on power slips many around him are abandoning him, hoping for a place in a new system. Those who remain are the war profiteers, those who made fortunes smuggling in gasoline, and the worst war criminals.

These people know that once Karadzic goes they will lose money and maybe their heads. There is a lot of rancour and bitterness now, even though Karadzic understands he is finished. We could see some volatile incidents before he goes.'

Many Bosnian Serbs, workers and intellectuals, remained loyal to a multi-ethnic Bosnia from the start, and like deputy chief of staff Jovan Divjak, fought for it.

They were the forgotten people, so far as imperialist governments and media (and some on the 'Left') were concerned.

General Divjak's visit to London last Summer, like Bosnian ambassador Filipovic's remarks about Serbs opposing Karadzic, went unreported by the BBC.

Today's opportunists are different. They blame Karadzic not for starting the war, but for losing it. They're extending a hand for the dollar.



Radovan Karadzic

WORKERS PRESS IS THE PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

British section of the Workers International (to Rebuild the Fourth International) Please send me information about the WRP

Address

Send to: PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB

Murderers' riends

more grisly evidence is unearthed genocide in Bosnia, don't forget the arderers' friends.

For instance, the New Worker, per of the New Communist Party CP: Though their Serb republic s, at last, been recognised and given ual standing to the Muslim-Croat eration, the Bosnian Serbs are ing asked to make substantial conssions in return.

Over the past three years they we fought the imperialists' puppet litias to a standstill. They've defied to bombs and Cruise missiles. ey've been starved by sanctions d blockade.

Now the Bosnian Serbs, together th their Yugoslav allies, accept that agreement represents the best al obtainable, given the balance of ces against them' (After the guns Il silent, editorial, 1 December).

The Serb Chetniks whom New orker, like the BBC, dignifies as 'the snian Serbs', have brutally raped men and children, and butchered busands of people. Glorifying them, Worker endorses fascism.

Socialist Action (January/Febru-), fearing 'NATO's first task may to smash the defences of the large b suburbs of Sarajevo . . .' sees 'In snia a Serb population forcibly corporated into a state of which want no part'. It berates 'sections the west European left who effecely endorsed this action'. Having n Socialist Action hacks with Serb tionalists, we don't need their vice, or them.

iet real

HATEVER is happening in the rld, — mass graves in Bosnia and anda, repression in Nigeria, ialism in Germany and Britain nt worry. Living Marxism, can ure you it's just an illusion.

In October, Joan Philips suggested imates of Bosnians murdered by Chetniks had been invented. rbs have been declared guilty of nocide on hearsay evidence insuffint to convict a bicycle thief,' lared Mick Hume.

December, Hume wrote: 'Home retary Michael Howard's plans to hten the screws further still on migrants and refugees ... have prosed accusations that he is "playing race card" to attract the bigot 2 . . . Of course, those whom the

ernment's tired and dirty little rection campaign tries to scapegoat the country's problems should be

But we should not get carried with the notion that the imporbattles of today will be fought inst the right-wing politics of the

.... When the authorities do slip k into their old ways they tend to their fingers burned, as Metrotan Police chief Paul Condon did h his "most muggers are black" ement earlier this year.'

But Condon kept his job, was ended in the liberal press, and ted in racist propaganda.

reader urged Living Marxism to the campaign against Shell and persecution of the Ogoni people. But Andy Clarke claims 'the camen against Nigeria is a cynical

mpt to exploit the Ogoni's plight rder to highlight the barbarism of k Africa ...

lumping environmental cam-

mers together with 'the British blishment and its media', Clarke The Ogonis would do well to ask mselves what are the motives and all the help they are getting m the West.' What help?

living Marxism chooses vague as like 'the West', or 'the political to obscure class issues. re's no trades description act in ties. The only answer to such nies is to produce the real thing.

Charlie Pottins

Dayton: US writes Last week we published a statement from Workers Aid for Bosnia, and endorsed by the for G

Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International, on the 'peace deal' agreed in Dayton, Ohio, in the USA.

This week we begin the discussion on the meaning of the deal with an article by Attila Hoare. Below we have a report from our friend in Tuzla, Faruk Ibrahimovic, about how the 'peace deal' is affecting everyday life

MUCH more than on their own ance. The Clinton regime, under strength, the Bosnian Serbs, at this moment, are relying on the international community, which they once blamed for everything, to prevent their total collapse.

So said the Serbian-opposition weekly Vreme on 16 October 1995 following the ceasefire that had halted the victorious advance of the Bosnian Army in western Bosnia.

On 10 October, Bosnian and Croatian forces had liberated the towns of Sanski Most and Mrkonjic-Grad. The Serb-Chetnik army of Radovan Karadzic was on the verge of collapse and General Atif Dudakovic, commander of the Bosnian Fifth Corps, was preparing to march on Banja Luka, the largest town in Serbian-occupied Bosnia.

Secretary Malcolm Rifkind admitted to the Bosnian ambassador in London that the game was up for the Karadzic Serbs. Croatia too had expressed an interest in driving Serbian forces from Banja

As *Vreme* predicted, the Chetniks were rescued by the Western powers, or more particularly by the Americans, who had established their leadership of the West's intervention in the Balkans.

It was the Americans who successfully coerced Bosnian President Izetbegovic into calling off his army's advance, throwing away the victory for which the Bosnian people had fought and died for three years to

Until the summer of 1995, this intervention had been paralysed by the conflict between the Americans and the west European powers over how to set about partitioning Bosnia.

The west Europeans favoured the full conciliation of Serbian aggression and sabotage of Bosnian resist-

pressure from Congress, cautiously worked to establish a military balance between Serbia on the one hand and Croatia and Bosnia on the other.

They hoped to weaken the Serbian occupation forces enough to pressurise the Karadzic regime into signing the Contact Group plan that split Bosnia 49-51 per cent between them and the Bosnians, but not enough to encourage the Bosnians to pursue a military victory.

In July 1995 they gave the nod to Serbia's conquest of the 'safe areas' of Srebrenica and Zepa in Eastern Bosnia, welcomed the Croatian liberation of Krajina, and briefly pressed the Bosnians to give up the third eastern enclave of Gorazde, which they saw as 'tidying up the map' and preparing the ground for a 'clean' partition.

Frantic

The Clinton regime's intervention became more frantic when the American Congress passed a resolution to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia unilaterally, with a margin wide enough to override a Presidential

To preempt this, Clinton was pressed finally to assert US leadership over the west Europeans, who were brought in line behind the American policy of 'forcing the Chetniks to be appeased'.

The first serious NATO air-strikes of the war, launched in late August, succeeded in pushing the Karadzic regime to sign the Contact Group

In September the Bosnians and Croatians launched a major offensive - Operation Mistral - that liberated one-tenth of Bosnia. Their advance had been facilitated by the

NATO strikes that disrupted the Serbian communications system, though in other respects they derived little benefit from the strikes, which were limited to eastern Bosnia, not to the west where the offensive took place.

The real effect of the strikes was to end resistance to the Serbian occupiers. So long as the Western powers were evidently failing to stop Serbia, the weak and vacillating regimes of Izetbegovic and Tudjman were forced to resist the partition of their countries.

The NATO fireworks-display allowed them to abandon the struggle in favour of an unquestioning reliance on the American Emperor. The latter allowed the Bosnians and Croatians to reduce the Serbian occupation of Bosnia to the 49 per cent stipulated in the Contact Group plan, before blowing the whistle.

Izetbegovic and Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic were taken to Dayton in Ohio, far away from the Bosnian people and their struggle, where the Americans could keep them isolated and pressurise them into accepting the partition of their

At Dayton, the Karadzic Serbs were represented by a delegation led by Serbian President Milosevic, ending any pretence that the former had been waging a civil war independently of the latter.

Milosevic was promoted as the key peacemaker; prior to Dayton, Washington had 'negotiated' a settlement to his dispute with Croatia over Eastern Slavonia that was highly unfavourable to the latter.

American threats of sanctions had deterred a Croatian military move into Eastern Slavonia; the deal reached at Erdut stipulated that Serbia's proxies would retain the territory for two years before it passed to the Croats.

By contrast, the Dayton settlement awarded the Chetniks territory in Bosnia, currently held by the Croats, that would revert to Serbian control by early February 1996, i.e. only three months after the signing of the agreement.

Nevertheless, at Dayton Tudiman proved to be a willing accomplice to the efforts to force the Bosnians to capitulate. All alone, the Bosnian delegation fell prey to internal differences that the Americans eagerly exploited.

The more resolute Silajdzic quarrelled with Izetbegovic; the US's Richard Holbrooke took Silajdzic to dinner and fed him stories of financial packages for post-war recon-

The territorial settlement proved to be far more unfavourable to the Bosnians than that of the original Contact Group plan: the Americans insisted on sticking to the plan's formula where it awarded the Chetniks 49 per cent of Bosnia, but not where it restored to the Bosnians several key territories.

Milosevic agreed to cede to the Bosnians territory around Sarajevo, in return for the Croatian abandonment to the Chetniks of a wedge of land around the towns of Mrkonjic-Grad and Sipovo in western Bosnia amounting to 4 per cent of Bosnian territory.

This represented a net territorial gain for Serbia, and meant that once again Bosnia's Bihac region would be cut off from central Bosnia by Serbian troops. The towns of Doboj and Teslic that guarded the eastern flank Serbian-occupied territory around Banja Luka would not go to

the Bosnians, as in the original plan. The Bosnians were granted a land

and 'peace Selam morning!

BY FARUK IBRAHIMOVIC **TUZLA, BOSNIA**

A SPECIAL bus full of local and foreign journalists escorted by the NATO and Russian Implementation Force (IFOR) passed down the northern route into Tuzla that was blocked off during the war.

Two weeks later a regular bus service between Zupanja (the start of the route in Croatia, where the first two Workers Aid Convoys were blocked in trying to go down the northern route) and Tuzla began.

Because of this Zagreb can be hed in ten hours, the journey through the south took two days. It's even faster in a car. The bus fare has halved - only 60DM.

Special permission to leave the country is no longer needed either.

Tuzla expects a lot from this improvement in its situation but it still needs the rail links to be opened to allow the flow of the huge quantities of raw materials necessary to feed its hungry industry — and for the flow of exports.

Some days ago a very thick fog descended on Tuzla. President Bill Clinton's arrival was delayed. The smog comes from the fact that many people still use coal and wood to heat their flats and houses, some of these to compensate for the electricity shortage. The electricity ration is 6kWh per day.

While I was away this ration was just enough for my wife and son but the moment I switched on my computer to do some work we had to be careful about consumption. There

are some indications that this may

People do not speak much about the Dayton 'peace deal'. The Workers Aid for Bosnia resolution was printed in the local paper Front slobode (Freedom front) on 25 December, but there didn't seem to be any response on the letters' page.

In my contact with ordinary people, friends, other journalists, etc., very few are delighted with the deal. A handful look to make a personal profit from the deal and some expect foreign capital to reconstruct the devastated country. Others neither support nor opposed the deal. They say the deal is the 'lesser evil' to war.

Some compare the deployment of US troops with the arrival of the Austrians in 1878.

Others say we musn't express our stand towards the plan openly any longer because CIA agents are coming to investigate who is against the Dayton 'peace deal'. This last fact was announced on Sarajevo TV news a few days ago.

The consequences for those against the deal were not spelled out.

The government, led by the prime minister, is discussing privatisation. In the first instance flats, banks and companies will be privatised. Workers have not welcomed this idea. They want their share in the companies to be clarified first. Trade union leaders have not expressed their stand on the issue openly yet.

Although elections will be held in September, inter-party struggles have already started. TV and radio programmes broadcast interviews with party leaders. A new radio station, 'Slon' (the Elephant) has been set up by the Croats. We can expect a new media war.

But a certain relaxation is evident in the many jokes being told about the present conditions. One refers to the coming elections:

'A woman fell down on the icy road and President Izetbegovic happened to be close by. When he helped her to her feet he said: "Don't forget this favour when it comes to the election." The woman replied: "I'm not mad! And what's more I didn't fall on my head."

Events

There are lots of cultural events in Tuzla. The theatre has regular performances and the international portrait gallery has an important exhibition running. Rikard Larma, a Sarajevo photographer employed by Associated Press, has an exhibition of photos from the most shelled place in the world — Sarajevo.

The book Bosnia and Herzegovina - A Tradition Betrayed by Robert Donia and Richard Fine was promoted here some days ago. Professor Donia came from London for

Young people in Sarajevo used to use a slang greeting 'Vozdra, raja' (from Zdravo, raja which means 'hello folks'). Now they say Lamse, raja (Selam, raja).

In Tuzla, people combine 'Islamic' and English words to say 'Selam morning' or 'Selam afternoon' and show their disagreement with increasing Islamicisation, encouraged by the Dayton carve up.

Some people's living standards have improved so they can run a car. Traffic is very busy although the streets are full of holes. A road maintenance company has started to repair them.

Not far from Tuzla's customs compound we discovered a group of 170 people from Srebrenica — women and old men only. They are living in abandoned houses without proper living conditions. They had only one

They receive two cans of meat a month and three-quarters of a loaf of bread a day. Some days before they had

eceived a whole loaf.

A woman had given birth with no medical assistance.

Presumably the government SDA party will hail this as a great success story: people moved from the underdeveloped village of Srebrenica to the town of Tuzla as the party has helped so many more people to become part of Europe — as

Young people employed by IFOR are paying income tax at the rate of 47 per cent deducted straight from their pay packets.

An employment office for IFOR has been set up - after all bureaucrats must be able to live!

I wonder if their salary is the measly 900DMs (£346) paid to the others?

That's the price of peace! Those who worked during the war with UNPROFOR, UNHCR, WHO and other humanitarian organisations didn't pay any income tax. Of course, others didn't get any income at all!

s constitution reater Serbia

corridor to their eastern enclave of Gorazde, but unlike in the original plan this would not include the key town of Trnovo to the south of Sarajevo. Indeed, a new road would have to be built to make the corridor to Gorazde workable.

The biggest Bosnian territorial loss was the Posavina region, the most strategically crucial territory in all Bosnia, that Serbia was to have given up under all previous Western posacoplane.

Posavina controls the 'corridor' between Serbian-occupied territory in western and eastern Bosnia, and had a pre-war Croat relative majority, making the Croat members of the Bosnian delegation in particular reluctant to accept its loss.

But the Americans met Bosnian protests over Posavina with the argument that Tudjman and Milosevic had already agreed that the territory should go to Serbia, and that there was no more to be said for the matter.

From the wreck of Posavina the Croats were able to salvage only the town of Odzak, while the fate of Brcko, the most important town, is to be decided by 'arbitration' a year after the signing of the agreement.

The Bosnians and their Croat partners did make a gain in relation to the original plan, namely, the economically worthless, strategically marginal and largely Serb-inhabited region of south-west Bosnia that they had captured in their autumn offensive.

Conceded

The only significant Bosnian territorial gain was territory in and around Sarajevo, which Milosevic, who spent much of his time at Dayton the worse for wear, whimsically conceded to Izetbegovic on the grounds that the Bosnian president 'deserved' it for having lived in the capital throughout three years of siege.

But Milosevic was sober enough to keep Mt Trebevic to the south of Sarajevo, from which Serbia can rain shells on the Bosnian capital in any future conflict.

This territorial settlement, extremely unfavourable to the Bosnians, was combined with a military settlement that is still more unfavourable.

Dayton stipulated a balance of armed forces between Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia of 2:2:5 in favour of the latter.

Of Bosnia's portion, one third is to go to the Chetniks' 'Republika Srpska'. The remaining two thirds are to be divided between the Bosnian government and the army of their partners in the 'Muslim-Croat Federation', the Zagreb-backed 'Croatian Defence Council' (HVO).

Dayton therefore enforces a Serbian military preponderance of 63 per cent to 37 per cent over the Bosnians and Croatians combined.

Given the hostility of Croatia and its HVO proxies to their nominal Bosnian ally, the latter's military strength in proportion to its two predatory neighbours is of the ratio of 7.4 per cent compared to 29.6 (HVO) and 63 per cent (Chetnik).

In the event of a future Serbian-Croatian military campaign to partition what is left of Bosnia, the latter would be at a military disadvantage of 7.4 to 92.6 per cent in relation to its enemies.

This is justified in the text of the Dayton agreement on the grounds that the military balance must reflect respective population sizes, though Serbia and 'Republika Srpska' do not enjoy a 17:10 advantage in population over the Croatians and Bosnians, even if one counts as Serbian citizens the nearly two million Kosova Albanians, who are unlikely to derive much benefit from the Serbian army in question.

Population sizes are not, of course, used to determine the military balance in other parts of the world: in the Middle East, for example, the Americans maintain an oversized Israeli army precisely on the basis of little Israel's 'legitimate security needs' in relation to 100 million Arabs.

The Dayton settlement destroys multi-ethnic Bosnia not only in practice, but also in principle. The text of the agreement announces that the 'Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina' is henceforth to be known as 'Bosnia-Herzegovina', replacing a name connoting political unity with what is essentially a geographic expression.

The Bosnian-government and Croatian-controlled areas are to comprise a 'Muslim-Croat Federation', reduced in Dayton terminology to an 'entity' equivalent to the Chetniks' 'Republika Srpska', which receives official recognition.

The two 'entities' are to share a loose central government, but will maintain separate armies and powers of taxation and a veto of central-government legislation.

They also have the right to establish 'special parallel relationships with neighbouring states consistent with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina', in other words effectively to become adjuncts to Serbia and Croatia, respectively.

Dubious

While refugees have the extremely dubious right to return to their homes on the territory of either 'entity', members of the presidency and upper house of the central state are to be ethnically determined.

This means that Muslims and Croats living in 'Republika Srpska' cannot be represented in these bodies except by Serbs; likewise, Serbs living in the territory of the Muslim-Croat Federation can only be represented in these bodies by Croats and Muslims.

Dayton therefore legally enshrines elements of apartheid into the constitution of Bosnia-Herzegov-

The entire settlement will be enforced by the presence of NATO troops, who will keep the Bosnian Army within the boundaries of its 'entity' but who will have no power to enforce fair elections in 'Republika Srpska', or guarantee the safety of refugees attempting to return to their homes on the wrong side of the ethnic divide.

But let us look on the bright side: Clinton has achieved a foreign policy triumph that he can parade before the American people in the upcoming elections; the cause of a damaging division in NATO ranks has been removed; and Western politicians need no longer be embarrassed by the pictures of suffering Bosnians on our television screens.

Clinton was even generous enough to allow the formal signing of the peace treaty to take place in Paris, to satisfy the west European craving for some share in the glory. Never let it be said that a small Balkan country was sacrificed for nothing.



Milosevic 'whimsically' conceded Sarajevo saying Izetbegovic 'deserved' it for staying there

City Lights

Poverty and unemployment

THERE are some 50 million people now living at or below the poverty line in the European Union. This is a jump of almost 10 millions over the last 15 years.

These are among the findings of a recent series of studies, *Old and New Poverty: The Challenge for Reform*, published by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

Poverty is defined by the authors as households with a disposable income of less than 50 per cent of the average disposable income of the country concerned.

According to this definition, some 20 per cent of all non-elderly households in the United States, among the richest countries in the world, fell below the poverty line by the mid-1980s and the situation has undoubtedly got worse.

One of the contributors to the book, Klaus Funken, distinguishes between the past kind of poverty in which people fell temporarily when out of work or sick, and the now almost permanent type of poverty which has resulted from mass unemployment and the cutback of welfare provisions in western Europe and north America.

It is this sort of poverty that is being passed on from one generation to another, the children of unemployed parents being far more vulnerable to unemployment and poverty themselves.

Whereas previously poverty used to hit elderly people it is now the young who are facing the brunt of the crisis. Thus in Britain between 1974 and 1991, the number of children under 16 dependent on state benefits rose fourfold.

Nor does 'economic growth' — the panacea to poverty trotted out by the Labour leaders — appear to alleviate the problem.

Thus the book shows that in the case of Germany, while economic growth has amounted to some 70 per cent in real terms over the last 20 years the total number of poor has more than doubled.

With the economy now almost stagnant and the German government looking for ways to slash social welfare benefits, it is not hard to see that those suffering poverty will now grow dramatically.

The fact is that with or without 'economic growth' the number of jobs is falling rapidly throughout Europe. Thus in the case of Britain, since 1991-92 — when we have supposedly enjoyed an 'economic recovery' — the number of jobs has dropped by at least 800,000.

The figures — which come from the Labour Force Survey, a quarterly survey of a large sample of individuals in Britain — indicate that if the rise in part-time jobs is taken into account the fall in full-time equivalent jobs is around the 1.1 million mark.

Equally significant is the fact that the decline in employment has been greatest among the 18-24 age group, down by about 880,000.

It is these sort of figures that help explain why the so-called 'Welfare State' is in terminal crisis. Introduced by the Labour government under intense pressure after 1945, it was designed to provide a 'safety net' for the short-term unemployed as well as for the sick and elderly.

The Welfare State was, and is, quite incapable of dealing with the sort of structural crisis in which capitalism, in Britain as well as Europe and north America, is now locked.

Part-time earnings

IN A a recent article the Financial Times suggested that one of the reasons that the much trumpeted 'economic recovery' in Britain was having so little effect on consumption levels was that any increase in jobs taking place involved the expansion of part-time jobs which were hardly above the level of state benefits.

The sort of earnings that the FT was referring to can be judged by the April 1995 New Earnings Survey (NES) which reveals that median earnings of female manual workers were £3.68 an hour. For non-manual female workers the median rate was £4.94 an hour.

(The median rate — that is, the midpoint of the earnings distribution where the number of those above is equal to the number below — is a more significant measure than the simple average earnings figure which is distorted upwards by a relatively small number of high earners.)

Even these figures under-estimate the lousy wages on which increasing numbers, mainly women, are forced to try and survive. For the *NES* excludes those whose earnings are below the income tax threshold of £68.00 per week.

The *NES* estimates that about a fifth of all part-time workers, mostly women, are not included in their survey.

Germany's stricken giant

ACCORDING to its chairman, Daimler-Benz, Germany's industrial flagship group, is facing 'gigantic pressures' following losses of over £2billion on its overall operations.

Its electronics giant, AEG, and the Dutch-based aircraft manufacturer Fokker, are responsible for a considerable slice of these losses.

AEG is to be broken up and the company has been in negotiations with the Dutch government about the finance for a rescue package for Fokker.

So far the Dutch government — itself the owner of an 11 per cent stake in the company — has failed to come across with any cash. Given a growing budgetary crisis it is highly unlikely that it will provide funds on the scale needed to keep Fokker in business.

Unless the government changes its mind Daimler has threatened to pull the plug on Fokker and allow it to collapse, with dire consequences for the company's near-8,000 workers.

Daimler, after Royal Dutch Shell Europe's second largest company, acquired Fokker in 1993. It bought the company — which specialises in regional aircraft — as part of the purchase of overseas assets designed to avoid the consequences of a stagnant domestic market and rising wage costs at home.

It was in the 1980s that Daimler embarked on a whirlwind, £10 billion plus, expansion aimed at diversifying what until then had been a company almost entirely confined to the making of cars.

The expansion took it into aerospace, industrial electronics, consumer goods and financial services. The dream was to create a giant firm able to compete with the largest outfits in the United States and Japan.

Now the dream is turning into a

Whodunnit?

SIR MARTIN JACOMB, chairman of the Prudential, once infamously declared that 'insider trading' — taking advantage of inside knowledge to make money on the stock exchange — was a 'victimless crime'.

Now, following the acquittal of the Maxwell brothers, we seem to be faced with something equally paradoxical: a crime with no perpetrators.

Threadneedle

Tate's morals (and heroes) and ours

LAST week my colleague Charlie Pottins, with his customary acid wit, flaved Dr Nicholas Tate, the education 'expert' who wants schoolchildren to be taught 'traditional moral values'.

Judging by reminiscences of Dr Tate contributed to various newspapers by former colleagues and pupils of his, the chief executive of the School Curriculum Authority Assessment always was an extreme authoritarian with a rigid cast of mind, and never was able to keep order in his classroom.

One Tate-watcher suggested that this rotten teacher might have made a passable librarian. That strikes me as grossly unfair to librarians, a body of professionals whom I find on the whole to be models of flexibility and open-mindedness.

IN ANY case, moral values can't be taught by rote, in the abstract. and any attempt to do so is doomed to failure. Children learn right from wrong, not in a classroom, but as part of the lengthy, complex process of socialisation and enculturation.

And if 'the very concept of value' has been weakened, as Tate claims, that weakening isn't the fault of teachers; it reflects the decay of a society based on exploitation and greed.

Striking proof of this came last week when, after sitting on it for months - for as long as it decently could — the government at last published Young People

This devastating Home Office study, issued with as little publicity as possible, shows how absurd is the Tory claim that there is no link between youth unemployment and crime.

The Home Office's own researchers say that for the first time there is a generation of young men who are not by their late teens 'growing out of' crime. On the contrary, more and more young men in their twenties are getting involved in theft and fraud.

By the age of 25 more than three young men in every 10 (31 per cent) are involved in some form of crime - excluding the use of illegal drugs and motoring offences. In the 22-to-25 age group, more than one in four young men (27 per cent) are involved in theft of property.

The study, based on 2,500 interviews with young people aged 14 to 25, is the first official study of youth crime levels not based on police figures, which don't take account of undetected

It says the lack of any prospect of a job is making it more diffitransition to 'responsible adulthood'. And it concludes that a new generation of 'perpetual adolescents' is emerging, embedded in a criminal life-style. And it adds:

[W]ith the declining number of young people in employment, the capacity for the world of work to provide a rite of passage for young males has diminished.'

An editorial in the Guardian (19 January) finds that this report 'makes complete fools of the succession of ministers who have denied a link between crime and unemployment. Michael Howard may wish to avert his eyes from the hundreds of thousands of young men without work but his own researchers show how short-sighted this approach has become.'

Now, it needs no great imaginative leap to understand the plight of the jobless young. They're not merely unemployed: they have precious little hope of ever finding work.

Notoriously denied benefit before reaching the age of 18, an

COLUMN

entire generation are thrust into adult life desperately poor, hopeless, and alienated.

And every day of their junk-fed lives they are tantalised by a different kind of junk: remorseless television advertising for luxury goods — fast cars, smart designer clothes, hi-fi equipment, expensive male cosmetics often as not crudely and cynically portrayed as the indispensable key to sexual success

On top of which these young men see before them every day the grab-it-and-run examples set by their betters: the media tycoon, bankrolled by MI6, who coolly steals his employees' pension fund; the corpulent skiloving duchess who spends £3 million she hasn't got; the bosses of privatised utilities who brazenly enrich themselves.

It hardly needs underlining that to become 'embedded in a criminal life-style' is a long way from being political protest as revolutionary socialists understand the term; but when millions of young men - a third of a generation — are so 'embedded', this is already a fact of considerable political importance, which serious socialists ignore at their peril.

Blair's Newlabour and its 'stakeholding economy' have nothing to offer these young men, apart from the selfsame stinking prisons the Tories consign them to, those academies whose young inmates learn about slopping-out and about much else besides.

How can the moral values held by royal parasites, privatisation profiteers, and arms dealers be held also by the young unemployed? And what an insult it is to our deprived children to teach them that, in a class-divided society, there can possibly be a 'universal' morality standing above

Only a fool or a scoundrel would put a moral equals sign between theft from the rich by the poor and theft from the poor

BUT Dr Tate has another complaint. 'British heroes', he says, are being 'sidelined' in school history books. He wants our children to be taught 'patriotic' history. I gather he wants them to learn about three historical figures in particular: Lord Nelson, Florence Nightingale, and Winston Churchill.

This call for 'patriotic' history is nothing new. It was heard back in the early 1980s from Hugh Thomas and other historians associated with the right-wing Centre for Policy Studies.

They wanted children to learn a sanitised and selective version of British history, a version that would be expedient to the Tory

Such an exercise would not involve the writing of anything new. All that is needed is to rake out and republish the history textbooks used in British schools 100 years ago, with their glorification of imperial conquest, their racist belittling of conquered peoples, their pretence that all British deeds of arms were valorous, all Britain's enemies brutal and perfidious.

Ninety years ago the economist J.A. Hobson wrote scathingly of what he termed 'drum and trumpet history'. In his eyes it was a high offence to teach children such falsehoods.

Dr Tate's choice of British 'heroes' brings interesting problems for the conscientious

How can Nelson's name and fame be separated from those of his mistress, the profligate Lady Emma Hamilton? Wasn't Nightingale in fact more than a bit of a martinet? And wasn't it Churchill who as home secretary was responsible in 1910 for the troops' use of bayonets against Welsh miners at Tonypandy?

PERSONAL 'Third Battle' of new English civil war

BY DANIEL ROBERTSON

THE 'Third Battle' of Newbury has begun! Protesters have moved onto the site of the threatened A34 Newbury Bypass for what is becoming an epic confrontation between the 'Great Car Culture' and those forces that want to protect Britain's severely damaged wildlife and countryside from further destruction.

This road passes through a Site of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a Nature Reserve and several Sites of Special Scientific

These include Snelsmore Common (rare southern heathland), the River Kennet (threatening rare bird species), Rack Marsh Nature Reserve, and Redding Copse (containing animal species supposedly protected by the European Habitats Directive).

These nominally protected status areas frequently seem to be targeted by the Tories for road building as they often have sparse populations that cannot fight back effectively.

Historical sites that will be destroyed or degraded include the sites of the First and Second Battles of Newbury in the English Civil War - hence the 'Third Battle' slogan.

Construction of the bypass was suspended in late 1994 in response to public concern and to allow other options to be exam-

However the government later changed its mind, it short circuited opportunities for public consultation, scrapped a proper consideration of environmental impact and decided to push ahead rapidly with the planned road.

The arrogance with which this was done has caused particular fury. The campaign director of Friends of the Earth said: 'We feel badly let down. Local people have been preparing to start dialogue . but will now have their efforts thrown back in their face by a government committed to road building as a matter of dogma.'

This anger has guaranteed a strong response by the green movement.

The Highways Agency — the arm of government responsible for reviewing the planned road — has been slated by independent transport consultants for its apparent incompetence.

The Metropolitan Transport Research Agency said: 'The Highways Agency has simply reviewed the choice of route, not whether a road is needed or not. It dismissed other options in six lines, and has not even fulfilled its own terms of reference, which included alternatives.'

The agency has been criticised for failing to carry out a full Environmental Impact Assessment, ignoring the views of the National Rivers Authority on likely damage to the Rivers Lambourn and Kennet, and ignoring the views of English Heritage on feared effects on Donnington Castle and the Battle of Newbury

Further protests have come from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Greenpeace, the World Wide Fund for Nature, the Council for British Archaeology and the Wild Life Trust. These organisations number millions among their members,

NEWBURY Proposed bypass * = Sites of Special Scientific Interest 1* = Snelsmore Common 2* = River Kennet 3* = River Lambourn × = Historic Battlefield Map of the front line at the 'Third Battle' of Newbury

many of whom are 'natural

An analysis of the road's impact by Friends of the Earth has further demonstrated that the bypass will not resolve Newbury's congestion problems. It will actually attract more traffic to the area.

Studies have shown that the bypass will probably only take 5 per cent of the traffic from the congested town centre - the proportion that is long distance

Applying the Department of Transport's own models reveals that the traffic on the existing ring road will be back to present levels within five to seven years of the new road opening.

Escalated

On top of all this the projected cost of the scheme has escalated, the police are complaining about the cost of their operation and demanding government financing, and recent rumours have suggested that the scale of the protests and mounting costs have caused some of the contractors to get cold feet about their involve-

So why is the government persisting in this expensive and controversial folly at a time when most of their other road building plans have been scrapped?

Originally the bypass was planned to complete one section of a projected strategic trunk road between the Midlands and the south England ports. This has not been subject to public debate or scrutiny.

It was admitted by the Department of Transport back in the 1980s, but this motive is now hidden behind propaganda claims that it is being constructed for the benefit of Newbury. This is a deeply dishonest attempt to defuse local opposition to the destruction of so many valued local sites.

Another factor appears to be

the appeasement of the local Tory MP whose support for Major during last summer's Tory power struggle was bought in exchange for allowing the bypass to pro-

Local campaigners also point out that the allocation of a safe local seat to Transport Minister Sir George Young was made public within hours of the bypass being confirmed!

A growing backlash is now developing among local people who increasingly feel that they have been fooled. This was demonstrated when large numbers of local people joined protesters to replant trees on one of the first sites to be cleared.

The demonstrators have shown great imagination and courage in their plans to stop the road. Dwellings have been constructed in the tree tops connected by ropes. Underground tunnels have been dug to hamper the work. Workers Press visited the site and spoke to several peo-

'J' complained about media misrepresentation and violence by security guards: 'The media say we are criminals when all we are doing is trying to save the

'It's us who are being mistreated. I was hit over the head and fell unconscious to the ground. They kicked me in the ribs and I could hardly breathe.

'It took them an hour to get an ambulance to me from a place that was only five minutes away.

'When I went to the police station and said I wanted to press charges against them for assault they just didn't want to know.

"They said can we have proof. I took pictures and video recordings to them and I said this is what happened but they still didn't want to know - they're just all for the security side.'

'A lot of the security guards don't want to do the job, but they've been told by the bosses, especially if they have been on the dole, you take the money or go away. We talk to the security guards.

'On the first day they came down a lot of them felt it wasn't worth it. They thought they were fighting for a bad cause while being poorly paid.

'Most of the security guards think we are going to fight with them. We try to get over to the press and TV that we don't fight. They drag us away and we try to stop the chain saws and diggers. We lock ourselves underneath the wagons to try and stop them moving to other sites to destroy

'But there's lying publicity in the papers at the moment that says that we drink wine and have massive parties. They say the local people are against us, but a lot of the food we have we don't buy - the local people bring it in

Food

'If you go up to the visitors' site it is full of the food people bring in. We have people coming down to us at weekends asking us what we want.'

'The contractors break their own security rules and regulations on using chainsaws. They don't wear gloves and they allow people to get too close. We've got more and more protesters coming down from all over the place.

We could build camps all along the way of the route, maybe have a festival. They can make all the plans they want but at the end of the day we can make plans

Another demonstrator 'W' said: 'The cost was originally £65 million, but now its gone up to £101 million — and that's without the policing costs. Its supposed to take two years to build, but with what we're doing it's going to take six years!

This bypass is not going to solve Newbury's problems. What we really need is for the government to put money into some-thing positive like public transport, upgrading the roads in Newbury and making people aware of the need to share cars.'

The courage of these young people should be saluted. They are taking great personal risks as well as suffering media witchhunting to fight a system that puts profiteering and political fixing ahead of the real needs of people and the environment.

If you want to help phone Jill Eisele on 01635 45544 or Susan Millington on 01488 682817. Coaches go to the site from London — phone 0171-281 4621.

For those so inclined (and if you have access, Workers Press doesn't!) you can follow the action on the Internet using the following pages. Newbury Friends of the Earth at http://www.foe.co.uk:80/action/newbury/, this contains background information. The '3rd Battle of Newbury Home Page' is at http://www.gn.apc.org/newbury/, this is a detailed day-to-day account. Reclaim the Streets have a Newbury page at http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/NInfo.html, which has information on on-site tactics.

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Wapping ten years on

The Fleet Street Support Unit was a central component of the fight to defend sacked workers from Murdoch's News International ten years ago. LARRY HYETT and ALAN CLARK were both members of the unit and are members of the GPMU print union. They write on that dispute in a personal capacity



Every week there were marches from Tower Hill to 'Fortress Wapping'

IN JANUARY 1986, over 6,000 printworkers, compositors, clerical staff and other ancillary staff were locked out by Rupert Murdoch when he moved his entire newspaper operation out of Fleet Street and Gray's Inn Road to a brand new purpose-built plant on the site of the old docks at Wapping in east London.

This was after months of talks between management and unions finally broke down.

Management were seeking to impose a legally-binding agreement, flexible working, a nostrike clause and abandonment of the closed shop.

One thing became clear. Murdoch had been planning this move for some time.

Talks with the unions had been to stall them while he got the building ready. Little did the workforce know or realise, Murdoch had other plans for them.

He had sought planning permission to build his new plant because this gave him the option of a green-field site. Wapping, he said, was for printing a new newspaper called the London

Ploy

But this was a ploy to break the power of the unions and get rid of them once and for all.

His newspapers were printed in old buildings where the workforce often worked in hot dirty conditions.

The working environment was appalling and the hours were

unsociable. In many cases the money was not as good as it was made out to be.

Murdoch decided to move his newspapers to Wapping after he saw what Eddie Shah had achieved in 1983 when he took on the unions, especially the National Graphical Association, and printed Today without them.

Secret planning was involved in setting up such an operation. Just as with Eddie Shah earlier, there was help from the EETPU electricians' union and its leader Eric Hammond. Murdoch struck a one-union deal. Without the electricians' union it's doubtful if Murdoch or Shah could have done it.

The Wapping dispute, as it became known, lasted 13 months. Every bit of anti-union legislation that the Tory government had put in place was used. Murdoch boasted that during that time he never lost a single copy of his papers. That is possibly true.

But Murdoch had planned this moment for months, if not years. The union rank-and-file only had hours to plan anything before they were thrown on the street on 24 January.

Murdoch had erected a ring of barbed-wire fencing around his building with security guards to keep the sacked printers out and no doubt to keep the scabs in. He also had the knowledge that the state's police would also make sure that his papers got out, and they did.

The sacked printworkers and their supporters had Brenda Dean (SOGAT) and Tony Dubbins (NGA), who thought up the idea of the 'Boycott Campaign' and did everything possible to stop the dispute spreading throughout the rest of Fleet

The so-called 'Boycott Campaign' was supposed to ask people to stop reading any of Murdoch's papers and therefore bring him to his knees.

Thousands

Though many thousands of people agreed with the call it was not enough to stop Murdoch and many sacked printworkers knew

The 'Boycott Campaign' was initially supported by the joint FoC/MoC committee (shop steward committee). But this committee later realised that Fleet Street had to be brought out if they were going to win.

They often ran foul of the union leadership, when they questioned who should be running the dispute - the joint committee or the national executives.

The Fleet Street Support Unit, a group of active print workers, fought throughout the dispute for the rest of Fleet Street to be brought out and for a national print strike alongside mass picketting.

They organised meetings, leaflets and a newsletter called the Printworker for those in dispute. They got great support for their demands, but were unable to convince the majority of printers that the only way to beat Murdoch was to break from the leadership and demand that the 'Boycott Campaign' be scrapped.

Support for the dispute came from far and wide. Miners came down on the picket line and joined the marches on many occasions. After all, it was only one year on from their own 1984-85

Support also came from the Lesbian and Gay movement, though this was viewed with suspicion at first by the rather con-

servative printers. But they soon welcomed this support on every demonstration. Wapping tenants and residents added their powerful support. They sometimes had to live under siege conditions because of police road blocks.

Without doubt the Wapping residents' support group showed that solidarity between workers in dispute and local people could come together into one fight.

not forget Women Against Murdoch formed by those in dispute and wives and girlfriends of male

Their support during the dispute, as women have shown in many other disputes that have taken place in Britain in recent years, was invaluable. It was great to see them marching armin-arm, sometimes right at the front of the march.

But one group printers couldn't count on was the TUC. In fact these leaders hardly appeared. They hadn't done much for the miners, and they certainly weren't going to challenge the Tory anti-union laws. They had been flat on their backs since Thatcher had come to office and still are.

One feature of the dispute was the weekly marches: every Wednesday and Saturday night from Tower Hill to the gates of Murdoch's building.

Joined

Printworkers were joined by thousands of workers and other Fleet Street print union chapels. They were a crescendo of noise. whistling and singing, particularly as the march got nearer and nearer 'Fortress Wapping', as it became known.

A number of times the protests turned into clashes between police and marchers when frustration arose because the demonstration was stopped. The biggest distrubance came on the anniversary of the dispute, when the clashes were so violent that it 'shocked a nation', as a report into that night put it.

A police inquiry was called for and legal observers on the march issued a press statement in which they said police tactics were: 'provocative, unlawful and unnecessarily violent'.

During the 13-month dispute. Dean and Dubbins, the union leaders, put to the sacked printers, on three separate occasions, a package for ending the dispute that had been worked out in secret talks with Murdoch. But three times it was turned down.

Printers didn't want a settlement where Murdoch would win. They wanted their jobs back inside Wapping. They wanted to print newspapers again.

In the end Dean and Dubbins caved in and called off the dispute. They were not prepared to challenge the anti-union laws which still stand today.

The finances of the union were apparently put before the members. An agreement was reached with Murdoch and everyone had to abide by it. After 13 months of sometimes bitter dispute, printworkers and their supporters had stood outside Murdoch's plant for nothing.

Pain

All the pain, misery, suffering and deaths meant nothing. There were no jobs on offer. It was a sell out. The printers were angry and annoyed with their leadership. What had they done!

After the defeat other proprietors rushed to build new plants and move from Fleet Street. Although they didn't sack all their workers like Murdoch, they did demand legally binding agreements, no closed shop, flexible working, etc. There were drastic cutbacks and thousands of jobs lost.

But the lessons of one of the most memorable disputes in the newpaper industry's history are that the unions were not defeated, they were pushed back - a long way in some cases. But chapels still survive and are working to win back lost ground.

Employers are still on the attack, cutting jobs, lowering wages and bringing in casual labour. They have the Tory government's complete backing on anything they want to do.

Workers must also think seriously about whether or not they can place any faith or trust in a Labour government changing things for them. Workers have

Inmate denies reponsibility for Lübeck deaths

Residents criticise unsafe conditions and isolation

theft.

BY BOB ARCHER

GERMAN police have arrested a 21-year-old Lebanese inmate at the Lübeck hostel where nine asylum seekers lost their lives in

public prosecutor reported that the man detained had detailed knowledge of the outbreak of the fire and made suspicious comments on his involvement to one of the firefighters who fought the blaze. The man has denied the accusations.

A six-year-old girl, the daughter of one of the victims, also died later in hospital.

Thirty-five people were still in hospital three days after the fire, six of them on the danger

There were 60 people in the three-storey building when the fire broke out. Three people are still unaccounted for. There were

47 residents officially registered. Survivors of the fire and relatives of the victims have been joined by local supporters in a solidarity committee. They have put a number of demands on the authorities, including help in shipping bodies home.

Suspects

Four young suspects from the former east Germany arrested near the blaze were released.

The local public prosecutor said they were not connected with the fire.

Three of the young men had been stopped by police before the

The police have also denied

early reports that the fire had broken out simultaneously in several parts of the house.

the hostel six months ago.

fire broke out and some distance

away in connection with a car

When the same police later

saw them near the fire, they

became suspicious. They were

arrested at home in Mecklenburg

the next morning together with a

questioning, the police were unable to connect them with the

that the police have swept under

the carpet a fire-bomb attack on

However, despite hours of

There have been complaints

Apparently the fire broke out on the first floor. Investigators did not expect to have quick results in the search for chemical traces or evidence of a faulty appliance or electrical fault.

Residents in the hostel emphasised that even if the fire was not the result of a racist attack, the conditions there were unsafe and deliberately isolate the residents instead of integrating them into the local population.

There are about 10,000 asylum seekers in the State of Schleswig-

Between 2,000 and 2,500 live in the same kind of communal accommodation as the home in Hafenstrasse

How asylum seekers are accommodated is, as in Britain, a matter for the local authority in the area to which they are assigned.

nocked reactions to hostel fire

POLITICAL, trade union and religious leaders in Germany reacted to the terrible fire in Lübeck with loud platitudes about 'erecting bulwarks against xenophobia'.

Protestant Bishop Kohlwage said on the radio that 'people should not have to fear for their lives in our country'.

Local people in Lübeck came with tributes and held vigils in the freezing cold to commemorate the victims of the fire.

Schoolchildren in the town held a march against racism.

Undoubtedly many Germans were profoundly shocked by the apparent return to right-wing terror attacks on immigrants.

Politicians and the media have spent a lot of time recently patting each other on the back about the successful 'eradication' of such attacks.

Nevertheless, in the present climate of cuts in public spending

politicians are clearly to blame for spreading anti-immigrant feeling.

Henning Voscherau is Socialdemocratic national spokesperson on taxation and incidentally mayor of Hamburg.

Two weeks ago he broke off in the middle of a full-page newspaper interview on the need to cut taxation and government spending in order to blame asylum seekers for the country's economic difficulties.

Condemning the huge cost to the government of massive unemployment, he went on: 'A special role is also played however by the streams of refugees and the imported poverty they entail. Hamburg is a good example. Every second poor person there is an immigrant.'

The Social-democratic Party (SPD) has no realistic socialist

programme for the crisis. This sort of incitement against

an echo among middle-class and working-class people suffering the effects of the economic crisis.

Nevertheless, the thought that the Lübeck fire was the result of a racist attack did unleash a wave

The Social-democratic mayor of Lübeck called for direct action against racists and promised that steps would be taken to integrate asylum seekers into normal family housing and end their isolation in hostels.

Denied

However, the Social-demo-cratic premier of the state of Schleswig-Holstein, Ms Simonis, denied that the hostel had been overcrowded and urged people not to be carried away by a sense of excessive solidarity to help asylum seekers to settle illegally.

(Ms Simonis's predecessor as Social-democratic state premier, in a slush-fund scandal known as the 'cupboard affair'.)

Angry comment in the British press about the fire has failed to emphasise two points. One is that the British laws on right of asylum, and the treatment of asylum seekers here, are even less fair than they are in Germany. They stand to become much worse under the current Asylum Bill.

Secondly, British accommodation for asylum seekers can be just as bad, if not worse, than what is offered in Germany.

Recent television reports here have highlighted profound safety concerns about a hostel in Maida Vale, Westminster, where asylum-seekers are placed by the council and about the conditions faced by asylum seekers who are lodged in boarding houses on the Kent coast.

How long will it be before a tragedy in Britain raises all the questions and doubts being aired Page 8

Saturday 27 January 1996

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Mass graves near Brcko and Srebrenica

MORE mass graves have been found in Bosnia, grisly evidence of the genocide carried out by Serb nationalist forces. Graves located near

genocide carried out by Serb nationalist forces. Graves located near Brcko, in north-east Bosnia, may hold the remains of some 3,000 people murdered in 'ethnic cleansing'

More graves, thought to be those of massacred Bosnian prisoners of war, have been found near Srebrenica, the Bosnian 'safe area' in eastern Bosnia overrun and 'ethnically cleansed' last summer, after the UN decided to give it up to the Serbs.

operations in June 1992.

There may be more than a dozen graves near Brcko, where people were killed on the streets and at detention centres like that at Luka dock, near the Serb Orthodox church.

Witnesses say bodies were dumped in the river Sava at first, and later some were cremated. They also allege that four mass graves may have been dug up, and the bodies destroyed in a nearby animal feed plant.

Brcko is in the contested Posavina corridor where eastwest Serb supply routes cut the northern route to Tuzla. Under

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

the Dayton agreemnt it remains in Serb nationalist hands, with US 'peacekeepers'.

Reporter Scott Peterson (Daily Telegraph, 22 January) says the mass grave he has been to is a stone's throw away from the main Brcko-Bijelina highway along which NATO military convoys are passing.

The UN war crimes tribunal requested assistance from the Implementation Force (IFOR) last week, but IFOR's US commander-in-chief Admiral Leighton Smith said: 'NATO is not, I repeat NATO is not, going to provide specific security, or in other words guarantee security for teams investigating these grave sites.'

He said his troops would report, but not interfere with, any suspicious activity around the graves.

Reporters who have been to

the graves at Glogova, north-west of Srebrenica, say they could easily hold hundreds of bodies of Bosnians murdered by the Serbs. Jonathan S. Landay says one is a 50 by 20 yard rectangle, the other roughly circular with a 30 yard diameter.

'Several human leg bones were embedded in the rectangular swath, nearby sat the crown of a human skull. A human jawbone with teeth, one of which was missing a filling, was found at the far end.

'Several more human bones were embedded in the circular swath, where the odour of human flesh could be smelled. Also frozen into the middle of the circular patch was a shirt sleeve or trouser leg containing a bone. Several boots stuck out of the earth of both patches, and a strip of gauze bandage lay on the rectangular swath' (Christian Science Monitor, 19 January).

Glogova, the site of a Muslim hamlet destroyed by the Chetniks in May 1992, is three miles west of Bratunac, a Serb-held town. Reporters reached the area by back roads, evading Serb checkpoints. Four other grave sites were discovered near Srebrenica in August and October.

Not far from the Glogova graves is a former warehouse, now used for farm animals. Bullet-scarred walls testify to what went on there after the fall of Srebrenica.

Some 40,000 residents were expelled from the town when the UN withdrew its 'protection'. About 10,000 men and boys set out across country, marching at night, to reach Bosnian government-held territory. Some were lured into an ambush by Serb Chetniks disguised in UN uniform.

Captured

Hakija Husejnovic was one of those captured when their column was ambushed by the Serb forces. General Mladic, the Chetnik commander, war criminal, and member of the 'Yugoslav' army general staff, told them: 'We evacuated your families. You are all going to be evacuated yourselves in one or two days.' They were marched to the warehouse at Kravica.

'As soon as we got to the warehouse we sat down, and they started to shoot,' says Husejnovic. The shooting lasted two or three hours. As night fell, and the shooting abated, he managed to pull two bodies on top of himself. He hid like this in pool of blood for 24 hours.

'The following morning the Chetniks came back to finish off any survivors.

'At 10 am a bulldozer rammed through the wall, and began loading corpses on to trucks which drove off towards Glogova. The operation lasted until dark, when Husejnovic escaped.'

'Virtually everyone who was in the warehouse was killed. We think this may well be the place where they are buried,' said US assistant secretary of state for human rights John Shattuck, who led a team to Glogova last Sunday (Guardian, 22 January).

They were escorted through Serb checkpoints not by IFOR troops but by Serbian police, part of the Milosevic regime's attempt to distance itself from its Bosnian Serb allies.

The involvement of forces from Serbia itself in the onslaught on Srebrenica and Zepa, which the British media tended to play down, has been highlighted again by the revelation that some people from this part of Bosnia were detained in

camps in Serbia. And war crimes prosecutor Richard Goldstone charged on 19 January that the Serbian government was still refusing to co-operate with his investigations.

Indicted

'Nothing has changed since the Dayton agreement even though it commits the signatories to help detain indicted war criminals and ensure their speedy transfer to the international court in the Hague,' he said.

Meanwhile in Zagreb, UN officials blamed computer thieves for the disappearance of information on atrocities in Croatian Krajina from their headquarters.

Some Serbs from western Bosnia have been dumped in ruined and plundered Srebrenica. Under cover of the UN's treacherous 'protection', the British and French governments intended to hand Srebrenica, Zepa and Gorazde over to Serbian rule in a deal with Serbia's Milosevic.

Under the US-brokered Dayton agreement, only Gorazde remains in Bosnian hands, still surrounded by Serb Chetnik guns. Genocide has so far not been punished, but rewarded.

Palestinian voters deliver message

PALESTINIANS in the Israelioccupied West Bank and Gaza, using their first opportunity to vote in national elections last week, delivered a mixed message to their leaders.

With 88 per cent of votes, PLO chairman Yasser Arafat is President, still without a state. About three quarter of a million people, some 75 per cent of those registered to vote, did so, defying harassment from Israeli settlers in Hebron and intimidation by Israeli secret police in Jerusalem.

Those who voted also ignored boycott calls from Islamic militants and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

Arafat's lone brave challenger, elderly welfare campaigner Samiha Khalil, got less than 10 per cent. But despite the absence from the lists of the PFLP and Democratic Front, and (officially at least) of Hamas, and despite the invasion of some polling stations by Arafat's 'heavies', his Fatah movement did not get a walkover.

In East Jerusalem, where Fatah's candidate was a millionaire businessman, liberal critic and academic Hanan Ashrawi topped the poll as an independent, one of three women winning there.

In Gaza, Haider Abdel Shafi, who criticised Arafat's tendency to one-man rule and willingness to accept whatever the Israeli government offered, was elected. In Ramallah, Abdel Jawad Saleh, whom the Israelis exiled for 20 years, easily defeated Fatah.

Arafat's police continue doing the Zionist state's dirty work. The Palestinian 'self-rule' council will have few powers. But evidently many Palestinians want to use it as a platform to articulate their views.

US backs Yeltsin blitz, but Chechens defiant

MORE Chechen guerrilla attacks, perhaps in the heart of Moscow, have been predicted after Chechen fighters made a mockery of Russian President Yeltsin's blundering military might, and his Western imperialist backers.

Russian troops attacked the village of Pervomayskoye in Dagestan for four days with howitzers, multiple rocket-launchers and helicopter gunships to dislodge a small Chechen force and, supposedly, save its hostages.

US Defence Secretary William Perry, doubtless mindful of his own armed forces' feats in Vietnam and elsewhere, said the Russian response was 'entirely correct'.

Russian generals lyingly claimed the Chechens had begun shooting hostages. When the smoke cleared, Pervomayskoye was in ruins, cattle were killed, and some of the hostages lay dead alongside guerrillas — victims not of their captors but of their supposed 'rescuers'.

General Barsukov, the Russian commander, and Interior Minister General Anatoly Kulikov were appearing at a Moscow press conference to claim victory, and promise ruthless action in future.

Reports from Chechnya said the guerrilla leaders had all escaped, taking 20 Russian soldiers with them as hostages. 'No

one is trying to shoot them,' guerrilla Maksud Ingulbayev assured reporters. He described Russian military action as 'chaotic'.

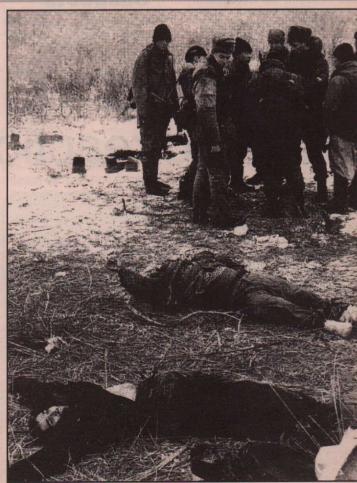
In Turkey, hijackers of a Black Sea ferry carrying Russian passengers, gave themselves up peacefully, and the boat resumed its voyage.

Although Yeltsin had criticised the Turkish government for not taking tough action against the pro-Chechen hijackers, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin thanked Turkish Prime Minister Ciller for the way the crisis had been handled.

If heavy-footed reliance on hardware didn't indicate already low morale in the Russian armed forces, the fiasco at Pervomayskoye will certainly not raise it. Nor is it likely to terrorise the Chechens into submission.

Yeltsin's war in Chechnya may enjoy sympathetic backing in Washington and London, but it has been a disaster for Russians and Chechens alike, and has now brought tragedy to Dagestan.

Without defending the use of civilian hostages, let alone the corrupt politics of Chechnya's President Dudayev, we must demand with our comrades of the Socialist Workers Union in Russia the withdrawal of Russian forces from Chechnya, so that the Chechen people can be free to resolve their own problems.



Bodies of Chechen rebels after the four-day battle

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