Workers Press

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BRENTUNIONS

UNISON members in the borough of Brent, north-west London, are stepping up the fight against the derecognition of their union by the Tory council.

The local government union lobbied members of the council's Policy and Resources committee last week (see page 3) where the council's Tory majority pressed ahead

with their derecognition The committee moves. accepted the recommendation from the Personnel committee to go for derecognition.

The derecogntion will be implemented after the council has taken legal advice and after consulting Unison national officials.

Brent is held by the Tories on the casting vote of the Mayor.

If the Tory council is successful, consultation between the council and the nearly 2,000 members of Unison would cease. The national agreements now in place would be threatened as well as many of the local conditions fought for by the union in the past.

Local agreements have been achieved in Brent which are often better than those negotiated nationally. These too would be immediately at risk.

Fear

Union members fear current sick pay arrangements, maternity leave provisions, and equal opportunity agreements could be swept away if the union was no longer recognised.

Local members of Unison are worried that national officials have started negotiations with the council without

the involvement of local officials.

They are especially concerned that the council may be trying to curb the powers of Unison regional officer Stuart Barber who has campaigned to expose maladministration and racism in the borough.

Support

Local union officials say their fight has won support throughout London with many applying to join the union in Brent itself.

It is clear that if the Tories get away with their derecognition plans this will give the green light to any other council to launch the same sort of attack against the country's largest union.

Union members in Brent ask all who support their

■ Send letters of protest to Brent council calling for the threat against Unison to be condemned unconditionally. To Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane, Wembley, London HA9

■ Write to Rodney Bickerstaffe urging the full weight of Unison be put behind the campaign against derecogition. To Unison, Mabledon Place, London WC1.

Labour supports new 'Sus' laws

THE Labour Party leadership gave its support to measures being rushed through parliament on Wednesday that will give police sweeping new powers of body search and arrest on the streets.

After private talks with Tory ministers and senior Metropolitan Police officers, shadow home secretary Jack Straw said he accepted that such powers were needed to combat a supposed IRA cam- minority communities.

paign to mark the 80th anniversary of the 1916 Easter

Under these new measures, police can name a 'specified area' for 28 days where officers can stop and search pedestrians, even if they have no reasonable suspicion that they are involved in any terrorist activity.

Even the Liberal Democrats opposed the measures as a return to the 'Sus' laws abolished a decade ago which were often used to oppress ethnic

Women of the Waterfront's **WOMEN'S DAY**

Wednesday 10 April

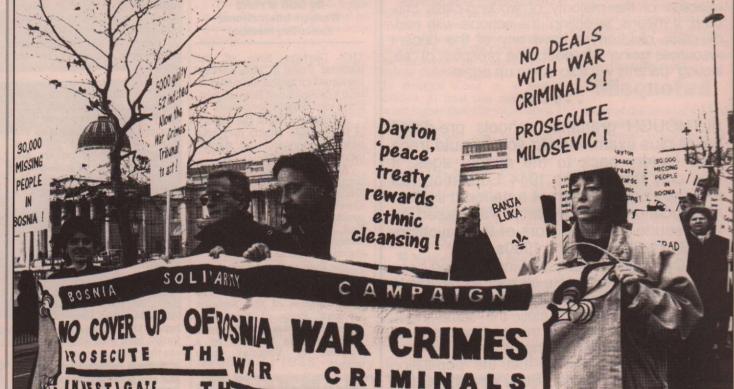
Assemble 11am, The Strand, Bootle March to Seaforth Container Base

Book a coach! Come in force! Take the day off! Bring your banners!

All national union offices have details

WOW c/o Transport House, Islington, Liverpool L3 8EQ Telephone 0151-207 3388 Fax 0151-207 0696

(Clearly marked WOW!) London coach contact Liz Leicester 0171-911 1686



R CHIS

Demonstration last Saturday against the cover-up of war crimes in Bosnia

Photo: Marg Nicol

as beef industry collapses

BY DANIEL ROBERTSON

THE Tories are trying to sweep health concerns about BSE under the carpet as they blame everyone but themselves for the growing beef crisis.

Media hype is blamed — as if confirmed human deaths from BSE are of no conse-

Still denying that there is any risk from eating British beef, they have twisted and turned to minimise the need to cull infected herds.

This is clearly now going to happen — although the logistics of slaughtering millions of cattle defy the imagination.

The European Union have stepped in with offers to help with the massive cost of clearing British beef of BSE, reflecting common concerns over a growing boycott of beef and beef products across Europe. Cases of European deaths from the new strain of CJD have been reported.

British-produced animal feed has probably spread the infection into herds across Europe. A past cover-up of this situation seems likely to produce new panics across

Europe. The whole beef industry, which is a massive profit earner worldwide, is threatened with a loss of credibility

amongst consumers who are and propel the beef industry increasingly willing to question the healthiness of massproduced food.

Thousands of jobs have already disappeared, tens of thousands will follow. Sacrificing Edwina Currie did not make Salmonella in eggs disappear - Douglas Hogg's departure will not perform a miracle for beef.

Yo-yo

Sales are going up and down like a yo-yo in response to price cuts and reassurances from supermarkets. But the steady effect of successive CJD deaths will inevitably eat away at consumer confidence into terminal decline.

Details of how the deadly infection may have been transmitted to cattle are becoming clearer. A frequently posed defence of BSE beef has been that the origin of the infection - scrapie in sheep - has not previously infected humans.

It now seems possible that the defective beef rendering process used to prepare the animal feed that passed the infection from sheep to cattle selected out a particularly virulent strain.

Numerous different types of scrapie occur in sheep with

TURN TO PAGE 3

next m2 + (Crisis in the labour movement) n49 E + India n6 + Spain n7 + Bosnia n9

Grammar and rhetoric

ONCE again the Tory government is putting forward proposals to allow more 'selection' of pupils by schools. Schools may be allowed to 'select' their entire intake and they may be allowed to set up consortia to run 11-plus exams.

What is being proposed is not the reintroduction of the grammar schools, as suggested by the simplistic headlines in the press. The moves are part of the government's attack on education as such. They are driven by the desire to keep their middle-class supporters happy along with the needs of capital to force down state spending. There is no 'method' in their madness. They don't want to educate the majority of the population in any meaningful way; their purpose is to provide a sop to their supporters.

HOW would 'better' schools work in the new situation? How could parents get a 'better' education for their children? It would be another national lottery - with the stake being children's futures.

'Selection' in education has always meant rejection of the majority of working-class children. It means 'selecting' the schools with middle-class children to have any of the decent resources going. No doubt the prospect of 'selecting' parents will also come up again.

ALTHOUGH grammar schools pre-dated the 11-plus exam, indeed some could trace their history back to the middle ages, it was only through the 1944 Education Act that they became part of a national system of education. This 'system' was based on the pseudo-scientific work of the psychologist Sir Cyril Burt in the 1930s.

Sir Cyril studied identical twins who had been separated early in life. He claimed to be able to show that independent of their upbringing the twins were of approximately the same intelligence in later life and that this intelligence could be measured through testing.

It was further claimed that the population divided into three 'types'. There were those able to run things, the managers and technologists, there were the skilled, technical workers and there were the general unskilled workers. Hence there was the need for three types of education: grammar, technical and secondary modern. This was called the tripartite education system although it was in fact bipartite since few technical schools were built. The purpose of the 11-plus exam was to pigeon-hole children into the three categories.

One major flaw to Sir Cyril's reasoning was found to be that there just weren't the number of twins separated early in life that he claimed. Sir Cyril had made up some of the 'results' to fit his preconceptions! Despite some recent right-wing attempts to defend Burt, this was one of the most infamous scientific scandals of the 20th century. It provided a 'scientific' basis for Britain's education system. This is the perverted history of the hated 11-plus exam.

EDUCATION will only become a liberating influence in the majority of people's lives in a society freed from capital's drive for profit.

Socialists interested in the education of themselves and future generations - parents, children, teachers and lecturers and most of all workers who have had a raw deal from state. education - must make sure that this is a central part of the discussions around the formation of a new party of the working class.

Letters

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

GEOFF BARR insists (Workers Press, 30 March) that we should join the Socialist Labour Party: of internal crises. I reported the east London Get in there and promote revolu-tionary politics. To stay out and

preach would be sectarian.' Let us leave aside the problem I did write the report with a that the SLP seems determined to adopt the exclusivity of the 'left' sects. Just how vigorous the internal political life of the party organisation. is and how it reflects the real struggles of the working class

and other remains to be seen. The 'main issue' is whether the SLP can rise to the situation in which the working class finds itself. Unless it does so it cannot play a pivotal role in rebuilding the working-class movement.

Socialist

Labour

So far there has been no serious attempt from the SLP to address the real changes that broke up old Labour.

party has flourished which could both make very significant concessions to the working class and be a part (sometimes a decisive one) of the British imperialist

This type of relationship is breaking up all over Europe and the parties which embodied it are consequently racked by a variety

meeting of the SLP as objectively as I could in Workers Press (9

certain sense of responsibility to the workers who turned out and clearly do feel the need for a new

The attitude of the leading SLP members at that meeting was to insist doggedly that they were carrying on the traditions of 'old' Labour.

Bob Crowe made a number of significant points, but he went out of his way to rubbish any mention of the capitalist crisis.

WRP members at the south London meeting that same night got the same sort of response oke up old Labour. when they pressed the main speakers on the nationalist limi-

tation which restricts the party's outlook and on how they plan to attract younger members.

The critical situation in which the working class finds itself is felt keenly by many, and that is why both SLP public meetings in London became the focus of interesting discussions.

This reflects the intensifying structural crisis of capitalism but in no way does it do it justice.

There are many groups active in the east London working-class movement (and by no means either right-wingers or sectarians) who steered well clear of the SLP meeting.

Let's not abstain from serious work with them by diving into

Bob Archer

Imperialist troops out

AMONG the decisions of the 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference, Workers Press mentions (23 March) a resolution on Ireland.

Letters

longer than

500 words

WILL be cut

It writes: 'The conference also voted support for Irish Republican political prisoners and demanded their unconditional realease.

Unfortunately Workers Pres misses the second part of the resolution moved by me, that is fight for the withdrawal, withou any condition, of imperialis occupation troops from Northern Ireland:

I believe, with Rosa Luxem burg, that 'the enemy is in ou country', that Great Britain makes an imperialist, colonia war in Northern Ireland.

For that reason the condition to be a real internationalist in Great Britain is to fight for th withdrawal of occupation troops

Only on that base it is possible to criticise Gerry Adams' dea with British imperialism and raise the fight for a workers' solution in Ireland, for the unity of the British and Irish working

Janos Borov

Support Bosnian miners' visit

By BOB MYERS Workers International **Executive member**

THE Durham Area of the National Union of Mineworkers has issued an appeal for money to help a delegation of Bosnian miners to visit Britain (see below).

A fragment from the history of the Bosnian miners may help people understand the significance of this gesture.

At the beginning of this century, salt and coal miners of the Tuzla region lived in the same appalling conditions as their counterparts here in the North East. As everywhere else, Tuzla miners tried to organise against the mine owners

The Russian Revolution sent a powerful message of workingclass unity across the world. The first congress of the Socialist Workers' Party of Yugoslavia (Communist) was held in April 1919. This was followed by a congress of Yugoslav trade

Across Europe the old differences of religion, nationality and language that had set worker against worker were being broken down. This growing unity of workers was showing humanity a

To miners' unions and other

organisations of working people:

ple of Bosnia-Herzegovina have

suffered a terrible aggression

aimed at dividing the country

Our miners' union and our

miners have resisted this division

but we have suffered appalling

hardships. Many miners volun-

teered to go to the front to defend

their communities. Many have

have tried to maintain some pro-

duction without which the cold and darkness for our people

would have been even worse than

it was. But it has been a hard

the war without pay. All equip-

ment is worn out and much is

now useless. Our mining towns

have often been surrounded and

We have worked throughout

Those who remained at work

For nearly four years the min-

Dear Friends,

along ethnic lines.

been killed.

blockaded.

way out of the barbarism being inflicted by capitalist nation states. It was met with brutal opposition from the capitalists.

Miners in the Tuzla region fought over and over to try and improve their wretched conditions of life.

In December 1920, a strike began in mines around Tuzla. Many of the miners were from Slovenia and other countries. The mine owners had a policy of throwing striking miners and their families out of mine-owned hovels. Police and the army would help the owners by deporting non-Bosnian miners.

To avoid this breaking up their strike, about 100 families moved out of their own homes and into those of Bosnian miners and other workers in nearby vil-

Many went to Husino, where police and the army launched an attack two days later to try and break the strike. The miners fought back with what few weapons they had.

Several miners were killed and one policeman was mortally wounded. A 20-year-old miner, Kerosovic, took wounded policeman into his house to try and care for him but the man died.

of the collapse of other manufac-

turing industries, there is not

enough work for us all to do. We

are facing privatisation and an

have kept our union alive

through the war. We want to

make sure our union continues to

be able to help defend the rights

very hard. We need help. We are

asking you for help in the same

way that in the past we have

given help to other workers around the world when they had

ain the following delegation to

discuss our problems with you:

Fikret Suljic (federation presi-

dent), Luka Bradaric (vice-presi-

We would like to send to Brit-

But right now our situation is

of our miners.

problems.

Against great difficulties we

Tuzla miners' appeal

Eventually the police overran the village and the strike was broken through arrests and deportations. Kerosovic had been seen holding the policeman and was charged with his murder.

The trial judge sentenced him to be hanged and said that he would personally come to the prison to hang him.

Kerosovic managed to have a knife smuggled into the prison to deny the state, and the judge, their pleasure. He plunged the knife into his stomach with the cry: Long live the working class, victory to the proletariat!

A jailer grabbed the knife and prevented the miner making another swipe. Kerosovic did not die. The state, with its sadistic hatred of the working class, decided he must first recover before it hanged him. The execution was postponed.

This gave the working class time to act. Across Europe the workers' movement protested against the hanging. Miners of every country saw their own fate entwined with the life of a Bosnian miner.

The protest succeeded in forcing the authorities to commute the sentence to life in jail. Further protest reduced it to 20 years. Kerosovic spent 17 years in Zenica prison.

On his release he returned to Husino and not long after, like many other miners, he joined the partisans in the fight against fascism and ethnic cleansing. In Husino today there is still the monument to the 1920 strikers and the partisans who continued the struggle of Yugoslav against division and exploitation.

The present war in the Balkans is aimed at destroying everything that was achieved in that fight for unity.

The miners have not escaped the onslaught of revenge waged by nationalism, backed by capitalism, against that unity. Today contact between miners in the different parts of former Yugoslavia is almost non-

Many mines have closed Kosovo miners live under martia law. In nationalist-held regions of Bosnia miners have been used a slave labour to dig trenches an the abandoned pits filled wit the victims of genocide.

Even in the free territories of Bosnia, where miners and other workers fought to hold off th nationalist advance, the memo ries and ideas of their fathers an grandfathers have grown din ideas of socialism abandoned.

Miners await the privatisa tion of their pits, the robbing of their labours, as onlookers. Th idea of working-class solidarit has lost any real meaning.

'After all,' the miners will say 'no workers came to help us.' Today thousands of Bosnia

miners face a grim future wit their own and other industrie destroyed. If they have hope, it i a vague idea about capital from the West coming to help them ou

But in defending Bosni against ethnic division - i defending the right of all work ers to live together — they hav stood in the same line of struggi of their forebears.

It is they and not Milosevi (the president of so-calle Yugoslavia) who have kept aliv the true spirit of Yugoslavia. It from that principled defence undivided, multi-cultural Bosni that a unity of working peop throughout former Yugoslav can be rebuilt.

Whatever the problems, th recent strike of Kakanj mine and the present visit by miners Britain are small candles burning out of the darkness

The history of Bosnian an Yugoslav miners is not yet sepa rated from the living preser Miners will again play a decisiv role in deciding the future society.

The Workers Internation appeals for all militant worke and anti-fascists to do everythin

they can to make sure the vis helps rebuild the kind of solida ity that prevented the mine own ers killing Jure Kerosovic.

Durham miners

Please find enclosed a copy of a fax we have received from the miners' union in Tuzla. As you can see they are in desperate need of help. We have agreed to launch an appeal to raise the funds required to bring a delegation of four miners from Tuzla to Brit-

ing for the delegates to addre

c/o The Miners Hall, Red Hi Dear Friends, Durham. All cheques should be made

If you or your organisation can help could you please send a

donation to: The Tuzla Miners Aid Fund

you as soon as possible.

Following the Dayton peace the actual fighting has stopped but the problems have not gone Address: Mije Kerosevica

dent), Resad Husagic (secretary, Tuzla miners), Tihomir Babic (mining technician and translator). We look forward to meeting

Tuzla, 11 March

Now many miners are being demobilised and need their jobs back but with destroyed machin-287 75 891 499

Fikret Suljic Miners' union president

Cuje 1, 75000 Tuzla. Telephone: 00 387 75 212 111 ext 594. Fax: 00

please write to us at the addre above.

Yours fraternally, D. Hopper General secretary,

out to Tuzla Miners Aid Fund

We are hoping that their vis

will be soon. Any one who may

able to help by organising a mee

BSE — health

FROM FRONT PAGE

different degrees of virulence. Cattle BSE agent transmitted back to sheep produces a 'super-scrapie' that infects a wide range

In addition it now seems likely that the new strain of CJD (human BSE) suspected of coming from BSE-contaminated cattle

has occasionally been seen in the

that this undermines the BSE ori-

gin argument, however it also

seems possible that this means

that humans have been dying for

some time from this 'super-

human exposure to this form of

scrapie, presumably in lamb and

mutton, has been limited until

now. The practise of feeding dead,

diseased sheep to cattle has let it

loose on millions of cattle with

where millions of human con-

sumers have also been exposed to

this agent with unpredictable

And now we have a situation

deadly results.

future health effects.

Deaths have been rare because

Some defenders of beef claim

concerns

ignored

of other animals.

Belfast support for Liverpool dockers

From an industrial correspondent

SUPPORT for the 500 sacked Liverpool dockers from dockers and other workers in the north of Ireland came at a meeting in Belfast on Saturday 30 March at Transport House. The meeting colected £62.50 for the strike fund.

In the 1960s Belfast had 3,000 workers on the docks. There are now 60. The meeting started late because the Irish dockers were meeting union officials. When that meeting was over, none of the officials even poked their heads around the door!

Liverpool dockers' chair Jimmy Nolan spoke of the history of the dispute starting from the sackings at Torside dock and the trade union principle of not crossing

The action was unofficial so there was no support from the Transport and General Workers'

anti-union laws.

Nolan welcomed development of support groups for the dispute and said that all 500 sacked dockers were getting only £40 to £50 a

He stressed that the strike would continue until they got reinstatement. He was pleased with the unity in action of the political groups and said differences were being put aside to work for the dockers.

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company was using the anti-union laws to back up its belief that workers were their

There had been 3,500 meetings so far in support of the Liverpool

A big problem was that other workers couldn't take part in solidarity action because they would be be sacked.

A Labour government had to scrap the anti-union laws. Workers had to make it very clear to Tony Blair that they would not tolerate these laws any more.

Minford and Peter Stoney had written an advert to support the employer in the Liverpool Echo at a cost of £10,000! The dockers had challenged them to an open debate but they had refused.

MDHC thought they'd isolated the dockers - but then the dockers had turned for international support. This would be their ultimate success

They had been accused of destroying the economy of Liverpool but labour power was the source of profit — whether from trade unionist or scab.

The scab-herding company Drake International, based in the Bahamas, had never made a profit. It was a scab firm supported by the government.

Liverpool docker Frank Mannigan spoke of how they had maintheir trade union organisation after the defeat of the 1989 strike to defend the National Dock Labour Scheme.

The Liverpool dockers had been out since September 1995. would stop with them, but when this didn't happened they turned to internationalism.

They went to to the American shipping company ACL, in Newark, New Jersey. They picketted every longshoreman (US dockers) who refused to

MDHC had been forced to talk to the dockers. Now it was not a question of money but of full reinstatement.

The principle they were negotiating on was jobs, reinstatement and one contract of employment instead of the six put forward by the employer to divide the workforce.

The only ones that can run the docks are the dockers, Mannigan

The company had offered a £25,000 pay-off to each docker. This had been rejected by 85 per cent in a ballot.

Behind the employer Bernard Cliff was the Tory government. When the dock labour scheme ended in 1989, Norman Fowler had put in a clause to break the strike promising no casualisation on the docks.

The dockers had sent a letter to John Major demanding that he enforce the 1989 law. He has done

There were a number of contributions to the discussion.

One worker who had not been invited and wasn't a docker spoke in the odd position 'as an officer of the T&G'. During the miners' strike everyone had been prepared to hold their coat but not get into the fight. He talked of the dangers from the proposal by the Tories to remove employment rights from all firms under 60

It was thought important to go beyond the union leaders and get regular money from members.

Jimmy Nolan suggested that the theme of the Mayday Parade be changed to support the Liverpool dockers and thought it would be good to make contact with the women's network in the

Union pay

MOST of Britain's top trade est report of the government's

Top of the league last year was Gordon Taylor, chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association who secured a package in 1994 worth £295,741, made up of a basic salary and a range of

Association was the other union leader whose pay topped the £100,000 mark (£101,347). Peter Smith, secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers on £95,343 was not far behind.

When we come to unions affil-

Perhaps it is time to revive the demand that union leaders should get the average wage of their members.

Meanwhile union membership continued to drop — down 5 per cent to 8.23 million belonging to the unions. This was the 15th year of decline after union membership peaked at 13.2 million in

bonanza

union leaders are now on 'annual remuneration packages' of more than £60,000, according to the lat-Certification Office.

Dr Mark Armstrong, general secretary of the British Medical

iated to the TUC, Alan Jinkinson, Unison general secretary, the country's biggest union, weighed in with a modest £66,120 a year, to be followed by shopworkers' leader Garfield Davies who had to struggle along on a mere £65,914. At least this was somewhat higher than the wages of his members.

But Davies was somewhat more fortunate than miners' leader Arthur Scargill, whose wages came to only £62,526 in 1994 (about £1,200 a week before the Inland Revenue had its slice).

The government's view seems to be that its too late now anyway lets just try to save the profits of the beef industry.

Recent opinion from govern-

ment scientific advisers has been shockingly contradictory. Statements that BSE could be worse than AIDS are followed by reassurances that beef is perfectly safe to eat.

The problem here is defining 'safe'. Does this mean that the food we eat now is so contaminated by the products of intensive farming that one more health threat makes little difference?

Misquoted

Many of the scientists that the government have referred to as offering past reassurances are now coming foward to explain how their warnings were ignored and often misquoted.

The zoologist who was the government's chief adviser on BSE in the late 80s has insisted that his advice was consistently ignored.

Most human exposure to BSE happened after the government had been warned of the dangers but failed to take prompt action. This makes them clearly complicit in any deaths that occur.

On the scientific front reports from the US suggest that a test for BSE in cattle and CJD in humans may soon be available. If widely applied this is likely to spark off a major escalation of the

An additional concern has been expressed by Harold Stern, an eminent professor of virology, who has pointed out that the nerve fibres present throughout muscle tissue may transmit the BSE agent from its base in the central nervous system deep into meat tissue.

The government has argued that meat is totally free of BSE. He pleads for the complete destruction of all British cattle as being the only safe answer to the crisis.

The issue of the declining quality of food, the threat this poses to human health, and the manner in which this reflects capitalism's slide into chaos will be analysed in detail in future articles.

The newly-formed Socialist Science Forum will make this a priority campaign issue. This will include demanding a people's inquiry into the BSE scandle.

Lobby of Brent council against derecognition last Tuesday (front page) Photo: Ed Hall

Relatives in high places

THE Royal Opera House's new chair is the selfsame person who headed the Arts Council's lottery panel when it awarded a not disimilar organisation £55 million! Peter Gummer, brother of Enivironment Secretary John, is the chairman in question.

And he's not the only ministerial relative to make the big time recently. Heritage Minister Vir-Bottomley's brother, Christopher Garnett. is chief executive for Great Northern Railways, just awarded the Inter-City East Coast franchise.

One-person strike!

IRISH airline Ryanair, which does not recognise trade unions, is likely to be picketed soon if it. does not withdraw its dismissal last June of baggage handler Ray Healy. The company rejected a Labour Court recommendation to re-instate him.

Ray's union SIPTU, balloted him last month, and he voted for strike action to regain his job. SIPTU's civil aviation branch has been authorised to notify the company of strike action.

Advertisement

Marx at the Millenium (Pluto, £12.99) by Cyril Smith. Book signing by the author. Index Bookcentre, 28 Charlotte Street, London Wl. Thursday III April 5.30-7pm. All Workers

Cyprus army killing won't go away

BY BRONWEN HANDYSIDE

THREE British soldiers, who raped and beat to death a young tour guide in Cyprus, were sentenced to life imprisonment for manslaughter last week.

The defence had failed to have the case overturned on technicalities — the soldiers, however, will appeal the sentence on more tech-

Allan Ford, Justin Fowler and Geoffrey Pernell had spent the evening getting blind drunk — as they often did — when they saw 23-year-old Louise Jensen riding pillion on her Cypriot boyfriend's motor bike.

They swerved their car deliberately to knock her off the bike, drove off her boyfriend and dragged her into the vehicle.

They took her to a secluded spot, where they raped her, beat her to death with a spade and buried her in a shallow grave. The Observer (31 March) quotes Ford describing his drinking pal as he dealt the death blows: Fowler swung the spade from above his head and grunted with each blow and he kept hitting her over and over again so many times that he took her face off before my eyes.'

The British military authorities have maintained throughout the trial that the behaviour of the atypical and no reflection on their regiment or the army.

But many complaints have been made about the brutal behaviour of off-duty, drunken soldiers in Cyprus. Allan Ford, an alcoholic, was already facing trial for slashing a British tourist with a broken glass a month before the murder of Louise Jensen.

Ford himself told Observer: 'My life was in the army, but why didn't they help? That girl would have been alive today if they had cured our drinking.'

The case is horribly reminiscent of the recent trial and conviction of three American servicemen in Okinawa who abducted a 12-year-old girl, tied and gagged her, and gang-raped her. There too the local population reacted with fury.

Recent news stories have revealed the rampant culture of racism, homophobia and sexism permeating the British army and navy. The consciousness of being a kind of occupying force also encourages in soldiers a dangerous contempt for the local community.

This macho culture, encouraged by British army authorities, together with boredom and excessive amounts of alcohol, was a lethal combination. According to Allan Ford, a combination which will continue to

Workers Press — May lectures (details later) MARXISM AND THE HISTORY

OF THE BRITISH **WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT**

Some lessons for today

national

tional.

1. Chartism and Socialism

The world-historical significance struggle. of Chartism. 'The first proletarian revolutionary movement' (Lenin). Marx and Engels's engagement with the Chartists. Engels's Condition of the Working Class. Chartism's two wings: 'moral' and 'physical'. The relationship between socialism (Robert Owen, etc.) and the Chartists. Some lessons for the new party.

2. Karl Marx and the British trade union movement

The role of the British trade unions in the formation of the International Workingmen's Association (the First International). How Marx saw the International and how he worked in, organised and led it.

3. Marx and the Struggle against sectarianism in the labour movement

The role of the petty bourgeois in the International. The Proudhonists and the followers of Bakunin. The fight against this tendency by Marx and Engels and its historical significance. The fight for the legal eight-hour day against national, founded in 1889. The role of the struggle for mass trade

industrial from the political

4. Frederick Engels and the

foundations of the Second Inter-

The origins of the Second Inter-

unionism in its formation. The entry of new forces into new politics in this period. Struggles in the east end of London. The part played by Marx's daughter, Eleanor, in the formation of the New Unions and the Interna-

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British section of the Workers International (to Rebuild the Fourth International)

Name Address	date	
Trade unic	on (if any)	Age (if under 00)

Send to: PO Box 735, London SW8 1YB

Inside left

Bigheads, little brain

HERE'S one thing worse than the morance of some contributors to the orn-again Communist Party of reat Britain's Weekly Worker. It's be arrogance with which they air it. Like Tory ministers, they affected

eutrality' over Bosnia, asserting 'all ides' equally repugnant, and declarng nothing could be done, except to arve the country up on 'ethnic' lines. hus they support the very nationalts they pretend to despise.

If you want self-determination for he Bosnian people, says Phil Kent, ou must also accept 'self-determinaon' (i.e. separation) for Serbs and roats within Bosnia. Lord Owen, or adovan Karadzic, could not put it etter. Those Serbs and Croats who efend a multi-cultured Bosnia gainst the separatists, those Bosnian tizens proud of their mixed descent, on't count.

With more patience than I could uster, James Tait, an Edinburgh eader who went to Bosnia with Torkers Aid, has answered Weekly lorker's arguments, particularly its buse of 'self-determination' as a uphemism for 'ethnic cleansing'.

Last August, James predicted that Simperialism only wanted 'a rump fuslim-statelet dominated by its two ggressive (and genuinely imperial-

t-backed) neighbours.'

On 22 February, criticising Phil lent's remark that 'the Serbs in Bosia have just been defeated', he rgued that 'as far as the Chetnik ackers in Belgrade are concerned, e war aims of Serbia (in Bosnia) ave been accomplished. Serbia now ontrols half of all Bosnian territory."

James asked whether Kent suported Ulster loyalists' claims to 'selfetermination'; noting that loyalists ave spoken of emulating Chetnik olicies in Bosnia, i.e. ridding areas bey control of 'ethnically undesir-

ble elements'.

Kent replied on 14 March: 'James ait is quite right to say that if I cept the right of Catholics, Muslims nd Orthodox Christians in exugoslavia to self-determination en I must also give this right to rotestants in the north of Ireland.

Except that the protestants in the orth consider themselves British nd it is not my job to artifically crete new nations. Anyway their politial project is not self-determination. ut political domination under the rotection of British imperialism.

And the Chetniks, armed and comanded by regular officers from Sera, or the Catholic fascist Ustashe in erzegovina, aren't for domination Greater Serbia, or Greater Croatrespectively? What kind of 'compretends these rotten unist' hauvinists are only fighting for eir 'rights'?

Worse follows. Referring to the iners in Tuzla, Kent asks 'What nti-government forces can the mins turn to? Hardly the Serbs or roats, whose rights they refused to efend.' This is malicious invention.

Anyone who has been to Tuzla will ave seen the statue of a heroic armed iner, commemorating workers' sistance to the Serb monarchy in 20 when it tried to deport Croat

orkers. Throughout this war, Tuzla people ave stood by their neighbours. The ly Serbs whose 'rights' the miners enied were the nationalists firing ortar bombs into the town, and kill-

g workers' children.

Having himself referred to Chetks as 'the Serbs', Kent accuses James ait — an active anti-fascist — of ating 'all Serbs', and 'acting as a cruiting sergeant for fascism'.

If CPGB members want to be taken mously when they ask for discuson, they should disown such smears; nd show some respect for Bosnian univers resisting fascist 'ethnic eensing.

'Crisis in the labour movement' conference

Anew part

At the 16 March 'Crisis in the labour movement' conference on 'The need for a new socialist party', CLIFF SLAUGHTER's speech on behalf of the WRP/Workers Press was based on the following notes

Introduction

THIS conference can prove to have been a historic meeting. Depending on what we do in the coming months, there is a real prospect of founding a party which unites all those who fight to break the power of capital and for socialism.

This conference is three years in the making. It was in 1993 that we in the Workers Revolutionary Party/ Workers Press raised the question of the necessity of a new party of the working class fighting for socialism.

A great historical change had taken place. The working class in Britain was being subjected to a continuous offensive from the employing class, assisted and spearheaded by the Thatcher regime and followed up by Major.

This was not just a policy but an international offensive against the working class by a capitalist system which had entered a new stage of its historical crisis as a system. The offensive comes not from the strength of capitalsm but from its crisis, its weakness.

The working class fights back. The year-long miners' strike, the printworkers' fight at Wapping, the movement against pit closures, last year's mass movement in France, the heroic Bosnian resistance, and now the Liverpool six-month-old dock strike and the struggles of the JJ Fast Food and Hillingdon workers, are some highlights of this resistance.

A resolution moved by Greek delegates and carried at the international conference called by the Liverpool dockers shows the international character of the fight provoked by the crisis:

'We ... believe that the working class in all parts of the world is being tested by the prolonged politics of one-sided austerity, eroding decades of social gains to the benefit of capi-

Stalinism

TO UNITE and organise this resistance, and to turn defence into the necessary offensive for socialism, the working class would have to build new instruments of struggle, new political organisations, a new party adequate to the size and nature of the

Into this situation enters something entirely new: after decades of crisis, the Stalinist bureaucracy disintegrated at the end of the 1980s. Its regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe collapsed.

The Stalinist ruling bureaucracy and its government 'Communist' parties became open agents of the restoration of capitalism. The Communist Parties in the capitalist countries broke up, as for example in Britain, or changed their names to become openly 'social-democratic' as

For many years, and especially since the end of World War II, the Stalinist regimes and the world's Stalinist parties had been the main support in stabilising world capitalism and controlling the workingclass movement, on the basis of the doctrines of 'socialism in one country' and 'peaceful coexistence with capitalism, peaceful competition between the two systems'.

Their collapse was part of world capitalism's crisis, in that this crisis is now marked above all by the exhaustion of all capitalism's escapemechanisms.

Stalinism has done enormous damage to the workers' movement and the cause of socialism, but it is essential, for the way forward, to understand that Stalinism's collapse is positive, removing as it does the main barrier between the working class and Marxism and removing capitalism's main support.

Labourism

IN CONFRONTING the present offensive of capitalism, the working class is compelled to recognise in practice that over the last threequarters of a century it has been failed by the so-called Communist (Stalinist) parties. But now the final piece of the jigsaw must be fitted in.

Throughout this century Labourism (its equivalent in other countries 'social democracy') has enabled the capitalist class to rule through class compromise and certain concessions (based of course on the wealth of imperialism, namely finance-capital's domination of world economy and the super-exploitation of colonial and ex-colonial peoples).

The message of Labourism was that by parliamentary 'consensus' politics and reforms, capitalism could be made to work in the interests of working people, of the whole nation.

Today, indeed since the early 1970s, the conditions for ruling through this method of reformist compromises are finished.

Capitalism's crisis demands not only that there are no more reforms, but the gains won in the past must be reversed

That is what lies behind the vicious attack on the 'Welfare State', the abandonment of policies of 'full employment', and the insistence on 'law and order'. 'New Labour' is the open compliance of the Labour Party in capitalism's offensive.

To the historic failure of Stalinism must now be added the final failure of Labourism. Neither of them can be restored.

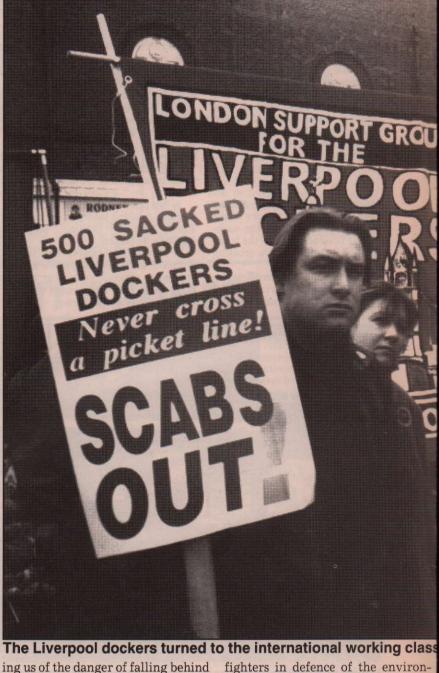
New times demand that the working class forges new instruments, a new party. Not because a political minority says so, and promises something better, but because necessity demands it for the working class.

Struggles

THE new party for socialism will be born out of the struggles and needs of the working class itself and of all those people in society who are drawn into the fight against decadent capitalism. These then were the reasons why we raised in Workers Press the need for the widest possible discussion throughout the labour movement of the need for a new, socialist party.

We were convinced that with Stalinism now dead, our own, Trotskyist organisation could in future live not merely by recruiting individuals to our own party but only by turning to the new, favourable situation for the working class, devoting everything to the forging of the vanguard of the class into a new party for the revolutionary struggle for

Since then, this prospect has surely been confirmed, surely warn-



ing us of the danger of falling behind what is necessary.

The Blair leadership has removed Clause Four from the Labour Party Constitution, is committed to use the anti-union laws against the working class and its unions, and drops its commitment to the Welfare State. This led Arthur Scargill and his supporters to launch the Socialist Labour Party, and others to start building the 'Socialist Alliances'.

And now, even since Workers Press called this conference, the biggest change of all in the situation has taken place: the Liverpool docks dispute, the dockers' turn to international solidarity, and their international conference in February.

The response to that conference, the discussion and decisions there, and the international actions and solidarity shown since as a result, together with the springing up of support committees in London and elsewhere, point the way forward politically.

They point the way forward not only for dockers but for all those who are at this conference on the need for a new party: dockers, miners and ex-miners, unemployed workers, members of many trade unions, pensioners, community defence organisations, members of socialist parties and groups, members of the Labour Party, of Socialist Alliances and of the SLP, ex-members of the Labour Party and Communist Party, Women of the Waterfront and other working women, organisers of Workers Aid for Bosnia, comrades from several African countries and from the Indian sub-continent, socialists from France, Spain, Greece and Hungary,

ment, against racism, the anti-asylum bill and immigration controls, against the Criminal Justice Bill, writers, teachers, scientists, students,

Developing new party

WHEN you say 'new party', you ask: can those working in every one of these spheres work together for the same ends in the same political network, organising mutual support against the common enemy, working over all the problems, developing new initiatives, new strategies, reaching out internationally, as the dockers have done?

That will be a party not 'supplied' to the working class but built of the working class, out of its deepest needs. It will need a comprehensive programme developed out of these needs and the strategy required to meet them.

In order to achieve this, all our forces - workers, scientists, writers, experienced Marxists — need to be developing our understanding. developing the knowledge and the theory on which the programme and strategy must be soundly based. Only the best is good enough!

We don't mean by theory something abstract, up in the air, the exclusive property of specialists remote from everyday life.

We mean a real scientific and intimate study of the needs of ordinary people, needs that demand a solution. as people's rights and security are being trampled on.

Charlie Pottins

tor socialism



for solidarity

More and more we come to understand, through study and through hard experience, that it is the crisis of the whole system that is the common source of all these needs, all these struggles and campaigns, and that a common force is needed against that source.

That force is the working class itself, drawing into its fight all those in society who suffer at the hands of capitalism.

An example shows that this necessity of Marxist theory is no abstract matter but is deadly urgent.

Employer attacks dockers

IN ITS attack on the Liverpool dockers, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company spent over £30,000 in fullpage advertisements explaining how the dockers were striking against 'reason', how their capital investments were to the advantage of the workforce and of all Liverpool and must not be endangered by such things as picket lines to defend jobs.

To make their case, the employers hired two university professors of economics, no doubt in order to give the impression that clever and reasonable and impartial scholars agreed with them.

It so happens that one of these 'impartial' gentlemen, Professor Peter Stoney, gets paid as an adviser to the company.

The other, one Professor Patrick Minford, is on the committee of 'wise men' who advise the Tory government on economic policy. He was one Margaret Thatcher from the beginning.

They had to be answered at the most basic level. These gentlemen express the most profound assumptions of the capitalist system. They say, almost in so many words, that docks are far more important than dockers and their families.

It is beyond their horizons that without the millions of hours of labour, not only of dockers and other workers on Merseyside but of slaves and oppressed workers throughout the British Empire and the rest of the world, there would be no docks, no Mersey Docks and Harbour Company — and no university to pay their salaries.

Furthermore, it is beyond their comprehension that besides their 'rationality' and 'logic' there is another, working-class rationality and logic. It is expressed in the dockers' response from the beginning to the invitation to sell their jobs:

"These jobs are not ours to sell!"

In other words, they refuse to accept the 'logic' that because of the reality of their relation to capital, namely, that they are regarded as no more than the physical repositories of labour-power reduced to a thing to be bought and sold, therefore they and their families and fellow-workers can be thrown on the scrap-heap. They have begun to challenge that logic, and insist that the needs of human beings shall come first.

Capital and labour

of the chief inspirers and advisers of AND this is a real challenge. Min-

ford, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, and all who accept the ideology of capitalism, see it as perfectly 'natural' that, as Karl Marx put it in *Capital*, 'capital employs labour', and it employs it only for the purpose of accumulating more capital, and only for as long as it is needed to do that.

But capital, money invested in machines, raw materials and labour-power (wages), is nothing but the value produced by past labour. Dead labour rules over living labour, that is what is meant by 'capital employs labour'. There is nothing 'natural' about it. This peculiar relationship between the dead and the living came into history only with the capitalist system — and it will die with it

It was on the basis of this understanding that Marx was able to show that through its struggles the working class would unite to overthrow capital, to put human beings, the producers, with their living and creative labour, in control of social life and culture. That is what socialism means.

Inherent in the challenge of the Liverpool dockers against the casualisation and sackings which more and more face millions of workers is the fight for this socialist future. That is why their fight evokes such a response. To develop our Marxist understanding of the relation between the new world situation and struggles of today and the socialist revolution which is necessary even for human survival on the planet — this is the scientific basis of a new party.

Capitalism, a world system

ONLY a few days into their dispute, the Liverpool dockers turned to dockworkers internationally. This was the only way forward. It was a great step forward, because as the working class faces today's crisis, the reconstruction of its internationalism is absolutely necessary.

Capitalism is a world system. Great multinational banks and corporations, operating across many countries, dominate world economy. They are very powerful.

However, not only is their capitalist system of driving for profit more and more in contradiction to the needs of humanity, their international operations make them at the same time very vulnerable to the action of the working class, once that action is organised internationally.

For this very reason, Labourism and Stalinism were priceless supports for the ruling class. Labourism's message was and is that through a loyal compromise with our 'own' British capitalist class, keeping Britain 'great', the interests of the working class could be protected and furthered. And Stalinism led the working class into the same trap, with its doctrine of 'socialism in a single country' and 'peaceful, parliamentary roads to socialism'.

In reality, this kind of politics protected only the interests of the Labour bureaucracy in Britain and the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, each in their own comfortable relationship with capitalism.

With the rapidly growing realisation that both Stalinism and Labourism have failed the working class, the road is open for the reconstruction of internationalism, key to the reconstruction of the labour movement everywhere.

'Political' and 'industrial'

WHERE did a century of Labourism lead us? What is history's verdict on those who always said that Labour reformism would 'gradually' lead to working-class victory and socialism?

Labourism always meant the acceptance of a division between the so-called political (parliament) and industrial (trade union) arms of the working-class movement.

Where has it led us? When did our 'political arm' ever call upon, inspire, lead and mobilise the united strength of the working class in any single struggle? Would the question even occur to anyone?

As for the 'industrial arm', the TUC used to be portrayed by a famous cartoonist as a rumbling carthorse.

It has become a well-oiled machine for isolating the struggles of one section of workers after another, concerned only with its business relations with the employers' federations and the government.

Workers' international

AS Liverpool MP Eddie Loyden pointed out to the dockers' international conference: in answer to the global operations of capital, what have the TUC and the so-called international trade union federations (WFTU, ICFTU) done to 'globalise' working-class resistance? They have done nothing, even though their files are full of data about globalisation.

In the dockers' dispute, did the 'industrial arm', the unions, lead the men to organise and fight, to go international? Did the union organise and prepare 3,000 meetings up and down the country and outside? No! It was the men — and the women — who did these things! They led the unions. It was they who had to show that despite the anti-union laws, it was possible to fight the employers.

The lesson of this is well worth repeating. Working-class internationalism has to be rebuilt, not because Workers Press and the WRP say so, on the basis of 150 years of working-class history and of Marxist theory, but because the dockers — and it will be the case in all the coming struggles — found that they could not go one step forward without rebuilding internationalism.

Real life answer

TRAVELLING thousands of miles, organising a highly successful international conference in the space of a month, inspiring international solidarity actions and collections, reactivating workers internationally as well as in Britain, and now Women of the Waterfront considering an international women's conference—here is the beginning in real life of the answer to the debate: Is the working class reconstructing its class movement? It is!

You ask: 'What international leadership? Where?' I answer, here is the beginning of what is necessary: working men and women organising themselves internationally. They have worked as a workers' international, no more and no less.

In this way the mirror is held up to the future for us. If there is to be a new party, it must be built on the real needs of the people, and by those

very people. And it will have to be international.

Billy Pye, one of the thousands of sacked miners, ex-member of the executive of the NUM, one of the organisers of the pit camp against the closure of Parkside colliery, made this very clear when he addressed the Liverpool dockers' international conference:

I believe the course of the dispute you have begun leads us to see that what is needed, and what is embodied in this conference, is an international and internationalist association of workers, an alliance of worker with worker, with a universal understanding that the class struggle is as alive as ever it was.

'As well as a realisation that there are those, relatively few in number on this planet, who control the lives of millions of human beings through their ownership and control of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

It is only when the ownership and control of these things change over into the hands of us — the majority — that we will begin to control our present and secure a proper human future for our children.

'We do, I think, have a world to win. This is a moderate demand under the circumstances.'

He was right, just as those who for three years now have organised solidarity convoys for Workers Aid for Bosnia were right, to see that it is necessary to find working-class, revolutionary means to support the workers of other countries, and not rest content with internationalist words alone. And just as workers on Teesside today organise solidarity with the miners of the Tuzla region.

Network

WE CAN conclude that the dockers are organising in fact as a workers' international, part of the reconstruction of working-class internationalism. The task is now to make sure that this reconstruction, this network, continues after the docks struggle is won.

In this way the work done and the political and organisational gains made in the dispute, become built in as an unshakable part of the class movement for socialism, an essential part of the continuous and conscious preparation for the decisive struggles of the future, 'money in the bank'

This means finding ways of uniting with other international struggles. The Liverpool dockers were absolutely right to show solidarity by joining the picket set up by the JJ Fast Food strikers.

Ways must be found to unite with Shell's Nigerian oil workers and the Ogoni people who with them are fighting against Shell and against the Abacha military dictatorship; with the textile workers of Bangladesh; with all those miserably paid workers - Iranian, Kurdish, Turkish, Indian, Kashmiri, Pakistani, African, Filipino, Indonesian, Vietnamese and others - most of them with no rights, who today work in London and other cities after being driven from their native lands by need and by political persecution, the rotten fruits of empire.

Unity of all these will strengthen each one immeasurably.

A new party will be above all internationalist, and its members will be made up of all those who come forward to take the lead in all these battles. If not, it will not be the new party which is needed.

Completed next week.

City Lights Human life v. tigers?

GERMANY's Alliance for Jobs. the union-proposed scheme that envisages pay restraint in return for the promise of more jobs, has proved still-born after Werner Stumpfe, president-elect of the engineering employers' association, denounced it and called for a radical overhaul of the country's wage bargaining structure.

But he is not alone. The head of the federation of German industry, Hans-Olaf Henkel, last week warned that Germany was 'degenerating into a "society of alliances" which would do nothing to resolve the country's fundamental economic problems.'

To create jobs, said Henkel, the country would have to cut its wage costs and increase its competitiveness.

His remarks followed the latest warning from the business monthly Impulse that a further that million jobs will disappear this year, adding to the record unemployment level, officially recorded at 4.3 million, but in reality over 6 million.

This is the problem with the Alliance — everyone is reading what they want into it,' says Thomas Meyer, economist at Goldman Sachs in Frankfurt. For the unions it is a centrallyplanned solution to economic problems, to the government it is crash course to meeting the Maastricht criteria.'

Like most economic commentators, Meyer wants big cuts in government taxation and spend-

'It is the government's last chance to fulfil promises they have been making since the 1980s - less taxes, less spending,' he

Despite mounting opposition, the government continues to declare its support for the Alliance. 'We will not get out of the pit of unemployment if efforts for an Alliance for Jobs are given up so quickly,' says Norbert Blüm, the labour minister.

April Fool

ALL FOOLS' DAY saw the opening of another round of political theatre — the so-called Group of Seven 'jobs summit' in Lille, northern France. The idea that it could in any way solve Europe's mounting unemployment crisis was crass from the start, but even more so given the experience of the last two years since the last such G7 meeting in Detroit.

Out of the seven countries taking part, three have higher (official) unemployment rates now than they did two years ago — Japan, Germany and Italy. Three have lower official rates - the US, France and Britain. One country - Canada - has the same rate.

But this came after two years of what for most countries was considered a decent rate of growth, a period when a so-called economic recovery was under way. If this is what happens in the good times, what is to be expected in the bad?

Taking the larger European countries, the unemployment rate is rising rapidly in France and Germany, is still in double figures in Italy, and is higher still in Spain (where it is around 23 per cent).

Where the official rate has dropped, as in Britain, this is due largely to the 'creation' of jobs where wages are hardly above the poverty level — what are now known as 'McJobs'.

The curious case of Barings

WORD has been leaked to the Financial Times that Andrew Tuckey - chairman of Barings' bank at the time of its collapse in February last year — is to retire at the end of the month.

But this is hardly a normal retirement. Though Tuckey has only just turned 51 he will be paid Barings pension of some

week as a consultant to ING Barings, which now owns the bank, helping to build up its business in South Africa and advising select British clients.

From this he will pocket additional fees from the bank, reputed to be around £110,000 a

And this being Barings — until its collapse and subsequent take-over by Dutch banking interests the country's oldest merchant bank — there is a bonus scheme. Tuckey will be entitled, along with staff corporate financiers, to a share of the

How odd that following the report of the Securities and Futures Authority (SFA) into all the circumstances surrounding the Barings collapse, Tuckey is not allowed to advise individuals on their investments of a few pounds but is considered perfectly OK to give advice to companies investing hundreds of millions of pounds, provided it is described as 'strategic'.

As usual the lawyers and other advisers who have been investigating the demise of Barings have profited handsomely. But to what

It is now known that all those disciplined by the SFA were on the list of alleged miscreants fired by ING Barings on 1 May last year. So all the months of investigation by the regulators

have produced ... nothing.

All those cleared by the SFA remain in Barings' employ. With one notable exception. He is Geoffrey Barnett, the bank's chief operating officer and chief financial officer who was not kept on by the Dutch. In spite of his high profile responsibilities he was cleared by the SFA.

Barnett is a former director general of the City Takeover Panel and as such the man charged with seeing that nothing illegal took place in connection with take-overs. No one wanted to see a former director general of such an august body banned from the City. It would have sent out all sorts of wrong signals.

South African unemployment

THE term 'jobless growth' was first coined in the US to describe a situation where output in the economy might grow but where unemployment failed to go down. It now seems that South Africa has caught a particularly severe

bout of the illness. Last year the South African economy grew by 3.5 per cent. But, according to a recent Reserve Bank report, the first three years of the so-called economic upswing, which we are told started in the second half of 1993, produced a net gain of only 12,000 new jobs.

Unemployment, even on official figures running at 33 per cent of the workforce, has continued

The South Africa Foundation, which represents the country's 50 biggest companies, forecasts that even if present growth rates can be sustained unemployment over the next five years will rise to almost 40 per cent due to the 300,000 or more job seekers who come onto the labour market every year.

To meet the government's target of a 6 per cent annual rate of growth - and anything less will see unemployment continue to — would mean an increase increase of some 10 per cent every year in exports of non-gold products, as well as a sharp upturn in investment.

But given the huge budget deficit, interest payments on which absorb one in every five rand collected in taxes, and the low level of savings, much of that investment will have to be financed from abroad.

And we all know what that means: continued attacks on the wages and working conditions of the South African working class.

Threadneedle

SUNDERBANS is one of the biggest mangrove reserves on the river Ganges. It is unique bioclamatic zone found on the Bay of

BY PETER GIBSON

It is also the only mangrove Tiger Land' in the world, where the tiger occupies the pinnacle of both the aquatic and terrestrial

In addition to the Bengal tiger, there are Esuarien crocodiles, fishing cats, Salvastor lizards Gangetic dolphins, river terrapins and marine turtles.

The one area neglected in the Indian government's efforts to protect the area is the human race. Here are found very poor people who live on the fringe of Indian society and depend solely on the forest for their survival.

Yet their interests are often suppressed in the cause of 'preserving the eco-system'.

Hundreds of thousands of people live in and around Sunderbans in a network of numerous big and small streams and creeks. It is a war between the poor and the mangrove forest, infested with tigers on land and crocodiles in the water.

Most of the population living on the archipelago are subsistence fishermen or farmers depending on the forest for life.

supports over a million people, but the reserves are inadequate to supply their needs.

Now the government, in support of 'Project Tiger', designed to protect the falling tiger population, has ruled that fishermen may only go into the fringe of the

This means that they will not obtain enough fish or other forest products to support their families. They are now forced to venture into the jungle, to face the risk of meeting man (and, pre-sumably, woman) eaters to collect firewood, honey, etc.

Sneaking into the forest and facing this danger may be the only way to feed their families.

Encounter

Not a day passes without an encounter with a tiger, with the fishermen losing the contest. They enter the banned zone in pursuit of the best catches in the

Very few of these deaths are reported. Going into the forest without a permit is illegal with strict penalties. But how else are these folk to find the food to sustain their lives?

Those tigers who venture into villages are often killed by being beaten to death by the inhabit-

A number of 'Project Tiger'



Living on the edge of the jungle

guards have been killed by the animals they are there to protect. They have no weapons for selfdefence and are not allowed to kill the animals. They are only given sticks to beat them, it is reported.

Falling fish populations force those living in the region to look further afield. But it's not caused by over-fishing.

It is now known that urban effluent from Calcutta and Howrah has polluted the water of the Ganges and caused the fall.

Industrial development of these two cities can only make things

Sunderbans fishing people are paying the price with their lives for uncontrolled industrial development and 'Project Tiger', set up under pressure from Western political leaders on the Indian government.

Of course Western capital won't provide the necessary resources to find alternative ways of life for the people of the

protest against workfare National

From A.R. WESTON Rochester, Kent

THE guinea pigs are squealing. The guinea pigs are in revolt. Tory government plans to introduce a pilot 'Project Work' workfare, no dole without forced labour - in Kent are rousing strong resistance.

The area chosen runs from Gravesend to the county town Maidstone. This has a population around three quarters of a million, larger than Manchester, Liverpool or Sheffield.

North Kent is the biggest industrial area in the South East, south of the Thames. It ranks with Birmingham or Glasgow. Plenty of guinea pigs here. Unemployment in the Tory years has been running well above the national averages, touching 16 per cent at times.

Capitalism has destroyed its own industrial base. Under the Tories' 16 years, something like 100,000 jobs have gone in the area. A paper-making industry has all but been wiped out: a power station, an oil refinery, dozens of engineering works have gone, plus all the job losses in the service industries, utilities, transport and local government.

Now North Kent is the front line in a new phase of the class war. Capitalism is opening up new attacks on the working class in jobs or on the dole. Workfare or no dole; no legal protection for the low paid; attacks on unions.

Capitalism is trying to offload its developing economic and

political crises on to the backs of a weakened working class. Either we resist or surrender. Class conscious workers have this chance

Medway trades council in North Kent is organising a national (south of England) rally against the Tory workfare attack, in parallel with a north of England protest rally in Hull. Both are on Saturday 13 April 1996.

Rally

The south of England rally is at Chatham, only 25 to 30 miles from London. Sixty thousand protesters were mobilised against the fascists at Welling in Kent. Many thousands, workers, students, trade unionists and unemployed can be mobilised on what may be a pleasant, spring morning.

Chatham is only ten more miles on from Welling via the M25 and the M2. The rally is at 15 noon at Chatham Riverside, Docl Road, which is beside Chathan public library, overlooking the Medway and the Chatham Nava Dockyard, which was closed and 7,000 made jobless at the beginning of Thatcher's reign.

Here is a chance to protes against workfare, to defend jobs Why wait to May or later month to vote and strike a blow agains the Tories? Here is a chance to make that blow now. Be in Chatham on Saturday 13 Apri

For more information telephone (01634) 281320.

Neo-Nazi confesses to serial murders

BY BOB ARCHER

A 27-YEAR OLD, Thomas L. of Gladbeck in the Ruhr area of western Germany, has confessed a series of killings to police.

The accused was expelled from school for expressing farright opinions and was associated with a number of banned groups, although there is no evidence he was a member of any of them.

He confessed to shooting 26-year-old Martin K. to death at his girl-friend's flat in Dorsten on 15 March and to killing 23-yearold Patricia W. in February of

Patricia W. was hit over the head with a plaster statue and stabbed 91 times. Thomas L. confessed to killing her because she wore an embroidered badge saying 'Nazis out'.

Following up information from Thomas L's partner, police searched woodland near her home in Altena, some distance to the south of the Ruhr area, and found a grave containing the body of Dagmar K. of Dortmund, who had been missing since July.

Apparently Thomas L, and his

partner had tied her up, strangled her with a rope and finished

Thomas L. is also said to have boasted to neo-Nazi friends about killing an as yet unidentified black man.

The big-circulation tabloid Bild Zeitung bought photo-graphs from local neo-Nazis showing Thomas L. using a bazooka in illegal military exercises and posing in a Hitler-sa-

Banned

In a flat in Altena investigators found neo-Nazi writings and documents linked to the banned Freiheitliche Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (FAP) and the Deutsche

Thomas L. insisted on breaking off his interrogation to commune with the Germanic war-god Odin. Commentators are unable to decide whether he is completely insane or a sinister neo-Nazi hit man. The deaths of Dagmar K. and Martin K. may be connected with the latter's insistence on leaving a neo-Nazi group

some time ago.

Vouchers 'undermine schools' say American unions

BY MURIEL H. COOPER (AFL-CIO News)

AMERICAN unions have condemned attempts to impose education vouchers as a prescription that 'undermines the system of public education that working families have fought so hard to obtain.'

'School vouchers drain public dollars from public education to fund private schools that do not answer to the public,' the AFL-CIO executive council said in a statement.

The vouchers for schools in Washington DC, proposed as part of a federal funding package, would allow some school students to be subsidised to switch to private schools.

The proposal was stopped in the Senate, where supporters twice could not garner enough

votes to halt a filibuster. Teachers' union president Albert Shanker, chair of the AFL-CIO Education Committee, said parents, teachers and the public wanted high academic standards and safe and orderly public (i.e. state) schools.

should be focused,' he said.

voucher would cost \$5 million, part of th overall \$727 million DC fundin bill for 1996. Supporters of th measure argue that funding private schools to compete with the state system would improve the public schools, which attended by 90 per cent of US students.

But that proposition is under cut by the experience of familie in Milwaukee, where voucher resulted in the abandonment state schools. During a three-year period, the voucher system un dercut the common good the public schools serve ... and brought greater fragmentation in the community, according to report cited by the council.

'We recognise that in man communities, public education needs our urgent attention ar support,' the council said. 'Scho voucher schemes, however, tal the resources that constructive measures require.

The unions' council urg 'states and communities to reje the diversion from construction action that vouchers represent." From BERNARDO NOGUEIRA in Barcelona, Spain

The right wins, crisis deepens

THE 3 March elections in Spain gave victory to the Popular Party (PP) of Jose Maria Aznar, a rightwing bourgeois party. It was, however, no straightforward vic-

The PP won 38.85 per cent of the votes (156 seats) while the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) won 37.48 per cent of the votes (141 seats) and the United Left (IU) won 10.58 per cent (21 seats). Together, the PSOE and the IU received more than 2.4 million votes more than the PP.

Only the anti-democratic electoral legislation in force in Spain prevented them from winning more seats. With this result, the PP will not be able to form a government without an agreement with the nationalist parties.

As an immediate consequence of this crisis, the stock exchanges in Spain suffered a marked fall on the Monday following the elections. The Madrid stock exchange fell by 16.84 points (over 4 per cent) and Barcelona fell by 14.35 points.

Three years of political crisis

THE bourgeoisie was banking on early elections (the last elections were in 1993) to get rid of the government of Felipe Gonzalez, the principal leader of the PSOE, which had started to appear discredited and weak.

For many years the bourgeoisie used the Gonzalez govern-

ment as a loyal manager of its interests. It was Felipe who took the country into NATO, who has been imposing the policies of the Maastricht Treaty (cuts in social benefits, the shutting down of the mining and steel industries, privatisations, etc).

Recently there has been an imposed 'Labour Reform' to bring 'flexibility' into labour relations. Its aim is to facilitate every kind of temporary contract employ-

These anti-worker policies have been aggravated by all kinds of scandals and corruption, illicit use of state 'reserve funds' by government officials and above all the GAL affair.

These initials supposedly belonged to a right-wing terrorist group dedicated to attacking members of the Basque nationalist organisation ETA. In reality, 'GAL' concealed terrorist actions by Franco's old repressive apparatus on the orders of leading members of the PSOE.

Jose Barrio-nuevo, instance, is now answering charges of forming an armed group by reason of having authorised GAL actions.

The credibility of the Gonzalez government has been worn down by doing the dirty work demanded of it by the bourgeoi-

But as the PSOE government became increasingly unable to serve its ends because it was being weakened by crisis, this same bourgeoisie decided to call early elections with a view to setting up a government of the most right-wing bourgeois party, the

It needed a strong, stable government to impose even harsher economic measures — a second labour reform, unimpeded sackings, budget cuts and privatisa-

tions. Aznar also claimed to be about to launch an 'offensive' certainly repressive in character - to 'solve the Basque question'.

The new right-wing government will be even weaker

HOWEVER, the election results did not give the PP an absolute majority, for which 174 seats were needed. It didn't even get a working majority that would have allowed it to form a government with one of the parties of the right such as the Canaries

In order to govern, the PP now needs the support of the bour-geois nationalist parties in Catalonia and the Basque Country. It is particularly dependent on the Convergency and Union party in Catalonia, which won 16 deputies.

The problem is that the PP spent the whole campaign attacking the nationalist parties. Now, to form a government, it will have to compromise on a number of issues, that is, it will have to back down on its programme.

Workers voted to stop the right

THE reasons for this result, which hurts the right and deepens the political crisis, may be found in the attitude of the majority of the working class.

Despite all the attacks and the openly anti-working-class policies of the Gonzalez government and the PSOE, the main objective small revolutionary alternative of the majority of the working class and the youth was to stop or weaken the right.

And it saw no other way of doing this but to keep voting for

The class majority did not vote because it trusted the party's programme or in the hope that everything would be different from the past few years of government. It voted to prevent a victory for Aznar, or at least to stop him getting a majority that would allow him to form a strong government.

Polarizatio and the tactical vote

THIS battle by the PP to get into government and the vote for the PSOE to prevent this polarised the elections.

This was the main reason for the lowest abstention rate in 14 years, matching the figures for the general election of 1982. It also affected the vote for the United Left, which, far from enjoying the growth its leaders hoped for as a result of falling PSOE popularity, only got three more deputies.

But there was also a strong element of punishing the policies of the IU, for making political and parliamentary agreements with the PP against the PSOE government.

This was reflected in the regional elections in Andalusia, where the PSOE almost managed to get an absolute majority (it obtained 52 of the 54 seats needed) and the IU was reduced from 20 to 13 deputies.

Alternative

DESPITE the polarisation, a NATO;

The Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), affiliated to the International Workers League (LIT/CI), took part in the elections defending the need for struggle and workers' unity to defeat the anti-working-class policies of the Gonzalez governmet and at the same time to stop the right.

In the run-up to the elections, the PRT defended the position that the unions and all the organisations relying on the support of the workers should form a Workers' Alliance which would have a basic platform of workers' and democratic demands — against the Labour Reform, for the right of nationalities to self-determination (Basque, Catalan and Galician), against the GAL, and with this unity forming the

Against this the PSOE kept the continuity of Felipe Gonzalez as its banner, and the IU stepped up its divisive talk, driving the socialist base to support the government against the right.

basis of a government of workers

organisations.

The PRT participated with a view to constructing a revolutionary workers' alternative ready to struggle for an alternative workers' programme:

Reduction of the working day to 35 hours with no reduction

Abolition of the Labour Reform; ■ Nationalisation of key

industries; Expropriation of the banks

under workers' control; Right of national self-de-

termination; ■ Getting rid of the monar-

chy and demanding a republic; ■ Breaking with the EU and to do military service;

■ Need for a government of workers' organisations on the road of the struggle for socialism.

PRT's results

THE PRT strove to overcome their size with a revolutionary policy and the determination of their militants and sympathisers.

The electoral activities began before the elections. In order to contest 42 constituencies more than 450 candidates stood in the elections.

The party obtained 14,907 votes for the congress and another 4,577 votes to the Senate (in many cases the party only stood candidates for the Senate) In total the PRT received 19,484

This result is very positive considering the polarisation in the elections and the tremendous pressure to vote for one of the established parties.

For example parties without parliamentary representation only took 1.15 per cent of the vote. On the other hand in Madrid

and Barcelona the vote for the PRT to the Senate was more than double the vote for the Congress because there was not the same gamble for governor and less pressure to use a vote for the PSOE or the IU.

Another important vote was in Navarra (824 votes, 0.25 per cent), in Alva (251 votes, 0.15 per cent) and in Guipuzcoa (431 votes 0.11 per cent) which is a Basque

In Ceuta, a colonial enclave ir Morocco, the party received 54 votes. It was the only party in Ceuta that demanded the return of the colony to Morocco.

OS ASESINOS COMISION NACIONAL CONTRA EL INDULTO

'In the memory, 20 years is nothing'

BY MARTA COCCO

DEMONSTRATIONS and public campaigns were held last week in Argentina to mark the 20th anniversary of the bloody dictatorship which took power on 24 March

Under the dictatorship, 30,000 people 'disappeared', thousands more were killed by torture and executions, 2 million were exiled and there were 8,000 political prisoners. The country was driven to economic disaster and people endured the deepest poverty.

Last week's massive demonstrations were organised in many provinces by the Commission for Memory, Truth and Justice, which consists of 172 organisations including unions, political parties and other groups.

All weekend a massive rock music festival was held in the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires, climaxing with a rally of 100,000

One of the main speakers was from the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. They led the struggle against the dictatorship since the early days, marching around the square every Thursday demanding to know the truth about their 'disappeared' sons and daughters. Along with them marched the grandmothers of the 'disappeared'.

Also at last week's rally were speakers from an organisation formed by the children of those 'disappeared' and murdered by the dictatorship — HIJOS, which

Silencio (Children for Identity and Justice and Against Forgetting and Silence).

Roars of welcome went up and

older demonstrators stood with tears running down their cheeks as the HIJOS banner made its way through the crowd. The HIJOS organisation is a

year old this month. It has struck a nerve in Argentine society by taking up the struggle that the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo began.

weekend's marching The started at 7pm on Saturday. Eight hours later, at 3am on

Sunday morning, exactly 20 years after the 1976 military coup, the HIJOS led a crowd of thousands to the high court to hand in 100 letters demanding habeas corpus for the state to produce their 'disappeared' parents.

One speaker said: 'Our group is against forgetting. We are against silence. We come here to repudiate the coup and to struggle to make sure that horror never happens

He continued: 'Although we don't believe in so-called "justice", we want to demonstrate that we are in the same situation that we were 20 years ago and that the murderers are free. After 20 years we don't know anything about what happened to our parents.'

The main banner for the weekend's event said: 'Memory, resistance, struggle for truth and justice, 20 years after the coup which went unpunished'.

Rebuilding people's memory

organisers but by every demon

Workers, young people, fami lies with young children were al present to show their hatred o the genocide of the past, which went unpunished then and goe unpunished now.

There were slogans agains present-day police violence. Per haps the most important slogar was 'without police and withou the military, we will live better.'

The anger was expressed at th Las Canchas football stadiur where two big teams were playin on Sunday. After a minute silence ordered by the Argentin Football Association, rival fan united to sing traditional song against the military and police.

In the years following the fa of the dictatorship in 1982, th 'democratic' governments — Rad cals first and then Peronists tried to pacify public opinion an restore the army's discipline an reputation by ordering some lim ited punishment (gaoling, etc.) the most notorious killers.

But the current president, Car los Menem, set all the assassir

The masses have come into ou fight to rebuild our historica memory, to search for the trut about the 'disappeared' and to fin those really responsible for the

Young people, with the HIJO in the front line, have come for ward to shed a new light of Argentine history and to continu the struggle until every murden

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

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BALKAN POWER-PLAY TORY Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind had talks HYPOCRISY with the Slovenian government at the end of February about its plans to spend \$750 million over the next seven years modernising its armed forces. Rifkind was anxious about plans to purchase a £35 million military

Marconi, Racal and Siemens-Plessey were after a slice of the action. While the British government pontificates in public about not supplying arms to former Yugoslavia, Rifkind told the Slovenes that if they want to join the European Union and NATO, they had better buy British.

electronics system from the Israeli firm Tadiran.

The ex-Yugoslav states are being caught in the imperialist powers' games, lies and hypocrisy. Bosnian vice president Ejup Ganic told officers at an independence day ceremony on 1 March that Bosnia would protect its independence with a strong army and wise choice of allies.

'We have won our independence by ourselves. We co-operated with friends from the western and Islamic worlds. We are deeply grateful to all those who have helped us, but we will build our Bosnia to suit Bosnians.

The US promise to arm and train Bosnian forces was the vital carrot held out last Autumn, for Bosnia to sign the Dayton agree-

Bosnian commander-in-chief General Rasim Delic, and General Zivko Budimir of the Croat forces (HVO) visited the United States recently, meeting General John Shalikashvili, chair of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, and touring military bases.

Six selected Bosnian officers are due to start four-year courses at West Point and Colorado Springs in the Autumn.

Ten have begun training at military academies in Turkey. The Clinton administration has agreed to provide communications systems, 46,100 M-16 assault rifles, 1,000 M-60 machine guns, 80 M-113 armored personnel carriers, 45 main battle tanks, and 840 light anti-tank weapons. Turkey has promised about \$2 million in military training.

But the US proposed \$800 million aid plan is looking as shaky shotgun 'federation' imposed between Bosnia and the

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

The Clinton administration said it would pay \$100 million, and expect other governments to fund the rest. But Arab oil states are holding tightly on to their money, and the British and other European governments remain opposed to arming Bosnia.

A US-sponsored donor conference in Ankara failed to come up with pledges.

'If America is unable to keep its promise to the Bosnians and to equip and train the Bosnian army, we will continue with our policy of supporting the Bosnian military,' said Seved Mohsen Rashidouleslami, a senior Iranian diplomat in Sarajevo.

'We are ready to provide anything the government requests us to provide.'

Having told the Bosnians it is up to them to find aid backers, the US government is using the Iranian bogey to focus blame on

Crusade

Leighton-Smith's Admiral IFOR won't chase war criminals, but it wages a media crusade against Muslim mujahaddin, said to be training Bosnian forces.

Newspapers are told 'hundreds' are still in Bosnia, in breach of the Dayton agreement, and that Bosnian officers are training in Iran, both of which the Bosnian government denies.

The agreement does not forbid Bosnia as a sovereign state from turning where it likes for training, but it is being interpreted that way.

Republican Senator Robert Dole, who posed as a supporter of Bosnia, has signed a bill making aid conditional on breaking ties with Iran.

Washington also wants the Bosnian government to set up a joint command with the Croat HVO (some of whose commanders



London protest last Saturday to demand no cover-up

collaborated with Serb Chetniks, and committed war crimes against Muslims).

The Croatian government allowed some light weapons and equipment from Iran through during the war, helping itself to a third. But it has stopped the

Iranian arms are in any case likely to be accompanied by reactionary political influences.

Bosnians opposed to the carve-up of their country are in a Catch-22 dilemma. Whichever way they turn for arms they will be tied with strings to those who The daily Oslobodenje has alleged that Croat nationalist intransigeance in Herzegovina is being covertly encouraged.

After the nationalists attacked European Union administrator Hans Koschnik in Mostar, it says, Germany's Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel arrived in Zagreb angry, hitting his fist on the table in front of journalists. However, this was only a show for the

Whispered

In an eye-to-eye conversation, Kinkel whispered something else in Tudjman's ear.

This is called politics, which is only another name for the international community's hypocrisy.'

An IFOR spokesman could neither confirm nor deny that troops from Serbia - also supposedly covered by the ban on foreign forces — were guardin sites of alleged mass graves i eastern Bosnia.

There have also been con plaints that Russian IFOR troop have been intimidating Muslim near Zvornik, and telling them t leave. The Russians allegedly tol people to take down the 'Muslin flag' - meaning the flag of Bos

Serb forces still have th upper hand, with their airford and 400 tanks.

NATO 'peace' supervisor Car Bildt and others say that rathe than let the Bosnians arm them selves, European forces shoul stay to guarantee the peace.

Former Bosnian Foreign Sec retary Muhammed Sacirbey sai We remember the false guaran tees for Zepa and Srebrenic where 8,000 people were killed showing the promises given to u are kept only if we are stron enough to defend ourselves.'

No settlement if war get away'

BY NICK BAILEY

PRISONERS from Chetnik concentration camps were part of the 100-plus audience at the Central Halls, Westminster, meeting of the Bosnia Solidarity Campaign on 26 March.

Jackie Vance (chair) apologised for the absence of Ed Vulliamy, in Bosnia and Calum MacDonald MP, engaged at the House of Commons.

Michael Foot was there to MacDonald's first-hand report of his visit to Sarajevo but was warmly welcomed when he stepped into the breach and addressed the audience.

'How can it be a settlement if war criminals get away with it?', he asked. I was pleased when Labour Friends of Bosnia was founded. A new Labour government must change the policy on Bosnia. The conduct of this British government was despicable.'

Dave Lawrence said the response to the campaign's internet appeals was positive. 'We are just ordinary people who saw on our television screens events in Bosnia reflecting the rebirth of racism and fascism in Europe.'

Allison Snape presented the campaign's interim report. 'In July 1995, after the fall of Srebrenica, British General Rupert Smith signed a secret accord with Ratko Mladic providing for evacuation of women, children and the elderly from the UN "safe

'Men and youths were omitted from the agreement, but Smith must have known that he was leaving the men and boys of Srebrenica to torture and death.

'British people were duped when MI6 briefings of journalists led to news reports that Muslim men had fled Srebrenica before its fall. The Dutch and US governments also participated in the cover-up.

The report quotes Ed Vulliamy in the Guardian (26 January). In November 1994 British General Sir Michael Rose ordered SAS teams not to identify Serb artillery positions around the UN 'safe area' of Bihac, thereby preventing NATO airstrikes which were about to take place against

'The actions of Rose and Smit raise questions as to who directed British UNPROFOR troops were they following UN man dates or were they directed from

Neil Thompson, Tribuna Action, said Dayton was deeply flawed, but it empowered borde guards to arrest war criminals.

He called for the lobbying o MPs to insist the governmen provides funds for the war crimes tribunal.

Speakers in the discussion included Lee Bryant, writer and supporter of Bosnia, Quinting Hoare, Alliance for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Faruk Ibrahimovic from Tuzla, Workers Aid

Arrests as Detroit press struggle escalates

BY VIC CHARLES

Bosnia Solidarity Campaign IS THERE A MULTI-ETHNIC **FUTURE FOR BOSNIA?**

Tuesday 16 April, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (nearest tube Holborn) Bob Myers, Workers Aid for Bosnia secretary

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ABOUT seventy people, including three bishops, a former senator and the president of Detroit city council, have been arrested outside a Detroit newspaper building as striking workers stepped up a ten-month long struggle against the Knight-Ridder and Gannet press empires.

Two dozen arrests, including Episcopalian and one Catholic bishop, and city council president Maryann Mahaffey, were made on 6 March as religious leaders demonstrated in support of the workers outside the Detroit News building. On 14 March, 44 women were arrested, including Gloria Cobbin, vice president of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

The strike, involving journalists, printers, photographers and delivery drivers, began on 13 July last year after negotiations ended without a new agreement.

The employers are out to cut their workforce, drive down pay and bust the unions. Pickets have faced court injunctions and clubwielding riot police. The companies have hired picket-busting security goons to deliver papers.

The National Labour Relations Board has filed unfair labour practice complaints the Gannett-owned against Detroit News and Knight-Rid-

der's Detroit Free Press for illegal acts, including 'permanently replacing' the strikers.

Both companies have made huge losses, as readers and advertisers desert them. But with big resources and nationwide interests, some fear they are prepared to hold out.

'The union leadership kept on saving that when we reach the magic number, then we'll win,' says Daymon J. Hartley, Newspaper Guild vice-chair at the Free

'When you have multi-billion dollar corporations like Gannet and Knight-Ridder - and Gannet has \$38 billion in operating expenses - we're going to hit our number before they hit their number. That's what's happening. We have people losing their houses and their cars, and families are breaking up.

'So it has to be turned around. We have to do other things. We can't just have an ad boycott and a circulation boycott as the centrepiece of the strike' (Socialist Action, San Francisco, March).

In Miami, local trade unionists and Detroit strikers have a phone-bank aiming to torpedo Knight-Ridder's flagship Miami Herald by urging workers not to buy it. A campaign called Sports Fans Against the Herald was announced in nearby Broward

The Bal Harbour, Florida, hotel where the AFL-CIO unions'



Police try to break up Detroit picket line

executive council was meeting scuttled plans to distribute 500 free copies of the Herald daily to guests. AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer Richard L. Trumka said unions were telling hotels and airlines not to support the Gannett flagship USA Today. United and Northwest airlines had stopped distributing the paper, and United withdrew advertising.

'Gannett and Knight-Ridder are the largest media conglomerates in the world, and can absorb huge losses in Detroit,' Trumka said. 'We must expand on a national level.'

Visiting strikers stood and applauded as council members pledged financial support for the strikers, about \$100,000 on top of the nearly \$600,000 raised for the relief fund so far.

But Trumka reminded council members that much more needs

to be done. He also urged union leaders to talk with unionised companies and vendors about advertising in the striker-produced Detroit Sunday Journal. Strikers from six unions have

formed a Unity-Victory Caucus to build solidarity. Daymon Hartley says they can't just rely on boycotts, but should renew mass pickets, and call on Detroit's autoworkers, steelworkers, public utility workers and others to stage one-day strikes, and join ■ Detroit Sunday Journal is

at 3100 East Jefferson, Detroit, Mich. 48207. Publisher William Brown can be reached at 313/567-9818. Unity-Victory Caucus - PO Box 104, 19186 Fourth St., Riverview, Michigan. Donations: DNA Strike Relief Fund, Detroit Metropolitan AFL-CIO, 2550 West Grand Blvd., Detroit, Mich. 48208.