Workers Press

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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PRICE 30p

Political unity and a new working-class socialist party

RESUCES N

Support grows for sacked Hillingdon cleaners



OVER 1,000 trade unionists and supporters marched through Hillingdon on 17 February in support of 56 sacked Hillingdon hospital workers who are campaigning for reinstatement.

Six months after winning the contract to provide catering, portering, cleaning and sterile supplies services the contractor Pall Mall attempted to impose a massive package of cuts in pay and conditions on its 200-strong workforce.

This was to mean pay cuts of one pound an hour to some of the lowest paid workers in the NHS. Thirty-four staff who refused to accept the cuts were sacked. They were later joined by 22 staff sacked for refusing to accept new terms and conditions.

The strike has received widespread support in the local community as well as the trade union movement. Banners on the march included Hillingdon hospital UNISON, Mersey Dock Workers Shop Stewards Committee, Hillingdon trades council, Hillingdon Hospital Support

Committee and several UNISON branches.

A rally at the end of the march was addressed by Jeremy Corbyn MP, Rodney Bickerstaffe, and Cris Rodgers, leader of Hillingdon council.

A speaker for the hospital workers warmly thanked the Liverpool dockers for coming on the march. She condemned Pall Mall's slave wages, and said they would stay out 'for as long as it takes to get our jobs back'.

A concerted effort is needed to win support for the strike in the labour movement. The women have been on strike now for 18 weeks. They have been on the picket line seven days a week in freezing conditions, facing racist taunts and company intimidation. Nevertheless they have remained solid.

All donations should be sent to: Florence Portugal, UNISON branch secretary, UNISON Office, Hillingdon Hospital, Pield Heath Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 3NN.

> Photo and story: Anton Moctonian More details page 6

THE racist Asylum and Immigration Bill CAN be defeated!

Above all, this must be the message from today's national demonstration in London. The Tories' legal attack on those seeking asylum from imprisonment, torture and assassination has provoked a huge resistance as already seen in the powerful marches and lobbies of parliament.

It is essential, not only that all the different forms of protest

continue, but that they are developed in such a way as to make fighting links with all those in conflict with this hated Tory regime.

There must be no attempts to limit the forms of struggle. Connections must be made with the unemployed, the homeless, those suffering from cuts to social and public services, black and Asian youth suffering the racist violence of the police, and, above all, those vanguard workers currently on long, bitter strikes, such as the Liverpool dockers and the Hillingdon

The Liverpool dockers have already given heart to all asylum seekers by passing a vote of opposition to the Asylum and Immigration Bill at one of their mass meetings.

This is a reflection of the deep revulsion against this bill. Scores of campaigning groups have sprung up around Britain and many of these have linked up with anti-deportation campaigns defending immigrants already under threat of being returned to political persecution.

Many trade union branches and district committees have been involved in the anti-deportation activities and have also passed resolutions resolving to defend workers who refuse to implement the new legislation.

This bill is a major assault on the rights of refugees and asylum seekers. Already three out of four refugees seeking asylum in Britain are rejected and 700 asylum seekers are currently imprisoned. They

have not been charged with any crime yet they may be held indefinitely.

BY JACKIE VANCE

The new law intensifies this repression. As well as effectively denying entry to most refugees it will:

■ DENY most asylum seekers the right to any benefits once they are in Britain.

FORCE employers, through threat of heavy fines, to check for 'illegal' workers. This is an attempt to turn employers into agents of immigration control on the shop floor.

Bosses

Most bosses will not get involved with the lengthy procedure of checking the legal 'status' of black and ethnic minority applicants and will simply cease employing

■ INTRODUCE a legal category of 'immigrant,' which would include many of those long-term resident in Britain, and make their access to many basic rights dependent upon the home secretary of the

The mobilisation of the strength of the organised working class alongside the refugee and migrant groups can smash this bill and deepen the crisis of this weak and unstable Tory government. It is only Blair and the Labour leaders' refusal to wage a real fight that stops them being brought down.

tiny majority and inner-party divisions. It is a reflection of the deep-lying crisis of British capitalism which is attempting to solve its problems by taking back every gain won by the working class in struggle.

The right of workers to travel wherever they wish to sell their labour and the right of asylum are two of these

Their defence is an integral part of the fight of the working class against capitalism and the defeat of the Asylum and Immigration Bill will strengthen the working class everywhere.

Asylum seekers must not be left to fight on their own. Every action against this vile Tory legislation shows the necessity of uniting all the struggles. It is not possible to separate this campaign from all the other forms of working-class resistance.

This means political unity and the need for a new party to be formed which takes forward the struggle of the working class for socialism.

This striving for unity by the working class is reflected in the meetings currently going on throughout the country called by the supporters of Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party and supporters of the Socialist Labour Alliance connected with Militant Labour.

Workers Press has itself called a conference on 16 March to discuss the 'Crisis in the labour movement' and the need for a party which takes forward the struggle of the working class and if one can now be built (see page 7).

Workers Press invites all those fighting the Asylum and Immigration Bill, along with all those who strive for internationalism and socialism in But the government's the working-class move weakness is not due only to its to come and participate. the working-class movement,

Stop the Asylum and Immigration Bill

National demonstration

Saturday 24 February

Assemble: 11am, Embankment

Rally: Trafalgar Square Supported by the TUC

Asylum and Immigration Bill, pp2-5 * 'Fast unto Death' p6 * New party, p7 * International Liverpool deckers' conference, p8

Workers Press

From anger to action

TODAY'S demonstration against the Asylum and Immigration Bill expresses our anger at the British government's intended victimisation of people who have suffered deprivation, persecution, in many cases torture, before they set foot in this country.

We have seen the Home Office send asylum-seekers back to what can be death sentences in some countries, and order a dissident to be deported at the behest of the Saudi regime and big arms firms. After the Scott Report, government ministers say they did nothing wrong in concealing the truth from parliament and the public about military exports to Iraq.

In 1988 hundreds of Kurdish people were massacred with chemical weapons by the Iraqi government. But firms like British Aerospace, GEC and Racal flocked to the Baghdad military fair to sell their wares, with the British government's blessing, and exportcredit guarantees provided by the taxpayer.

Amnesty International reports that the Iraqi regime was torturing children were ignored. Representatives of Kurdish asylum-seekers were told HM Government had 'no proof' that Kurds had been gassed in Iraq. Only when Gulf oil interests were threatened did the Tory hypocrites shed crocodile tears for the Kurds.

FOR decades the only busy sectors of the British economy have been banking and armaments. Many people have been forced to come here because of British-supplied weapons (like the cluster-bombs sold to former Yugoslavia and used against Bosnia); or by tyrannical regimes which Britain supported and equipped.

Many are victims, like the Ogoni of Nigeria, of the debt-bondage, dictatorship and environmental destruction which banks and multinationals impose on 'Third World' countries.

Can anyone expect compassion, or honesty, from this government? Can we not see the underlying link between attacks on working people's welfare, living standards and rights in Britain, and what is done to people driven to seek a living and asylum here?

Freedom for capital means restrictions on workers.

LABOUR has never seriously challenged the Tories on the arms trade, any more than on racist immigration policies. Labour criticised the Tories 1962 Immigration Act, but once in office further strengthened the legislation. Once you accept the logic, you are reduced to arguing about numbers, and 'what the country can afford'.

Thousands of people in Britain are homeless. Millions, including thousands of building workers, are unemployed. It is the same elsewhere. Capitalism finds it more profitable to make armaments and build prisons than to let workers provide for people's needs. Politicians prefer to blame the victims, or persuade them to blame each other, rather than admit it's the rotten system that's at fault.

By getting rid of Clause Four, Tony Blair's 'New Labour' has buried any idea that it might change the system. It won't even promise to restore past gains. 'Resources are finite', we're told, 'we have to compete'. Throughout Europe, seeing the ruins of welfarism and the aspirations of the young, the racists and fascists grow more arrogant.

FIFTY years ago, after Hitler's fascism was defeated, the world said 'Never Again'. But it has happened again, in Bosnia. People were herded into camps, tortured, raped, and murdered.

The Great Powers have endorsed apartheid in Europe. The Right backed the Croat Ustashe or Serb Chetniks (supported by Britain's Nazi C18, and Russian fascists). Every lumpen racist thug has adopted the phrase 'ethnic cleansing'. But instead of helping those resisting fascism, many on the 'Left' made their excuses to look away, pretend it wasn't happening, or even defend the 'ethnic cleansers'. How can such groups possibly lead the fight against racism and fas-

WE NEED a movement that makes internationalism its essential starting point, not an optional extra. A party that doesn't save its socialism for May Day speeches, but takes it into everyday struggle. A workers' paper that isn't afraid to face the world, and tell the truth. Workers Press is dedicated to these tasks. That's why we're sponsoring the conference on 16 March. Will you join us?

Asylum and Immigration Bill demonstration

Refugee children and families

BY LIZ LEICESTER

THE Asylum and Immigration Bill will have a drastic impact on the lives of families and children already experiencing desperately high levels of stress.

The changes proposed by the Bill will mean that people who apply for asylum after their arrival in Britain will be excluded from claiming all ben-

Asylum seekers already in the country who do not make their application at their port of entry and those awaiting the outcome of an appeal will also have their benefits stopped.

The British Refugee Council estimates that 90 per cent of the people who will be affected live

Over all, the DSS predicts that 52,000 people will lose benefit over a year.

Currently asylum seekers are entitled to claim the full range of benefits at the urgent-cases rate which is 90 per cent of the usual port, housing and council tax benefit, child benefit, disability benefits and other non-contributory benefits.

They can also apply to the Social Fund for grants or loans for things like clothing, bedding and essential furniture.

Asylum seekers have also had some access to public housing though since 1993 there have been restrictions on their housing rights. The new bill will restrict such rights almost completely.

Though current levels of support are desperately low, they have meant that the most basic necessities of life have been avail-

The thousands of asylum seekers who will be taken off or denied benefits and access to housing will face starvation and homelessness.

Asylum seekers have already experienced trauma and loss in their country of origin.

The measures proposed in the Asylum and Immigration Bill will mean families living in conditions of extreme poverty, sities of food, warmth and shelter.

The DSS estimate that at least 2,000 of those currently receiving benefit who will lose it have children, though other research indicates the figures are considerably

In addition, there are an estimated 150 unaccompanied young people aged 16 to 20 who are not known to Social Services in Lon-

According to the British Refugee Council, in 1984, 31 per cent of asylum seekers were given full refugee status and 24 per cent were refused.

In 1994, 5 per cent were granted full status and 76 per cent were refused. In addition, 18 per cent were given 'exceptional leave to remain'.

Children living in such conditions of uncertainty suffer badly. They have come from conditions of war, state terror, institutionalised torture and psychological

According to studies undertaken for the International Symposium on Children and War in

World War I were civilians, 50 per cent in World War II and over 80 per cent in the Vietnam War. In current armed conflicts over 90 per cent of all casualties are civilians, usually from the poorest groups in society.

Terror is used to exert social control and often populations not territory are the target. Atrocities, public executions, disappearances, torture and sexual abuse are the norm.

It is estimated that there have been 150 wars since 1945 leaving 22 million people dead.

The Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture estimates that from 1984 to 1994 there were 1.5 million children killed, 4 million children disabled and 5 million children forced to live in refugee camps as a result of these conflicts.

In Bosnia alone, the Medical Foundation estimate that 1,000 children died and 30,000 were

The Medical Foundation currently sees people from 65 differ-

Defend Iranian asylum seekers in Turkey

IRANIAN refugees in Turkey recently held a demonstration outside the Iranian embassy and later the police arrested 59.

The 90 Iranians have been seeking asylum for some time and have had to take refuge in the HQ of the United Socialist Party because of deportation arrangements between the Turkish and Iranian government and the refusal of the UN High Commission for Refugees to acknowledge that they were anything other than 'tourists' or 'merchants'. The UNHCR refuses to accept that they are political asylum-seekers. The recent demonstration shows the UNHCR position to be utterly false.

The embassy demonstration condemned the Islamic regime for lack of basic freedom and democracy and demanded the immediate release of political prisoners. They set the Iranian flag alight and tore up pictures portraying Khamenei and Khomeini as vampires.

Once the Turkish police found out about the demonstration they responded in large numbers and attacked the demonstrators. The refugees resisted the attacks and managed to get their message across through Turkish radio and television. The demonstration wrecked embassy plans to celebrate the Iranian revolution's anniversary.

Demonstrators then left the area around the embassy and went to a park where police were waiting. Police then violently assaulted the demonstration. Police arrested 59 demonstrators and took them to the aliens' section of the central police station.

After two hours, they were given formal letters setting out the reasons for their arrest. Attempts were made to get the demonstrators to sign a declaration that they would not hold any more protests. The refugees refused. After their release they returned to the United Socialist Party HQ

A joint statement by the Committee for a Workers' International, the Iranian Revolutionary Socialists' League (London), Iranian Workers' Left Unity (North London) and Militant Labour rightly says: 'The protests of the refugees deserve the full support of all progressive forces, and instead of preventing them from staging such demonstrations, we must actively defend their democratic right to live outside the dungeon that the capitalist Islamic regime in Iran has in store for them.'

The joint statement affirms that 'as part of our protest campaign of the last few months against the UNHCR and the Turkish government, together with other revolutionary forces, we will continue our solidarity work in support of all protesting refugees.'

These organisations hold frequent protests. The next is on Monday 26 February at the UNCHR, 21 Milbank, London SW1 at 12 noon. Contact: WLU, PO Box 1047, London W2 6ZD.

Capitalists' attack on democratic rights

The Iranian Revolutionary Socialists' League sent out the following statement:

THE home secretary, Michael Howard — under the cover that '80 per cent of asylum seekers are bogus' - began an extended attack on the democratic rights of asylum seekers in this country.

This attack is part of the extended attacks upon the working class as a whole. If the home secretary succeeds in expelling the refugees, the next step will be expulsion of other political refugees and eventually suppression of other democratic rights of other sections. This attack is also in line with the policies of the home secretary's counterparts in other European countries.

In Turkey for example thousands of Iranian refugees are at the mercy of the vicious attacks of the Turkish police. Since last summer, there are some 100 Iranian refugees who are about to be expelled from Turkey, and if returned will face death in Iran.

We believe that all the progressive forces should resist these anti-immigration acts all over Europe and in particular the asylum bill in this country which, if implemented, would put the lives of many refugees in dan-

■ IRS, PO Box 14, Potters Bar, Herts., EN6 1LE. Tel/fax: 0171-249 3773.

Community backs Nigerian family

ON 30 January, the Adegboye family's appeal against their asylum refusal was finally allowed.

Thank you, thank you. We love you all,' said Mr and Mrs Abegboye, choked with emotion, children, had been held in Saughton jail until December

We are delighted that we received justice today,' said Akin. We dedicate this victory to Ken Saro-Wiwa and the other Nigerian activists who were executed last November.'

The hearing's special adjudicator had considered the US state department's briefing on Nigeria to be more accurate than that supplied by the Home Office.

Central to the campaign for

Wester Hailes and other Scottish organisations to whom Akin expressed his 'special gratitude'.

Wester Hailes Anti-Racist Project manager Andy Egan, who on leaving the Glasgow hearing.

Akin Adegboye, the father of two

Family Support Campaign, said: We are delighted that justice has finally been done. The case exposed the inhumanity of the Home Office's policies towards Nigerian refugees.

> The success of the campaign shows what can be achieved when a community like Wester Hailes is fully mobilised, said

■ The Adegboye Family Support Campaign can be contacted c/o Wester Hailes Against Racism, 16/1 Murrayburn Place, Edinburgh EH14 2RR.

Other cases

There are a number of Nigerian refugees who have either been deported or remain under threat. Some examples are:

■ Sam Didia was deported to Nigeria and his wife now has the sole responsibility for looking after their five children. Application has been made to the Home Office for Sam's return on compassionate grounds

■ Sunday Ogunwobi will have been in sanctuary in Downs Baptist Church in London for two years on 15 March. An application for discretionary leave to remain following 14 years of residence in this country has been refused. (Ogunwobi Family Campaign, Downs Baptist Church, Downs Road, London E5 8DS. Tel: 0181-985 2958.)

Florence Okolo and her children in Manchester have been allowed to stay for another

year. (Okolo Family Campaign, c/o St Phillips Primary School, Loxford Street, Hulme, Manchester M15 6BT. Tel: 0161-740 5172.)

Bayo Omoyiola. (Bayo Omoyiola, c/o Liverpool UNI-SON, 4th Floor, Produce Exchange, 8 Victoria Street, Liverpool L2 6QJ. Tel: 0161-740 5172.)

Frank Daboh has been in HMP Rochester since his arrival in Britain on 13 May 1995 an active member of the Nigerian Democratic Movement and was arrested and held in jail by the military government after a rally on 7 November 1994. He escaped from Kirikiri jail in Lagos and with help from friends fled to Britain. His case was up for a High Court review in London on 23 February. (See Workers Press, 27 January and 3 February.)

(Frank (Davies) Daboh, Prison reference TB0562, HMP Rochester, D Wing, 1 Fort Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 3QS. Home Office reference D240522.)

Bradford gets into gear

CAMPAIGNING groups against the Tories' latest attacks on refugees are springing up all over the country. The Bradford Campaign against the Asylum and Immigration Bill was formed recently and has begun to hold political meetings. At least one coach will bring supporters to today's dem-

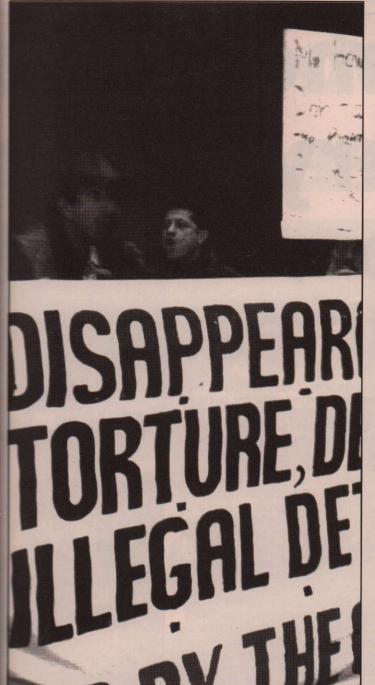
Bradford trades council has a long history of fighting racism at all levels - they are supporters of Workers Aid for Bosnia - so it is no surprise to find them solidly behind this initiative.

It is believed that there are between 300 and 400 people in Bradford who would lose their benefit under the legislation and Mike Quiggin, the trades council secretary, is particularly concerned that one effect of the attack on refugees will be to aggravate the tendencies towards racism:

Bradford has a large Asian population and it is important to fight all racially divisive issues at an early stage. The Bradford economy has been devastated and there are always attempts to blame "people from abroad" for

■ The Bradford campaign can be contacted on 01274

More on the **Asylum and Immigration** Bill on pages 4, 5 and 7



Demonstration outside parliament against the Asylum and Immigration Bill

The case against Fortress Europe

BY BOB ARCHER

THE GOVERNMENTS of Western Europe have conspired together against refugees and asylum-seekers, and have taken measures which violate fundamental human rights. This is the charge made by barrister Frances Webber in her submission to the Basso Tribunal in Berlin in December 1994.

Webber charged that a shadowy and undemocratic committee has put a stranglehold on applications for refuge in Western Europe. The former Ad Hoc group of immigration ministers, now called the K4 Committee, meets under the inter-governmental procedures set out in the Maastricht Treaty.

Asylum-seekers attempting to escape persecution in their home country face a formidable series of obstacles in even applying for refugee status in the European Union. The citizens of 129 countries now need visas to enter the EU. Sometimes the visa application form does not even enable the applicant to state 'refugee'

Being unable to get a visa is the first hurdle. Carriers such as airlines and shipping companies refuse to carry passengers to the EU without valid papers because they (the carriers) will be fined by the European governments and forced to bear the costs of detention and repatriation.

'Illegal' travellers also face the danger of exposure and violent death, like the seven Africans aboard a Ukrainian freighter bound for France who were killed and thrown overboard.

Western European governments are systematically criminalising such refugees as 'illegal entrants' and whipping up public concern to legitimise a militarisation of Europe's borders, big expansion of the border and immigration police, a huge technical armoury and so on.

In violation of a UN High Commission for Refugees' ruling, EU governments send refugees back to the first 'safe' country they arrived in, irrespective of family and other reasons to pick a particular host country. The Dublin Convention' of June 1990 effectively gives asylum-seekers only one shot at refugee status in

Guarantees

While the Geneva Convention guarantees asylum seekers the right to 'determination procedures', 'a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal', this can now be denied when a government can claim a refugee came through a 'third'

But often the 'safe' third country will simply return asylumseekers to the country they fled in the first place. These 'chain deportations' enable EU countries to evade their responsibilities under Geneva Convention Article 33.

While all EU and European Free Trade Association states now deem each other 'safe', judges in Britain have in the past found Germany, Italy, Belgium and France unsafe because of gaps and exclusions from the protection of refugees.

Hungary is defined as a 'safe' third country, but inmates in a holding camp in Hungary have allegedly been beaten unconscious. In August 1992, 20 Africans and Asians held in a camp outside Budapest smuggled out a note saying they would commit mass suicide if they were refused refugee status.

Webber gives chapter and verse on these and many other aspects of the growing 'Fortress

Throughout her charges she

contrasts the real practices of European governments with the ideals proclaimed in the Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1950 and the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights of 1976.

Issues

Her careful documentation of these issues makes this a very powerful text indeed.

■ The full indictment can be read in Europe on Trial: An indictment of the violation of the human rights of refugees and asylum seekers by Frances Webber, European Race Audit, Briefing Paper 1/1995, costing £1.50 and available from Institute of Race Relations, 2-6 Leeke Street, London WC1X 9HS.

I just completely hit the roof'

BY HILARY HORROCKS

EILEEN DICKIE and her husband John run a guesthouse in Edinburgh. They were both active in the local anti-poll-tax campaign — an experience which, says Eileen, probably subconsciously gave her confidence that she could do something when she learned about the imprisonment of an old subconsciously schoolfriend of her son's.

John Gotip has lived in Edinburgh for ten years, having arrived from Nigeria as a child on his father's diplomatic passport. He attended Drummond high school and later began studying for a degree, financing himself with part-time work in a bar.

All this came to an abrupt end last summer when, early one morning, seven policemen and customs officers burst into the house where John lived with his cousin and Scottish girlfriend.

The home office had ordered John's arrest on a technicality he had not replied to a summons to appear before a tribunal to renew his visa.

John says he had moved house and never received the letter. He was taken to Edinburgh's

Saughton jail. 'It could have been another

to know of John's imprisonment seven weeks later. 'Lots of things make you angry, but this was different, it was personal. I was absolutely furious. She contacted John's former

headteacher, Margaret Mackintosh. The two women immediately started a campaign for his release, phoning local MPs incessantly and prodding John's

The story featured in a community newspaper produced

Trade union (if any)

by Eileen's husband, and from that was picked up by the Edinburgh free newspaper, who published her phone number.

'I was amazed at the number of people who rang me to protest. Some knew John, but others were just angry at the injustice.'

Eileen was invited to speak on a Radio Scotland talk programme where a Tory spokesperson claimed no one was imprisoned for no reason.

'I just completely hit the roof,' remembers Eileen.

Her campaign and the publicity it generated won John Gotip's release after three months in prison - although the legal appeals available to him are now almost exhausted and his position looks insecure.

'He's not even applying for asylum; he just wants to finish his studies. He has to report twice a week to the police station, and every time he goes he must be afraid he is going to be seized and shipped off.'

Eileen believes that Nigerians in Britain are being especially targetted by the home office at this time. She says of the government's Asylum and Immigration Bill: 'It stinks. It's absolutely appalling.

'You're damned all ways - if you have a false passport, which Joy Gardner,' says Eileen, who got you need to get out of the country, you're automatically damned when you get here.

> 'If you don't reveal yourself at the airport immediately you arrive, when you feel completely disoriented, you're damned. And you are denied access to anyone

> 'The judicial inquiry said that more thought should be given to the bill, but didn't say anything about benefits to asylum seekers being reinstated, which is the worst thing of all.'

Capitalism has no

TONY O'BRIEN, convenor building DLO Southwark, branch secretary Southwark UCATT and executive member of Southwark trades council:

ASYLUM to me represents refuge from persecution for one's beliefs, from persecution for all those struggling for freedom, self-determination and against fascism and dictatorship.

For workers, in some ways, immigration and asylum are identical as the reasons for immigration are survival from capitalist exploitation.

For example, how many millions of workers over generations have been forced to leave Ireland or face starvation and depriva-Capitalism has no boundaries.

exploits internationally. Therefore, workers need free movement to survive.

Our trades council will be sent on the anti-Asylum and Immigration Act demonstration.

ED HALL Branch secretary Lambeth UNISON:

UNISON members have three reasons to campaign against the Immigration and Asylum bill:

We have seen our own members deported into great danger and their families repeatedly threatened. Abdul Onibiyo, an engineer and Lambeth UNISON member, has not been heard of since he was put on a plane to Lagos on 16 October.

This was the same month as the hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other innocent activists in Nigeria. At UNISON's request, the International Labour Organisation carried out a search for Abdul in Nigeria without success.

Abdul's son Ade remains detained, his academic career in ruins. His case rests on a complex legal appeal on the validity of making second or subsequent appeal applications.

■ UNISON members will see greater destitution as income Workers Press asked for comments on the fight against the Asylum and Immigration Bill . . .

denied asylum seekers who are making appeals.

The legal challenge to this from the Campaign for the Welfare of Immigrants is based on local authorities' responsibility for children and the overall unreasonableness of the withdrawal of a universal benefit.

UNISON members are to be asked to check immigration status, particularly in employment and housing matters. It is possible there will be spot checks on colleges, universities and large employers. There will be an atmosphere of fear and tyranny in many local authorities.

■ Much of UNISON's work has been to campaign for equality. The Asylum bill discriminates on the basis of race and UNISON will be faced with moving from opposition to the bill to non-compliance if it becomes law.

UNISON believes there is no 'immigration problem' in Britain. Much fly-posting and graffiti in Lambeth says: 'Smash the Asylum bill — all immigrants welcome

MOHINDRA FARMA, branch president Leicester Indian Workers' Association (GB):

THE Indian Workers' Association feels that the bill is a great threat to human rights and civil liberties. It will act against many people who come from a 'white list' of countries and will also give the right to remove asylum seekers to a designated 'third country' if they have passed through that country on the way here.

The bill takes away basic rights in respect of oral and incountry appeals, which are difficult enough as it is. New categories of immigrant are set out which will take away rights from people already living here on a long-term basis.

Further powers are given to police and immigration officials

will have to check up and report on people they suspect of being immigrants, increases the power of employers over their workforce in general.

Some employers can use this as a

lever to allow them to cut wages and worsen conditions. While oppression is building up in many countries overseas, the bill, if it becomes an act, can only strengthen the hand of these oppressive governments that will find it much easier to crack down

on dissidents who have less chance of escape. There is no compromise on this from the Indian Workers' Association. We want to see this bill abandoned in its entirety, and it is for this reason that we are fully supporting the demon-

stration on 24 February.

LEICESTER and District trades council president and National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear member HARRY WARNER, pointed out that the bill was another example of rights and liberties being taken away from

people. 'It concerns all workers,' he said, 'including those in this country. If employers overseas know that their workers cannot get away from poverty wages there will be even more centres of cheap labour to use against us. We have to oppose this bill to stop it becoming an act.'

A spokeswoman from the Refugee Council Bosnia Project: THERE are two groups of Bos-

nian refugees: those who came under the official government programme and others who are individual asylum seekers.

Those on the official programme are not affected by the current changes in the benefit regulations. They have a special form of leave to remain called them access to benefits now but it is temporary.

The programme began at the end of 1992 when the government agreed to accept 1,000 households, who have been coming in groups since then. In August last year the government decided to accept 500 more people from Bosnia.

Although most asylum seekers are in London, various city councils in the rest of the country are beginning to think about emergency steps to deal with asylum seekers now that the benefit changes are in place.

A representative of the Kashmir International Front:

THE Kashmir International Front campaigns for the reunification and independence of the people of Kashmir.

The organisation is mostly based in Pakistani-occupied Kashmir, and opposes Pakistan's fundamental human, democratic and constitutional rights for the people of the area. Our position is that the Asylum and Immigration Bill is not in accordance with international law. Cases are never decided on merit.

If the government wants to curb bogus asylum seekers, they have to expedite the system of deciding cases. Reducing financial support for asylum seekers is wrong — genuine political and human rights' activists will be the victims of this law.

We agree with Labour that the system should be improved. At present they just delay for months and months.

In the Third World there are millions of refugees from one place to another: Pakistan, India, Palestinians in Syria and Jordan, for example.

We oppose the bill and sup-port the ideas of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights.

Kashmir International Front, Suite 102, 75 Gloucester Road, London SW7 4SS. Tel/fax:

WORKERS PRESS IS THE PAPER OF THE **WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY** British section of the Workers International (to Rebuild the Fourth International)

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Send to: PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB

..... Age (if under 21)

Inside left

HE dockers have won their victory; with all drawbacks it must be lled a victory. They have shown alities of unselfishness and power combination which we may well pe will appear again before long.'

Writing on the great 1889 dock rike, socialist and artist William orris added that in showing they ald organise at least as well as 'the stocracy of labour', the dockers d struck a blow against reactionary stinctions within the working class. I'm sure Morris, an internationalwho addressed meetings of immiant workers, would have been ually thrilled by today's struggles Liverpool dockers, Hillingdon aners and the JJ Fast Food work-

Morris died 100 years ago. Hamersmith trades council has plans to mmemorate his life (he founded the ammersmith Socialist Society).

Others claiming Morris, with no stification whatsoever, include bour's Tony Blair! Morris regarded bians and parliamentary careerists ith contempt. In his utopian novel ews from Nowhere he envisaged at the violence of the upper classes ould necessitate a workers' revoluin to bring about socialism.

New Times (3 February), whose eve Munby advocated scabbing on Liverpool dockers ('Inventing a adition', 11 November), announces a emocratic Left' Morris anniversary ent in June. I trust they'll stick to scussing his floral wallpaper

eterans /

HIS year sees the 60th anniversary the outbreak of the Spanish Civil ar. The New Statesman (15 Februy) had a lengthy article by Paul eston on why Ken Loach's film md and Freedom, George Orwell's omage to Catalonia, and the milint workers of Barcelona were rong, and why the Stalinists were ent to crush them, to win Western pport, and beat Franco.

In case anyone's forgotten, this pular Front' strategy didn't work. e fascists won. But let's not coner such awkward facts, or we ight start to learn something from

Radio Four's Afternoon Shift (also 15 February) recalled Communist rty leader 'La Passionara'/Dolores arruri's speech to the departing solers of the International Brigade, in 39, asking them to come back when

The programme welcomed Bill exander of the International Bride Association, to talk about the anish government's recent decision award honorary citizenship to ese volunteers who came from

road to fight fascism.

Don Bateman, a longtime member the Independent Labour Party IP), has written urging the Spanish thorities to extend their honour to ople like his old friend Staff Cottan, no longer in good health, who rved in the left-wing Party of arxist Unification (POUM) militia. Cottman fought on the Huesca

ont, and was George Orwell's staffrgeant. When he returned to Bristol was expelled from the Young Comunist League (YCL) for having wed with 'Trotskyists', as the Stal-

ists dubbed the POUM.

The Stalinist Daily Worker cused anyone who didn't toe the pular Front' line of being agents of anco. Stalinist hacks are trying to

cycle lies like that. But a few years ago, when Staff ttman spoke about his memories of ain at a Bristol meeting, some of e old CPers who'd voted for his pulsion came along, apparently en to bury old differences. Hopeful-

those who no longer believe the old s will support seeing anti-fascist terans like Cottman honoured.

Charlie Pottins

Asylum and Immigration Bill demonstration

Workers' movemen Immigration Bill would affect asylum seekers from the Ivory Coast, some preparations to provide for refugees made destitute by the bill and give a historical sketch of asylum logislation in Britain We report on how the Asylum and

sketch of asylum legislation in Britain London's Ivorians under death threat

MANY political refugees in Britain are having to live with threats of persecution and death from the repressive regimes they fled from.

'L'Oeil du Peuple', a newspaper close to the political opposition in the Ivory Coast, recently highlighted the dangers facing Ivorian refugees in London whose activities it claimed were an embarassment to to the dictator Henri Konan Bedi.

The newspaper states that special staff are being sent to the Ivory Coast embassy in London on a 'punishment mission' and nine Ivorians, who were formerly leaders in the Ivorian student movement, FESCI, are named as among those 'to be assassinated'.

Gerard of the Ivorian Relief Action Group (IRAG) is one of those on the list and said that this newspaper had many contacts in the government and its information was

'This is a serious threat. Known thugs have joined the embassy. Every time the ruling party, the PDCI, puts our names on a list we reexamine our personal security.

'The Ivory coast has been increas-

militants de la dite association ont été arrêtés et gardés à vue pendant plus de 24 heures par la/ police britanique sur ordre, dit-on, de l'Ambassadeur de Côte d'Ivoire en Grande-Bretagne. Alors quills manifestaient pacifiquement devant l'Ambassade de Côte d'Ivoire à Londres. Pour "casser cè C'est ça la Côte d'Ivoire. groupe, Monsieur Oulai Kemegnan Jean, personne impopulaire de la

ing its contacts with the British government and the president recently paid a visit to London.

Everyone in the Ivory Coast knows the case of Ben Barka, the Tunisian trade unionist killed in Paris with the complicity of agents of the French state.'

The Ivory Coast was once a colony of France but there are are very few Ivorian refugees there because the French government works hand in hand with the Ivorian regime.

Henri, general secretary of the UK branch of the Ivory Coast Party for Progress and Socialism (PPS) is also on the 'assassination' list.

We are well organised and check on each other's movements but we don't know when the attacks will start. This is a continuation of life in the Ivory Coast. We thought we were safe in London but this is now a kind of jail — not being able to eat, drink or shop where you want.'

The PPS recently sent a letter to the British foreign secretary detailing Bedi's atrocities and how he has refused 'to organise democratic and fair elections and has deliberately chosen to kill demonstrators using

serait dressée dans ce sens. Sur cette liste figurent les noms des personnes à "anéantir ?" : MAMPO GERARD, MARTIAL AHIPEAUD, BAH SOUMALET, ZEGUEN, MADE, GBO, TOHOU KOUKOUGNON., ZADY'KOBEHE DANIEL, ROGER TEBILI LOUE.

GIRESSE LAETITIA

sous-préfecture de Facobly List of Ivorians in London 'to be assassinated' have not received even the courtesy

Since 1989 there has been a 100 per cent refusal rate to Ivorians applying for refugee status in Britain. There are currently four thousand waiting for a hearing or a decision.

Last year all Ivorians who applied for asylum at the point of arrival in Britain were arrested and deported and immediately rearrested on arrival in the Ivory Coast.

'For IRAG the asylum issue is not a welfare issue', said Gerard, 'but a political issue. Our job is to let people know that refugees in Britain are the victims of a system which oppresses.

"The asylum bill is an attack on our class. Today refugees are the target, tomorrow it is trade unionists, single mothers, etc. We are only in this country because of the dominance of the multi-nationals in our

'Most Ivorians are well educated and want to return home but cannot because of the persecution.'

Last October in London a peaceful demonstration by the Ivorians outside the Ivorian embassy was broken up by the police. Fifteen were arrested and ten face trumped-up charges including assault on police.

They are appearing at the Magistrates' Court, Horseferry Road, London SW1, from 26 to 29 February and IRAG and the PPS are calling for all their supporters, particularly those in the trade union and labour movement, to join them in a picket outside

The picket starts at 9.30am each day and further information can be obtained from IRAG, 365 Brixton Road, London SW9 7DB.



Ivorian drummers tune up for l

Sorry I

Britain's immigration laws

The very first set of laws restricting the entry of immigrants into Britain was the Aliens Act of 1905. It was specifically designed to exclude Jewish people fleeing anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe and Tsarist Rus-

The 1905 legislation was followed by the Aliens Restriction Act of 1914, and a more vicious Aliens Restriction Act of 1919. These laws were used to keep out Jewish people fleeing Nazism in the 1930s. In the six years following the Nazi takeover of Germany in 1933, only 50,000 Jewish refugees were allowed into Britain.

In May 1938, British authorities required nationals of Germany and Austria to get a visa in their country of origin before coming to Britain.

In other words, Austrian and German Jews in imminent danger of their lives had to make it obvious to their fascist persecutors that they intended to leave the country.

Again, today, immigration officials have the power to turn around

getting visas or proper documents.

The home secretary explained the policy to parliament in 1938 by saying of Jews: 'It is impossible to admit indiscriminately all persons claiming to be refugees.'

This was at the time that the Holocaust was about to begin in earnest.

Today Michael Howard tells us again that we cannot believe all those from countries such as Bosnia, Nigeria, Turkey who tell us that they are fleeing in fear for their lives.

People

Those Jewish people who made it into Britain were immediately interned as soon as the war started among them many trades unionists.

There were three pieces of legislation against refugees between 1905 and 1962. After 1962 the pace quickened, and another three acts were passed by 1971.

The 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act was passed by a Labour government, and took away the right

THE Tory Asylum Act of 1996 fol- and send back refugees who are pre- of British passport holders, mainly lows in a long line of racist British vented by repressive regimes from East African Asians, to come to Brit-

The Tory government elected in 1979 has now passed four sets of antiimmigration laws.

In 1981 the Nationality Act made it more difficult for black people to gain British nationality. The 1987 Carriers Liability Act made airlines into agents of immigration control by fining them heavily for carrying passengers without the right docu-

In 1988 another set of laws made entry yet more difficult, and in 1993 the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act made it possible to remove a refugee from the sacred soil of the UK within five days.

It removed appeal rights from all those refused a visa to enter Britain, and made council housing officers investigators of immigration status and agents of immigration control.

[Information from Workers' Control not Immigration Controls by Steve Cohen, Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit.]

TRADE unions actively campaigned for the 1905 Aliens Act. Jewish refugees started coming to Britain in the 1880s after the anti-semitic 'May Laws' were enacted in Russia.

In 1892, the president of the TUC told the congress: 'The door must be shut against the enormous immigration of destitute aliens into this country...We must protect our own starving work people by refusing to be the asylum for the paupers of Europe.' That congress made immigration control official policy, and similar resolutions were passed in 1894 and 1895.

The TUC actively campaigned for immigration controls, including the demand in a labour programme to be put to all candidates in the 1895 general election.

In 1891 W.H. Wilkins published The Alien Invasion, a book which named 43 unions as organisations supporting controls, including the Dockers' Union, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, the Durham Miners' Association and the London Trades Council. Leeds and Manchester trades councils also supported controls in the period between 1892

After World War II, significant

nt must defend ight to asylum



ast year's Africa Liberation Day demonstration (27 May 1995)

nistory of trade union labour movement

sections of the trade unions supported controls against black people. The 1957 conference of the Transport for control.

Frank Cousins, general secretary and future Labour minister, said the union 'could not allow these people unrestricted entry into Britain.

The TUC voted for control seven years before the 1962 act. A delegation visited the Minister of Labour and told him that the 'government must have a policy which could ensure that the rate of immigration could be controlled.'

Racist

In 1958, shortly after the racist riots in Notting Hill and Nottingham, the TUC report recorded that: 'Apprehensions have been expressed about the number of immigrants from Pakistan.' It called for immigration controls, including a 'medical examination'.

The 1962 TUC congress report says that the General Council opposed the Commonwealth Immigrants Act — by calling for exit controls. It 'invited the governments of those Commonwealth countries themselves to limit the flow of immi-

and General Workers' Union voted because the Labour Party, which was end to all controls. in opposition, voted against it. But when Labour came to office in 1964 it not only failed to repeal the new

> laws, but reinforced them. Thus in 1965, the General Council's report called once more for immigration controls — saying that there had 'been the growth of the proportion of Commonwealth immigrants lacking an adequate knowledge of English and of British customs.'

> From 1965 until 1973 the TUC united with the Labour and Tory parties on the need for some form of immigration control.

But the profoundly changed com-position of the British working class, coupled with the self-organisation of black and ethnic minority workers, has gone a long way towards transforming attitudes within the trade union movement — if not in the Labour Party.

In 1973 the Trades Union Congress voted for a repeal of the 1971 Immi-

gration Act. Since then most sections of the trade union movement have opposed controls — but still only in a limited

way. At the 1990 TUC congress the local government officers' union The TUC criticised the 1962 act NALGO moved a resolution for an

The General Council pulled out all the stops to force the withdrawal of the motion, and issued its own 'Statement on Racism and Immigration'.

Support

Ron Todd, on behalf of the General Council, said: 'We support the Labour Party's plans to replace the 1971, 1981 and 1988 Immigration Acts with rules and practices which no longer discriminate on the grounds of race and sex. But we have to be clear that this is not the same as outright repeal.'

The leaders of the British trade unions and Labour Party have always accepted capitalism's demand for a workforce which can be moved and disposed of at will. But what is needed now more than ever is the unity of all workers against international capital.

[Information from Workers' Control not Immigration Controls by Steve Cohen, Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit.]

Hackney centre prepares to meet benefit and housing crisis

HACKNEY in north-east London is a multi-ethnic area with a large concentration of Turkish and Kurdish

The Asylum and Immigration Bill threatens to make thousands of these workers and their families destitute.

On 5 February, the day that all benefits were cut off to large numbers of asylum seekers, a building in Hackney was occupied to provide alternative emergency housing.

The building, the old courthouse on Stoke Newington Road, had been empty since 1992 and was bought in January 1994 by a property company which has done nothing with it except remove and sell the most valuable fittings.

The squat, the Autonomous Refugee Centre Hackney (ARCH), has the support of refugee, church, trade union and community groups in the

Two illegal eviction attempts by the owners were repelled due, mainly, to the involvement of the local Turkish and Kurdish commu-

But on 16 February the owners of the building went to court and an eviction order was refused only on a

The squatters expect to be evicted shortly but are determined that the project will carry on.

When necessary', a spokesperson said, 'we will move on to another building to continue the struggle.

Other buildings will also be needed. Squatting is not illegal and although it is not the most secure form of housing for many it is already the only possibility.

Homeless

'For those made homeless by this latest attack, squatting may be the only way to organise housing and the defence of those threatened with deportation.'

In the nearby Halkevi Centre there was no doubt about the effects of the asylum legislation.

One person there reckoned that in 12 months time there would be between 2,000 and 3,000 people in Hackney in need of basic support.

Representatives of the centre have met with the Hackney Churches Refugees Support group who were very active in the late 1980s with support for the influx of refugees from Kurdistan.

They have discussed if the churches can be used as soup kitchens, night shelters and clothing

Refuse

They are also trying to get the council to refuse to implement the legislation through council workers refusing to apply checks and the council continuing to pay housing benefits. They are legally allowed to do this — it's just that the statutory requirements, and of course the money, have been removed.

At the Hundred Flowers Cultural Centre, also on the Stoke Newington Road, they believe that the militancy and organisation of the Turkish refugee groups in Britain have been a major factor in Turkey not being included on the Tories' 'white list'.

The 'white list' is those countries designated as without 'serious risk of persecution' and where asylum seekers will be automatically returned.

They were making plans for their participation in today's demonsta-tion and were in no doubt about the politics of the asylum bill:

'Apart from resurrecting and shamefully exploiting the old myths about the threat of foreigners, the bill also attempts to give strength to the new myths about peace and stability which are supposed to be finally prevailing in some of the developing countries under the "inspirational guidance" of the New World order and the caring economic policies of the IMF and the World Bank.'

Tonight ARCH are holding a social evening with international music in the occupied building and a warm welcome is ensured for all protesters against the Tories' racist asylum bill.

Some useful contacts |

UP TO 10,000 people are imprisoned every year under immigration legislation — half in special prison camps called 'detention centres' and half in prisons and police stations.

They are locked up without even being accused of any crime, without suitable medical attention or food, access to translators or legal

They are liable to deportation at any moment back to the repressive conditions they have fled on the decision of the Home Office. Their numbers will be increased by the current changes unless we close down the detention centres and smash these racist laws.

Organisations involved in the anti-deportation fight include:

■ National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns, c/o 22, Berners St., Lozells, Birmingham B19 2DR, 0121-554 694 National Network Against Detentions and Deportations, c/o CARF,

Fatma Tahir Defence Campaign, 0181-985 8364.

Joseph Nnalue Defence Campaign, 0171-207 7097. Shiji Lapite Campaign, 0171-232 1045.

Sam Dibia Campaign, 0181-340 9962. Onibiyo Family Anti-Deportation Campaign, 0171-737 2134. Southall Black Sisters, 0181-574 6781.

Colin Roach Centre, 0181-986 7111.

Ghana Union, 0171-700 5634.

C.C.R.J., 0171-620 4444 For information about squatting and the law:

■ Advisory Service for Squatters, 2, St. Pauls Road, London N1. 0171-359 8814

Drums of resistance

A LARGE part of black music is concerned with challenging the powers that be. The music throbs with defiance, subversion, and resistance.

And the further back you go, chronologically or stylistically, the more emphatic is this political message.

This was brought home to me a couple of weeks ago when I listened to a remarkable CD: Drums of Defiance: Maroon Music from the Earliest Free Black Communities of Jamaica (Smithsoni-an/Folkways CD SF 40412), recorded by the ethnomusicologist Kenneth Bilby for the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural

Some of the field recordings to be heard on this disc were made in 1977-78 and issued on a Folkways LP in 1981. But there is also much new material, recorded in

Apart from anything else, this CD is remarkable for Bilby's accompanying booklet, which is a model of careful, lucid explana-

WHO were, and who are, the maroons? The English word 'maroon', meaning 'runaway slave', is borrowed from the French marron, derived from the Spanish cimarrón, which comes from cima, meaning 'peak'.

Thus the maroons, literally, were 'people of the peaks': African slaves who had managed to get up into the unsettled mountains, where it was comparatively easy to evade recapture.

And in the mountain wilderness they stayed, establishing what nowadays we would call liberated areas and sometimes signing peace treaties with the various colonial governments, who found them impregnable.

Descendants of the original maroons are still living in Suriname (the Saramakka and other groups, once known as 'Bush Negroes'), French Guiana (the Boni or Aluku), Colombia, Mexico, and the US, as well as Jamaica. Three years ago these latter-day maroons sent representatives to a conference, sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution, on 'Maroon Culture in the Americas'.

The story of the Jamaican maroons begins in the middle of the 17th century. In the years from 1655 to 1740 — the first 85 years of English rule — the island was never free from revolt.

By about 1725 there were several thousand maroons, and they were waging guerrilla warfare all over Jamaica. The authorities paid £5 per head for each maroon killed, payable on production of the ears to a justice of the peace. Those taken alive were tortured and burnt to death.

'We are in terrible circumstances in respect to the rebellious Negroes', wrote a planter in 1733. 'They get the better of all our partys, our men are quite dispirited and dare not look them in the face in the Open Ground or in Equal Numbers.'

The next year, another planter complained that the maroons openly appear in Arms and are daily Increasing'.

The British sued for peace, and negotiations were held with the undefeated guerrilla leader Cudjoe on ground of his own choosing. They led to the signing of a 15-clause peace treaty on 1 March

Cudjoe and his followers were guaranteed 'a perfect state of freedom and liberty', and the right to grow crops, raise stock, and hunt throughout an area of 15,000 acres.

Four months later another maroon army, led by Quao, after winning a major victory over a force of several hundred British soldiers and sailors, signed a similar treaty.

Another formidable Jamaican resistance leader was Nanny, known as 'Grandy Nanny', who gave her name to Nanny Town -

COLUMN

now, I believe, uninhabited — in Jamaica's Portland parish.

Nanny, about whom a wealth of highly colourful stories has been passed down in the oral tradition, repudiated Cudjoe's peace treaty and later accepted similar terms for her own followers with extreme reluctance. The planters, who hated and feared her, gave a large reward to a slave whom they persuaded to murder her.

Like Nanny Town, the maroon settlement of Trelawny Town in St James parish is said to be no longer inhabited. But at least four maroon towns still exist: Accompong Town in St Elizabeth parish, in the heart of the rugged western Cockpit Country; Scott's Hall in St Mary parish, and Charles Town and Moore Town in Portland parish, all in the eastern Blue Mountains.

THE indefatigable Bilby spent 12 months studying and recording in and around Moore Town, and shorter periods in the other three locations.

The only disc known to me that contains anything resembling the beautiful songs he gives us on his CD is a 2-LP set called Heritage, issued about 10 years ago by the Folk Music Research Department of the Jamaica School of Music, featuring fifeand-drum music and Revival hymns as well as 'neo-African' songs with drum accompaniment.

Such songs are the staple of Bilby's CD. The style of singing and drumming in Accompong Town, he says, differs in many respects from those heard in the eastern towns. One song, Maroon Law, celebrates the 1739 peace

In the three eastern maroon towns there are groups of songs commemorating and honouring various African nations whose people were transported to Jamaica: e.g. Papa (i.e. 'Pawpaw', which is what Europeans used to call Ewe-speakers from presentday Benin, Ghana, and Togo); Ibo (from present-day Nigeria); and Mandinga (from present-day Mali, the Gambia, and Guinea).

Another category of songs is known as Sa Leone (Sierra Leone). The tall, single-headed, hand-played cylindrical drums used in the ritual Kromanti Dance ceremony — 'Kromanti' was a slave port on the Gold Coast, now Ghana - are called 'printing', from the Twi word oprenteng.

BUT music and dance are not the only audible and visible links between the present-day Jamai-can maroons and their African forebears.

Some years ago Dr David Dalby, who single-handedly redrew the language map of Africa and who, to the disgust of many, showed that 'OK' comes from the Wolof language spoken in Senegal and the Gambia — told me of his trip to one of the Blue Mountains maroon towns.

Dalby is a fluent speaker of Krio, the local language of Freetown in Sierra Leone (Krio is a creole, with a mixed English and African word-stock). And he spoke in that language to the maroons he met.

'They fell about,' he told me, and they said, "Where did you learn our language?"

Kenneth Bilby includes in his booklet the following 'word to all Maroons':

'Na fi di kliin-yai yengkungkun dis, an al bigi suma we tuajina obroni mek in sabi sonti; an na fi unu pikin dem ... so wen turo kon, foul futu n'e kil in pikin,

konjo sjid n'e laas! No English translation is provided. Perhaps some Jamaican reader of Workers Press — or some Krio-speaker — could oblige with one?

PERSONAL Indian students' hunger strike

From PETER GIBSON in India

THE All-Goa Students Front in West India has marked up a victory in forcing the Goa university authorities to back down in attempts to change qualification standards for exams in the middle of a course.

After months of protest and argument which brought no progress, seven students led a Fast unto Death', led by student union president Pundalik Raikan and Goa university student council chair Santosh George.

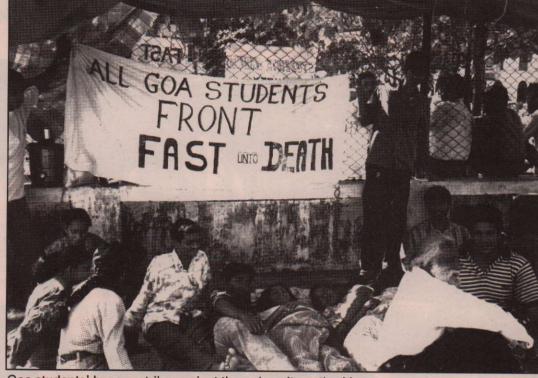
Within days, parents, teachers and supporters had set up the 'All-Goa Committee for Social Justice and Action', and begun to spread the agitation, saying: 'All the people of Goa must stand by their children who make up the student community to fight the evil policies being foisted on Goa university, ignoring the students and their future.'

Further, 'Goa university has created a wanton confrontation with the student community.'

While the hunger strike was still in progress, Workers Press talked to a student representative who said that while the main issue had been the change in the way marks were to be awarded mid-way through the course, they believed this was part of a plan to reduce the number of students who qualified each year.

Because of lack of facilities, he said, like no proper laboratory, premises, equipment, or properly structured libraries (with often only one copy of important course books between all the students), those from the poorest families lost out. There were also 35 unfilled teaching posts at the

The students' case was there-



Goa students' hunger strike against the university authorities

fore much wider and they had won support from many other

The Fast unto Death site at the Ferry Wharf in Panaji became the focus for supporters to sign the register of support and for meeting parents.

The backdown by the Goa university authorities was almost complete. The proposal to change standards was dropped.

All mid-term examinations were postponed to enable teachers to complete the syllabus and for students to prepare for the exam which had been missed due to the students' strike.

A computer awareness programme was to be made available to students. Journals, library books and other publications would be made available to students by the colleges.

The university also assured students that it would ensure uniformity of assessment.

The student representative stressed to Workers Press that the campaign had no links with any Goan or other Indian political party. With the corrupt nature of those parties this is not

However, the Goan students have demonstrated their ability

to organise united action and mobilise wider support for a just

They must now begin to consider what kind of Goa, what kind of India, they want for the future. Will it continue to be run by the kind of people who run it now, the same kind of people who run Goa university?

Or do they want a country run for the benefit of the mass of people, not for a few corrupt businessmen and poltical figures?

The Goa student victory must be the spur to become a sharp and decisive political force on behalf of the many, not the few.

Work to rule on North Sea

OILWORKERS on the Shell Expro platform Brent Charlie have started a work-to-rule to protest about pay and conditions and demand union recognition.

The 200 workers say that pay and conditions have barely improved in the last five years. They also accuse the company of ignoring their vote last year to affiliate to the OILC. Their employers, the Wood Group, say that they will only allow the workers to be represented by a TUC-affiliated union.

The workers say that there has been no management response on the question of OILC recognition since an overwhelming vote in favour of the union in April 1995. Out of 364 ballot papers issued, 349 were returned: 292 of them were in favour of OILC.

Because of the lack of rovement in conditions over the last few years the workers have called to allow Ronnie McDonald, OILC's general secretary, to visit the rig. There has been no management response on this question either.

Ronnie McDonald dismisses the company's claims that they will not deal with the OILC because it is not affiliated to the

"They're not talking to unions at all. That's just a convenient excuse. We are a fully certificated legitimate union'.

Germany and the 'Afro-pessimists'

BY BOB ARCHER

A NASTY and ridiculous report in a recent issue of Die Welt (3 February 1996) reveals almost by accident the real contradictions the powerful imperialist nations face in relation to the ex-colonial

Reporting on a visit to the horn of Africa by German President Roman Herzog, the paper said: 'It is characteristic that in all three countries [Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea] the presi-[Uganda, dents are former guerrilla leaders who only reached power after

They belong to a new generation of leading personalities who themselves had to fight against the adventurers, bankrupts and bloodthirsty tyrants who have been so prominent in Africa for three decades.

'Uganda's president Yoweri Museveni Kaguta was the first to stop looking for alibis for the continent's poverty, but made it clear that it was Africans who bore the responsibility for brutal

oppression, corruption and mismanagement.

'After almost ten years of government he can show impressive economic data. Free market economy, little bureaucracy, low wages and low taxes have led to foreign investors queuing up.'

Die Welt likes Museveni because he opens the door to let foreign capitalists profit by exploiting workers who are paid starvation wages and have no social services, health care or insurance protection.

In fact it is imperialism which is constantly undermining stability in Africa, disrupting social life and shattering economies. Foreign capital is the most inhuman and disruptive force in the African continent, often acting through dictators left or right.

This has been reflected in the ins and outs of policy toward Africa. Looking back on five decades of German financial support for African dictators left and right, the Welt's correspondent ruefully admits they have all turned out to be political flops.

In fact Germany's senior

'Africa hand', Harald Ganns, had to be quietly dropped from Herzog's entourage because he was too closely associated with the likes of Arap Moi, Eyadema of Togo, Mobutu, Buthelezi, Savimibi, not to mention Nyerere and

One after the other, imperialist-imposed political solutions have turned out to be disasters. There is no sign that Musaveni is going to be any different.

So although the report emphasises grounds for opposing 'Afropessimism', the issues raised hardly encourage optimism.

The correspondent of Die Welt also emphasised that the flow of aid is going to be greatly reduced. He quotes a leading Bonn official who says aid has proved useless in the fight against poverty and that Africa must follow the example of the Asian 'tigers' and make their own way forward.

No doubt low wages will play a role in this new plan. How the imperialists hope to enforce this one without dictatorships is a

Uganda '96

African Liberation Support Campaign and Uganda Joint Working Platform for Democracy: A series of discussions on an African case of a fight-back against military dictatorship __ 'Building a task force network for democracy'. February to April 1996. Umoja Theatre, The

Base, 59 Bethwin Road, Camberwell, London SE5, 1pm-6pm. Sundays 11 and 25 Feb, 10 and 24 Mar, 7 and 21 Apr Case 1, **Sunday 11 February**: The Uganda People's Congress (UPC) and comparative parties in Africa Information: Kofi (0171-924 9033) or Alfred (0956 222 497)

South Place Ethical Society Library, Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL 0171-831 7723 Fax: 0171-430 1271

Thursday 21 March, 2.30pm The Hidden History of Fossils

An Investigation (with lots of specimens) into what our ancestors thought about the remains of prehistoric life.

Mike Howgate MSc

Workers Press invites all readers and supporters to the conference we are helping to organise on 16 March on the theme 'Crisis in the Labour movement and the need for a new party'.

At our recent meeting to mark the tenth anniversary of the relaunch of Workers Press we discussed how we would make significant changes in the paper.

Specifically we intend to produce a paper that is the voice and expression of the growing movement against the employers and the government.

We want to widen the scope of Workers Press, draw in more contributors, involve more supporters and readers in its editorial work.

As you will have seen from our coverage of the Liverpool dockers' strike (page 8), it is clear that the working class is now striving to reconstruct its international-

Our continuous support for the right of the Bosnian people to determine their own future was part of this same fight for working-class internationalism.

At the same time some of the most exploited sections of the working class — such as those at JJ Foods in north London and the strikers at Hillingdon hospital — are at the forefront of the fight against the attempts of the employers and the government to impose slave conditions on the working class.

We believe that these are signs of a fight back in the workingclass movement. But this fight back takes place in a situation where, in our opinion, it becomes ever clearer that the working class requires a new party that can express its historical needs and interests.

The Labour Party leaders

make no bones about the fact that there will be no reforms under any future government they form. On the contrary, as defenders of the capitalist system, they will be impelled to set out to take back from the working class all the gains it has made in its past struggles against the ruling class.

At the same time the remnants of the Stalinist bureaucracy in eastern Europe is fully committed to restoration of 'the market'—that is capitalism—with all the disastrous social and political consequences this involves.

Regular readers will know that for the last two years and more we have been discussing the need for such a new party.

We think that a mighty explosion is being prepared between the working class and the party — Labour — which for almost a century it has, on the whole, voted for.

The decision of Arthur Scargill to launch his Socialist Labour Party is an expression of this situation and our attitude towards his initiative is one question we want to discuss on 16 March

We have greatly valued the support from our regular readers for the last ten years. Without it we could not have survived, let alone made important improvements in our paper.

But a new turn in Workers Press must now be made. The paper must be opened up and placed in the hands of this new movement, it must involve a new layer of contributors — on the economic and political situation, internationally and in Britain, but also on the latest developments in the arts and sciences.

It is in this spirit that we invite you to come along and participate in the conference we are helping to organise on 16 March. Please ask anybody who you think might be interested to come along.

Linking up with world-wide struggle against imperialism

JULIE AFFIONG SOUTHEY spoke to Workers Press about the 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference:

AS A black woman, I am tired of state-sponsored racism in Britain today. The Tories have continued to play the race card which has resulted in the deaths of Omasase Lumumba, Joy Gardner, Kwanele Siziba and Joseph Nnalue.

More recently the Metropolitan police, who act on behalf of their paymasters, continue to kill black men in custody. The racist Asylum and Immigration Bill is a fresh attack on refugees and asylum seekers.

Home Secretary Howard deports refugees to repressive regimes, the Department of Trade and Industry exports arms to the very same countries.

International finance capital spreads its tentacles to every corner of the globe. The result? Massacres in Africa. Mayhem in Asia and Latin America. War in eastern Europe.

As an African woman living in Britain, I will be looking forward to sharing my perspectives for a new socialist party with other comrades, linking this up with the world-wide struggle of other peoples against imperialism.



WEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB. Tel: 0171-387 0564 Fax: 0171-387 0569

To all socialist and working-class organisations and individuals and all those fighting the Asylum and Immigration Bill

— THE NEED FOR A NEW SOCIALIST PARTY

CONFERENCE:

Saturday 16 March, 11am-5pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1

(Holborn tube)

Entrance: £1 (50p concession)

We oppose the Asylum and Immigration Bill not only because people fleeing oppression and destitution need safety and benefits to live on, but also because all people should have the right to live and work wherever they wish and because these racist laws provide support for extreme right-wing and fascist movements.

The working class is an international class because capitalism exploits and oppresses worldwide — through multinational companies and the international financial system. Oppression, injustices, huge variations in wages and living conditions, starvation and early death, food mountains and waste — these are all parts of a world system run for profit which divides people in order to rule them.

The working class needs a new party, its own party, to fight for socialism. It must be a party that unites all workers, whatever their national origins.

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. Labour's past policy on immigration has supported imperialist legislation and racist control in Britain and abroad.

We need to unite, we need to discuss, we need to prepare. That is the purpose of this conference. We warmly invite all those affected by and opposed to the Tories' racist immigration laws and their attacks on job, benefits and rights!

I want to attend the CRISIS IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT — THE NEED FOR A NEW SOCIALIST PARTY conference on Saturday 16 March, 11am—5pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 NAME

ADDRESS

Organisation (if any) Enclosed: £

Please complete and send this form with your entrance fee (£1 or 50p concession, cheques/POs payable to Workers Press) to: Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB. Credentials also available from Index Bookcentres at 28 Charlotte Street, London W1 (0171-636 3532) and 10-12 Atlantic Road, London SW9 (0171-274 8342). Please tell us if you need childcare facilities.

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PLEASE PHOTOCOPY AND DISTRIBUTE

Trade unions in the fight against racism

BY PHIL EDWARDS Tower Hamlets trades council secretary

TOWER HAMLETS TUC welcomes the call for the national demonstration against the Asylum and Immigration Bill. It is the duty of every trade unionist to join every worker, employed or unemployed, and every refugee on this demonstration.

Tower Hamlets trades council has campaigned for many years take the issues raised by this demonstration into the local community and into the trade union movement.

Every day the issues are aready there in our local communities, confronting every lack and Asian worker forced to ace racism on the streets, on the busing estates and in the very astitutions which are supposed provide them with the housing and welfare benefits which are heir right.

Those rights have now been written away in law.

Tower Hamlets TUC has pined with the Tower Hamlets

Anti-Racist Campaign (THARC) in circulating leaflets and organising meetings to discuss the issues raised.

At a recent meeting organised to discuss the bill, a member of the Asylum Rights Campaign described how asylum seekers and those in the black and Asian communities will inevitably face further discrimination as a result of this legislation.

If these groups — and in particular refugees and asylum seekers — were to avoid destitution, he said, communities would need to organise to ensure that they were properly housed and provided for.

This cuts across trade unions and communities and is in the deepest sense a class question. It is also international.

The trend right across Europe is to cut any safety line between itself and those threatened with extermination and torture in their own countries and to deny the existence of suffering in Africa and elsewhere from the repression carried out by governments sustained and installed by the imperialist powers.

An Algerian refugees' representative, who had suffered brutal prison conditions in the Campsfield detention centre, said they were treated worse than dogs. At least dogs had campaigns that defended their right to live free of torture and abuse.

But we are not dogs. We are all part of an international class which has fought for over a century and a half in its own defence and for the construction of organisations to uphold the very rights now threatened by this racist legislation.

The central question raised at the recent THARC meeting was the Labour Party and whether it would fight to reverse this bill. It was quite clear at the meeting — even to those representing it! — that the Labour Party was not prepared to launch or support any campaign on the bill.

The Labour Party is prepared to watch the Tory government take away welfare and housing rights from asylum seekers, starve them into leaving the country when they are at their most vulnerable and deny them any right of appeal against

refusal of refugee status or the right even to temporary asylum.

One member of THARC described a meeting with a member of Labour's national executive committee who said the party was not prepared to focus on this issue in the run-up to an election.

Blair has said that he would be even harder than the Tories on 'illegal immigrants'.

So what sort of party does the working class need?

This is an urgent question and it will need raising at the National Assembly Against Racism on 9 March in Tower Hamlets

Kumar Murshid represented this campaign at the last THARC meeting. He said that the 9 March meeting had to address the question of consolidating the divided anti-racist movement. But we need to do more than that.

The agenda behind the bill is not just to divide workers but to take away the basic rights of EVERY worker, unemployed young person, refugee . . and to cut welfare benefits, health and other services to the bone.

No more blood on the streets

TOWER HAMLETS trades council's invaluable 1994 pamphlet No More Blood On The Streets: How To Fight Fascism and Racism is still available. It is a follow-up to Blood On The Streets, a history of racist abuse suffered by Tower Hamlets' Bengali community up to 1978.

No More Blood On The Streets explains the economic conditions which lead to racism and fascism. As capitalism advances in its decay, the pamphlet explains, Ithe ownership of the factories and the service industries becomes . . . concentrated into fewer hands as the bigger capitalists eat up their rivals and as the available markets shrink.

'What was hidden before comes into the open — corruption . . . nationalism and whipped-up racism and, finally, the coup de grace — fascism.'

This pamphlet is vital reading for all those opposed to racism and fascism. 'Unity among the working class is essential. No group or individual must be allowed to stand in the way of achieving this aim.'

TUC response on Nigeria delegation

certainly want to be represented in any delegation to Nigeria in the near future', in response to a letter from the International Trade Union Solidarity Campaign.

The ITUSC's Keith Standring reported in Workers Press (20 January) that the the International Federation of Chemical, Energy and General Workers' Unions (ICEF) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICTFU) had been discussing a 'high level' delegation to the country to investigate trade union rights there.

'The ITUSC is pressing Bill Morris, John Edmonds and Roger Lyons, general secretaries respectively of the TGWU, GMB and MSF, to ensure a senior British trade unionist is included on the delegation since it is the British state, and Shell petroleum, that are the mainstays of the military regime,' wrote Standring.

The TUC response came from international department head Michael Walsh and adds that Bill Jordan had been on the last ICFTU delegation to Nigeria in October 1994.

International Trade Unionist Bulletin

COPIES of the February issue of the ITUSC's International Trade Unionist Bulletin are now available. To get your copy send £5 for 12 issues to ITUSC, PO Box 18, Epsom KT18 7YR, Britain. For a trial send 55p for the new issue.

The *Bulletin* tells us that news and articles are always welcome from anywhere in the world. Let the editor have your contributions at the above address.

'If I have no money for a room then I have no alternative but to be on the street'

is estimated that 30,000 refugees a year will be made tomeless and destitute by the way Asylum and Immigration will. Workers Press asked three sylum seekers at the YMCA in Stockwell, south London, how the way would affect them.

If I have no money for a room have no alternative but to be on he street,' said **Tekest Esifunos**,

I am in opposition to the overnment in Ethiopia — my ather is in jail there. If I go back will be jailed or killed — I have dready spent nearly four months a prison when I was 18.

This new law is very bad —

and it affects all refugees. It is not easy to come to Britain — we only come here because of problems in our own country. Everybody would rather live at home.'

A 28-year-old refugee from Togo added:

'Of course any asylum seeker will have problems paying the rent and being able to live because of these new laws.

Britain will have a much bigger homelessness problem.

'These laws are unfair because asylum seekers are not the real problem in Britain.

'It is the only country in Europe with a very small number of refugees

'We are forced to leave home because of serious problems. If I go back to my country I will be put in jail or killed.'

Kiflom Ahara from Ethiopia said: I was lucky. I came here in 1988, and have now been given Indefinite Leave to Remain. But this country is getting really bad for refugee people.

'There is still a big problem in the east of Ethiopia. Many Ethiopians are worried about the new law.

'If they are forced to go back they will be jailed or killed. Some are women and children. The British government has to look again at this new law.'

Kosova terror

THE Albanian community in Britain is to hold a rally on 10 March to mark 15 years since student demonstrations in Prishtina that were soon joined by the entire Albanian population in the region demanding the status of a republic for Kosova.

Since then the Albanians of Kosova have been forced to endure under under a regime of state terror exercised by Serbia. Their basic rights have been violated. All Albanian institutions have been closed down and a system of apartheid established.

Apart from a halt to Serbian police abuse and violence, to which up until now the Albanians have responded with nonviolent resistance, the main demand will be the recognition of the right to self-determination for the 2 million Albanians who constitute 90 per cent of the population of Kosova.

The march starts at 1pm, Marble Arch, London. A rally is planned for 2pm at Trafalgar Square. After speeches a petition is to be handed in to 10 Downing Street.

Send your letters and photos — Deadline Monday Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB

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E-mail: s@gp@exnet.co.uk

Historic international dockers' conference begins in Liverpool

PLAN FOR WORLD MERSEY DOCKS' BOYCOTT 'THIS is a historic conference', said Jimmy Nolan, addressing the international delegates meeting at Liverpool town hall on Sunday, 'this conference must be made continuous, we must establish a steering com-

mittee with representatives from all countries.'

Nolan announced that 53 delegates from 15 countries had regis-

tered. They came from all over the world, from the USA, Portugal, New Zealand, Australia, Denmark, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Greece, Ireland (north and south), France, Sweden and Germany.

They came to extend the support they've given to the sacked Liverpool men, they came to find a path to uniting their common

Three resolutions were proposed to the conference to support the Liverpool dockers' fight and to create the necessary international coordination among



BY ANDREW BURGIN AND NICK BAILEY

dockers to prepare for the fights ahead.

Jimmy Davies outlined an ambitious agenda, the conference was to be much more than a talking shop, it was to plan for a worldwide boycott of the port of Liverpool.

Workers Press spoke to a number of the delegates as they arrived at the conference.

Stroke

Phil Toby, vice-president of the Maritime Union of Australia, said: 'My union is right behind these dockers, we've raised \$39,000 for this dispute. It was a master stroke to involve dockers across the world.

He called for the ITF (International Transport Federation) to 'Raise their game' and give more support to the Liverpool men.

Roger Van Doninck from the Belgium Transport federation, a docker for 22 years at the port of Antwerp, told us: 'When I first started on the docks in 1974 there were 13,000 dockers, now we are 6,500. Casualisation is an issue for

and Traffic Union in Germany, has been a docker for over 30 years in Hamburg. He said: 'My union would not The London Support Committee for the Liverpool Dockers Acting under the auspices of the Liverpool Dockers Shop

Roger Van Doninck

all of us. Here in Liverpool they

want to throw away a whole gen-

He called the recent ITF state-

ment 'a positive development' but

went on to say that 'Bob Baeten

(national secretary of the Belgium Transport Union) decided

not to come, but he should be here, he should understand the

Jorg Wessels from the ÖTV,

the Public Services, Transport

problem of casualisation.'

support this dispute officially at a national level because they said it was unofficial, but I collected 2780DM at my port from workers on the dock to bring here,

that such a long conference will lead to serious discussion, we must find new ways forward, we must discuss what to do and how to survive. There are no jobs in Germany for the young generation, this must be considered.'

Philippe Gaudillo and Charles Thieullen had come from the Port of Le Havre. Following a visit by Liverpool dockers to Le Havre, their union had decided to send a delegation to the conference. Gaudillo hoped the conference would be 'constructive and positive'.

In the opening addresses many delegates echoed Nolan's desire to see a more permanent structure emerge from the discussions.

As the Greek delegate put it: 'We have to face the coordinated



Jorg Wessels



Philippe Gaudillo

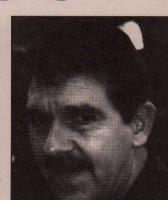
action of capital at an international level, trying to push the workers back to conditions at the beginning of this century, we have to organise internationally against this."

Next week we will examine the work of the conference in detail. The following points emerge clearly from the first day's work:

■ The conference aimed at serious practical support to win the dispute in Liverpool, while aiming to advance the situation of all dockers worldwide.

The conference was extremely well organised and the work was carried on in good humour.

■ The important role of the 'Women of the Waterfront' was



Charles Thieullen

What we begin to see in thi work is what we in the Worker International have discussed and argued for since 1990: The need for the working class to recon struct itself and its organisation on an international scale.

This conference arose entirely from the work of the Liverpoo dockers to win their dispute They turned outwards and vis ited ports throughout the world they lit a flame which the bureaucracy has not been able to extinguish.

As Mike Carden, from the standing orders committee, put it 'there have been those who have tried to undermine and ridicule this conference but they have no succeeded.'

Workers Press were proud to

Support Sacked Liverpool Dockers!

Stewards' Committee, c/o 19 Scorton Street, Liverpool L7 4AS

(London: 0171-627 8666)

PUBLIC MEETING

Thursday 7 March, 7.30pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (Holborn)

Chair: Eddie Loyden MP

Speakers: Francis Jones (Women of the Waterfront), Jimmy Nolan (chair, Liverpool Dockers Shop Stewards' Committee). Tony Santamera (RMT Seafarers' national secretary in a personal capacity), Vic Turner ('Pentonville Five' docker, jailed in 1972)

Liverpool dockers fight alongside all other workers fighting privatisation, casual work and unemployment. This meeting is called to RAISE RESOURCES AND UNITE THE STRUGGLES!

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Workers Press

Bosnia: NATO stunt can't hide war guilt

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

NATO military commanders are not much good at catching mass murderers (too much fellow-feeling perhaps).

Since the US-brokered Dayton peace' agreement on Bosnia, and the discovery of numerous mass graves, only two high-ranking Serb officers have been extradited to face the Hague war crimes tribunal; and both were captured by Bosnia and Herze-govina (BiH)'s own security forces, to NATO's obvious annoy-

matter. On Thursday night, 15 February, as Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian presidents were preparing for a weekend summit in Rome called by US Assistant Sec-

retary of State Richard Holbrooke, NATO forces swooped on a former ski chalet west of Sarajevo, apparently used as a Bosnian security forces training

Providing a photo-opportunity for invited media, US Admiral Leighton-Smith posed for the cameras, inspecting a sniper rifle. Reporters were shown grenades, explosive-packed toys and household objects, a sketch of a child's foot stepping on a booby-trap.

'The terrorists obviously didn't get any classes on the Geneva Convention,' commented an American officer. (US forces are experts on the Geneva Convention. Ask any Vietnamese.)

Suggestions that training might be needed for counter-terrorism were dismissed, although Bosnian civilians are still coming

under sniper-fire from Serb-held Sarajevo suburbs, and could face booby-traps as they move back into these areas.

Three of the instructors captured were Iranians!', said a BBC commentator, as though that in itself made them guilty of 'terror-

The much bigger training facilities at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Hereford or near Portsmouth weren't mentioned, of course - their men are terrorists, 'our boys' are special forces. US anti-personnel mines and British-manufactured boobytraps would obviously be nonlethal!

Anyway, we've not yet had to accept a NATO peace 'implementation force', not even in occupied Ireland. So why should Bosnia and Herzegovina, an internation-

attempted a mass break-out, but

most were machine-gunned by

leaders were protected by the

British and American govern-

After the war the Ustashe

Although himself a former

ally-recognised sovereign state have to account for military training facilities on its own soil?

If the CIA officers attached to Admiral Leighton-Smith's staff planned the raid, its timing betrays political spin-doctoring.

In the week before, while Serb General Djukic and Colonel Krsmanovic were flown to a Dutch prison, it was disclosed that their political chief, indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic, was travelling freely around Serbheld areas, crossing NATO Implementation Force (IFOR checkpoints without hindrance.

Karadzic's cocksure quiff has been seen on television and all the papers, as well as Hague tribunal mugshots, but British officers claimed they might not recognise him!

Indicted

In Medjugorje, still held by Croat nationalist forces, Dario Kordic, indicted as a mass murderer by the war crimes tribunal breakfasts at the next hotel table to European Union police offic-

Kordic is a leading member of Croatian President Tudjman's political party. His fellow-criminal General Tihomir Blaskic was promoted by Tudjman the day after being indicted by the Hague Tribunal. Tudjman encouraged hard-line Croat nationalists in Mostar to violently oppose the city's re-unification and integration into Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Mostar's Muslim mayor Safet Orucevic resigned last week after President Izetbegovic accepted a compromise in Rome which falls short of full integration.

Corrections

A FEW errors crept into our translation of Ludwik Haas's article on the Polish elections last week. The most important was that we mistakenly said that the peasant party was part of the peasant party was part of the Democratic Left Alliance. It is not It is a partner with the DLA in a coallition government. The DLA also includes the trade union federation, the RPZZ.

The former dissident Jacek Kuron is now also a former minister and is not currently in the government.

We also omitted the manual cent as stated in the article.

Hands off Nazi deathcamp memorial! Nazis' Croat puppet-regime. In April 1945 about 600 surviving CROATIA'S President Franjo inmates staged a revolt and

Tudjman has been warned he'll face legal action if he goes ahead with a plan to turn the memorial centre to Nazi victims at Jasenovac into a memorial for Croatian war dead Slavko Goldstajn, editor of the

independent magazine Erasmus, has written an open letter to Tudjman, warning that he'll file a lawsuit against him. Goldstajn says Croatia's Jewish community strongly opposes the plan.

Some 80,000 people, including 17,000 Jews from Croatia and Bosnia, thousands of Serbs and Gypsies, and many Croat and Muslim resisters, were killed at Jaseno-

vac during World War II. The camp was run by the

Communist Party member, Tudjman became notorious for his efforts as a historical revisionist whitewash the wartime Ustashe regime, and as president has welcomed back emigré

ments and the Vatican.

the Ustashe guards.

The museum at Jasenovac was damaged by Croat troops during

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workers' vote for Knaswiecki of 52 per cent. The apprentices voted by 52 per cent, not 51 per

the 1992-93 war.

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