WEEKLY PAPER OF THE WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

SATURDAY 1 JUNE 1996

Worldwide trade unionists' meeting in London

REBULD WORKERS RERNATONALSW

HOW is the trade union movement to be rebuilt internationally?

This will be the key question before a conference of trade unionists and other activists in the international workers' movement to be held in London over the weekend of 8 and 9 June (details below).

Organised jointly by the International Trade Union Solidarity Campaign and ALISC, the African Liberation Solidarity Campaign, it will consider three vital principles:

- **■** The establishment of trades unions independent of the state.
- **■** The re-establishment of democracy within unions.
- The forging of solidarity between trade unionists of different countries.

Countries

Workers from Bangladesh, Nigeria, Bosnia, Hungary, South Africa and Namibia attend the conference. The organisers were also expecting trade unionists from other countries - including Russia, Greece, the United States — to be present.

The British movement will be represented by members from various trades councils including Tower Hamlets, Hull and North Tyneside. The Merseyside Port Shop Stewards' Committee, who have

been in the leadership of a eight-month-long strike, have been invited.

Members of the local government workers' union Unison, the Transport and General Workers' Union, the general union GMB, the AEEU, NUT, Natfhe, MSF, NUM, the printworkers' union GPMU, and the offshore oil workers' union OILC will be present.

Important

An important role will be played by members of refugee organisations based in Britain. The Kashmiri International Forum, the Iranian Refugee Workers' Association, the Sudanese Trade Union Alliance, the Bengali Workers' Action Group and the Pakistani Trade Union Defence Campaign will all have members present.

All trade unionists and labour other movement activists who are sympathetic to the conference's aims are cordially invited to partici-

Funds to help with air fares and conference arrangements are still urgently needed. Trade union branches, trades councils and other bodies, as well as individuals, are asked to donate whatever they can to these costs.

■ Please send any money as soon as possible to, Keith Standring, Conference organiser, PO Box 18, Epsom, KT 18 7YR, Britain. Tel/fax: +441372 721 550.

in the leadership of a African Liberation Day



This year's Africa Liberation Day march and rally of more than 150 people began in Brixton, went through Camberwell, Walworth Road and the Elephant and Castle to end up at the Shell Centre in Waterloo. The Shell Centre was chosen in memory of Ken SaroWiwa. Many of the speeches stressed the role of capitalism in the repression of Africa. See centre pages for speech by International Trade Union Solidarity Campaign organiser Keith Standring Photo: Marg Nicol

Support Bosnian miners' strikes — see page 3

Funds needed: send money now!

International Trade Unionist Bulletin: Just out!

- Rebuild workers' internationalism
- Liverpool dockers help unionise Mexican transport workers in USA
- Reports on Germany, Mexico and China All for only 50p from ITUSC, PO Box 18, Epsom KT18 7YB, Britain

International Trade Union Solidarity Campaign — African Liberation Support Campaign Conference address: PO Box 18, Epsom, KT18 7YR, Britain. Tel/Fax: +441372 721 550

AN INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' CONFERENCE

- Trade unions independent of the state and the employers
- Democracy in the trade unions
 Workers' internationalism

AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL

Saturday-Sunday 8-9 June, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

Near Holborn. Start 10.30am Saturday, 10am Sunday.

This important conference is convened jointly by the ITUSC and ALISC. It will follow the 'Africa Month' here in Britain. We will be discussing and deciding how to take forward workers' international solidarity in the coming struggles.

Delegates will be travelling from Africa, India, Bangladesh, South America, Russia, Ukraine and eastern Europe. Therefore, rather than have a set

attendance fee we are asking you to give whatever you can towards the cost of the conference and the fares of those delegates. A draft resolution will be sent to you, and we ask you to keep in touch during the preparation of the conference and let us have any resolutions and/or written material on the issues you wish to

be discussed.

Germany, p3 ● Workers' internationalism, p4&5 ● Tuzla massacre, p6 ● Brazil, p7 ● Tory-Serb connection, p8

No thanks to the NHS

JAYMEE BOWEN, who became famous as Child B, died last week of leukaemia. She died tragically early at the age of 11. She reached even this tender age despite the efforts of the NHS.

If it had been left to the bosses of this organisation this courageous little girl would have died much sooner. In January 1995 they refused her a further bone marrow transplant on the grounds that £75,000 could not be afforded.

It was thanks only to the intervention of a Harley Street doctor, Peter Garrett, and an anonymous donor who undertook to pay for her treatment, that her life was prolonged. A few months ago observers said that if Jaymee managed to fight on for another six months her chances of long-term survival were good.

This is how the Guardian — that organ of washed-out, hypocritical liberalism — reported her death:

'Given the constraints of health service funding it was deemed better value for money to invest £75,000 on the well-being of many, rather than on a high-risk, pain-inflicting attempt to save a dying girl.'

And in its editorial the same newspaper went on to justify the actions of the Cambridgeshire and Huntingdon Health Commission in refusing Jaymee treatment.

WHAT are these 'constraints' on health service spending? They are constraints determined by capitalism and its needs, and not by the needs of children like Jaymee. What are the needs of capital today?

So deep is its crisis that capital must strip the working class of every right, of every benefit it has gained from its past struggles against the employers. Big business has not the slightest interest in saving or prolonging lives. That old people live longer, that children after leaving school are unemployed, is for capital an expense it must dispense with. Capital has only one interest in people: as sources or potential sources of profit.

The crisis of capitalism has reached such a point that it can no longer meet the most basic needs of millions of ordinary people, needs that have developed and expanded partly through the growth of scientific knowledge and practice. It had to deny Jaymee's inalienable right to fight for her life.

NATURALLY, as an apologist for this decaying system, the Guardian accepts uncritically the distribution of resources that capitalism imposes on millions of working people.

One of the many things it conveniently 'forgets' is that the NHS is at the mercy of the giant drug companies. The very week Jaymee died, British Biotech's value looks set to rise to £3bn on hopes that its latest anti-cancer drug Marimastat proves profitable. This certainly puts £75,000 into perspective.

The first task in finding desperately-needed resources for the NHS is surely the nationalisation of such companies, without a penny com-

pensation.

This must be part of the struggle to overthrow capitalism as the vital step in freeing the planet's productive forces so they can be consciously developed to meet humanity's growing needs.

One of Chartism's founders was told last century: 'Political economy says that we cannot afford this.' He replied: 'In which case we cannot afford political economy.'

It is in this very same spirit that we must respond to the hand-wringing liberals of the Guardian.

Letters

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

Letters longer than 500 words WILL be cut

SLP estimates

AS A MARXIST who has joined the Socialist Labour Party, I am writing on the comments in Workers Press on the SLP founding conference (11 and 18 May).

Workers Press underestimates the extent to which, despite the reactionary nationalist character of the positions taken by its leadership (including former 'Trotskyists' of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, Brian Heron, Pat Sikorski and Caroline Sikorski), the SLP has attracted a significant number of genuine working-class activists splitting from Labourism.

The domination of the leadership at the conference meant that the 'slate' proposed by the steering committee for the national executive was elected in its entirety, and all amendments to the policy statements opposed by

Scargill & Co. were defeated. The South London branch amendment on immigration controls drew the largest vote of any of the amendments. This was the only occasion when Scargill and the rest of the platform actually voted — such was their determination to defeat the call to end all immigration controls.

It was unfortunate (or deliberate planning?) that the conference did not have time to debate the amendments on the European Union. Scargill's perspective of 'Britain' withdrawing from the EU and building its own brand of socialism is utopian. The working class has to overthrow capitalism, not 'withdraw' from it!

Another problem was the lack of time for branches to discuss the policy statements. South London was the only branch to submit amendments as a branch: the rest were from individuals or groups of individuals.

Some of these were stupid, proposing an abstractly 'revolutionary' alternative manifesto, in the tradition of 'left-wing' sects. The proposers of these amendments made no attempt to relate to the consciousness of the leftmoving workers who have joined the SLP.

This strengthened the Scargill leadership against those who put forward serious amendments challenging their nationalist perspectives.

The Liverpool dockers have shown in practice the importance of internationalism. With such experiences, the working class can develop an internationalist perspective against the national-

ist limitations of Scargillism, old Communist Party's 'British

roots support for the SLP in many areas. In Southwark, councillor Ian Driver has left the ruling Labour group to join the SLP, and has addressed meetings of up to 100 on resistance to the imposition of charges on community care services.

Scargill's nationalist and parliamentary perspectives offer nothing to working-classs people who are moving against Labour policies. The SLP national executive has resolved to stand at least 100 candidates in the next general election. This ambition seems to be motivated more by a desire to outdo Militant Labour (standing 23) than to relate to the real struggles of the working class.

It is important that Marxists, including Workers Press, work with the left movement in the working class which has found its expression in the SLP. This will help in the building of a new, internationalist party of the working class.

Irish Postings

tell Workers Press readers about some of the debates going on in the Irish Post in recent weeks.

Firstly, replying to an article from Labour's spokesperson for Northern Ireland, Dr Majorie Mowlam (4 May), Niall Ward rightly said in response to he position on the coming 30 May elections for an 'assembly' in the north [see last week's Workers Press, 'Irish election farce', by

'[S]he not only defends these unnecessary, divisive, inflammatory and farcical elections, she boasts they were her idea. She concedes that the nationalists do not want them, but is sympathetic to the unionist complaint that, without them, there is a

'Far be it from me to dig up old rumours, but wasn't there a bit of a deficit when the unionists ran Northern Ireland as a one-party, quasi-fascist state?...

has changed its spots?

'The unionist leopard, in the form of David Trimble and Ian Paisley, still thinks it is positively democratic to swagger through

which is in the tradition of the

Road to Socialism'.

There is significant grass-

Name and address supplied

I BELIEVE it would be useful to

John Steelel:

democratic "deficit".

'Does Mo Mowlam know about this or does she think the leopard

its neighbours' streets banging

Workers Press — May/June lectures

MARXISM AND THE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH **WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT**

Some lessons for today By Geoff Pilling, Workers Press editorial board

Lucas Arms, Gray's Inn Road, London. Thursdays 6 & 20 June, 7.30pm.

Nearest tube King's Cross.

The first two lectures in this series covered Chartism and Karl Marx and the founding of the First International. These provided invaluable material for study and discussion about the tasks now facing the working class. The next lecture is next Thursday.

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 those who wanted to separate the industrial from the political struggle.

4. Frederick Engels and the foundations of the Second International

The origins of the Second International, founded in 1889. The role of the struggle for mass trade 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 International.

drums and singing offensive sectarian and racist songs. Despite this, Dr Mowlam comes down on the leopard's side....

'[Mowlam] proclaims: "No one has a veto on progress." When the SDLP proposes cross-border bodies with administrative and legislative powers and the unionists say "no", will Dr Marjorie Mowlam, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, veto the unionist veto?

'If history tells us anything, it is that Labour will always appease the sectarian bigots who are the Ulster unionists. Mo Mowlam will be no different. After all, this is the woman who can blithely say: "Unless the IRA ceasefire is restored, the community which votes for Sinn Fein will not be represented at the table." This is Orangeism writ large - "We are the people and you are less than nothing: your voice will be ignored and your rights will be trampled underfoot." And this from a woman who no doubt considers herself a decent and a civilised democrat.'

The Post has also contained correspondence concerning a pro-imperialist, cross-party body, 'New Dialogue', formerly 'New Consensus'. It has members from the Labour Party, Tories, Liberal Democrats, Stalinists, pacifists, etc. It is all for 'peace' but is unable to oppose imperial-

Among other things, Bert Ward (13 April) — defending New Dialogue from Donal Kennedy (23 March), who had criticised the organisation as proimperialist and pro-loyalist/fascist, said: 'Donal refers to me as a "quondam" (i.e. former) commu-

'Although the party is now disbanded, I am still inspired by the socialist ideals that convinced me to join and remain active in it for so many years. I will never, ever denounce the party or those

As I said in my reply to this letter, this is 'totally amazing'. Here is a former member of the Communist Party of Great Britain who says he will not denounce a party which supported without question the Stalinist tyrannies, including the murder and oppression of mil-

lions in the former Soviet Union,

eastern Europe and China. For all his pious words ('the world has changed', etc.) and hypocritical sentiments about the wills and wishes of the majority in the Six Counties, and those of other 'democrats' like him, he denies the right of national selfdetermination and independence to the overall majority of Irish people living on the whole of Ire-

> Charlie Walsh London SW2

Quantum corrections

I NOTE that your science correspondent Daniel Robertson considers it 'complete nonsense' to claim 'that the laws of chemistry can be deduced from quantum mechanics' (18 May).

I consider that he is incorrect in this assertion. Some of the laws of chemistry can be deduced from quantum mechanics and many other laws can be clarified by reference to quantum-mechanical behaviour.

This is certainly not the forum to argue such a case but I refer your readers to a short but classic book by W. Heitler called Wave Mechanics which contains chapter titles such as 'Valency', 'The Periodic System of Elements' and 'Theory of Homopolar Chemical Bond'.

The use of analogy as argument or even illustration is full of pitfalls. I suggest D. Robertson confines himself to skylarks.

R. Thurstans Leicester

SAOIRSE (LONDON)

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IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS IN BRITAIN Please send birthday cards to all POWs. Cards are welcome at

any time. Name Prison Liam McCotter Belmarsh Jan Taylor Whitemoor Paul (Dingus) Magee Belmarsh Nicholas Mullen Whitemoor Liam Quinn Whitemoor Joe McKenny Frankland Pat Hayes Frankland Pat McGlynn Frankland Patrick Kelly Whitemoor Denis Kinsella Full Sutton **Eddie Butler** Full Sutton Joe O'Connell Full Sutton Full Sutton Micheal O'Brien Peter Sherry Belmarsh Stephen Nordone Frankland Vincent Wood Full Sutton Thomas Jack Frankland Vincent Donnelly Frankland Sean McNulty Frankland Harry Duggan Frankland Sean Kinsella Full Sutton Paul Norney Frankland Brendan Dowd Whitemoor **Hugh Doherty** Full Sutton Noel Gibson Full Sutton Liam O'Dwyer Belmarsh Derek Docherty Full Sutton

Number Birthday LB83693 2 January EN1977 18 January BT3783 30 January

MR0639 49930 L46486 EN1978 EN1946 EN1194 EN1944 338637 338635 BT3782 B75880 758663 EN1049 EN3177 274064 CL3440 338638 758661

2 February 6 February 7 February 27 February

25 March 12 April 12 April 17 April 15 May 11 June 30 June 2 August 7 August 10 September 25 September 13 October 31 October 5 November 863532 11 November 758662 17 November

338636 7 December 879225 11 December MT2485 14 December EN3887 31 December

Framed prisoner:

Danny McNamee Belmarsh L481616

Prison addresses:

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

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

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

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

Support Bosnian miners' strike

BY BOB MYERS Workers Aid for Bosnia secretary

STRIKING Bosnian miners from Kakanj have launched an urgent appealed for help in a fax from their president, Luka Bradaric, on 24 May:

The miners in Kakanj are on strike. We have had to stop work as it is impossible for us to survive on a wage of DM70 (£35) a month. We are also demanding that miners have equal status with other workers, industrial and non-industrial, who now have better pay and status in the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Please help the 2,500 Kakanj miners. Many thanks and miners' greetings. Sretno!"

Following the recent visit of Bosnian miners, including the union president, to Britain, Durham National Union of Mineworkers is circulating the labour movement appealing for solidarity. This is made even more urgent by the strikes now

taking place throughout Bosnia's mining regions.

After four years with no wages, with miners having to survive on food parcels, they were promised £35 a month from the beginning of the year. In February Kakanj miners in middle Bosnia staged a two-day strike in protest at non-payment of even this meagre wage.

Two weeks ago the miners of middle Bosnia again stopped work and struck to fire a shot across the employer's bows. These actions have now turned into general miners' strikes.

It is the responsibility of every trade unionist to act immediately. Send messages of support of the miners (fax numbers this page). Send money to enable the union to finance its actions to the appeal fund set up by Durham NUM (this page).

Call upon union executives and the TUC to organise international trade union support for the Bosnian miners.

At stake is not simply miners' pay, important as that is. Throughout this century the Bos-

nian miners have been at the centre of the fight for unity and the democratic rights of all workers in the region.

The organised working class emerged around their struggles. The Bosnian miners' brigades were at the front of the Partisans' fight against fascism in World War II. The miners' history again made itself felt in the last four years with the barbarous war aimed at destroying workers' unity. Miners again formed their battallions to fight a new rise of racism and fascism.

Heart

The Tuzla region was once more the heart of the 'free territories' holding out against ethnic division. The Bosnian miners and their communities have managed to survive. Now after the Dayton agreement they face a new attack.

So-called 'reconstruction' is to take place under the guidance of the IMF and the international

The number one enemy of these organisations will certainly

be the miners' union. Not just because of their militant history, but because the miners have emerged from the war as the only group of workers with the power to confront the inevitable privatisation and austerity plans of the international banks.

All other industries are in ruins. But the miners remain united in a single organisation and 10,000 of them still working, producing the only source of power.

The miners have held meetings with the Bosnian government and are demanding the full restoration of production and the return to work of all miners is given the government's number one priority.

In defending their own rights, the miners are acting on behalf of all miners in the region. The miners have lived through four years of war and they and their union are destitute. Their enemies will bring to bear all their experiences of defeating miners in other countries of Europe.

Don't let the Bosnian miners stand alone.

Faxes:

Fikret Suljic (Tuzla region) 00 387 75 212 360; Luka Bradaric (middle Bosnia) 00 387 72 751 620.

Durham NUM, PO Box 6, Red Hills, Durham DH1 4BB. Cheques payable to Tuzla Miners' Appeal.

Workers Aid for Bosnia message

Workers Aid for Bosnia sent the following message of support to the Bosnian miners:

WORKERS Aid for Bosnia gives its full support to the present actions of the union of Bosnian coal miners. For four years they worked without wages and now they must be paid enough to live

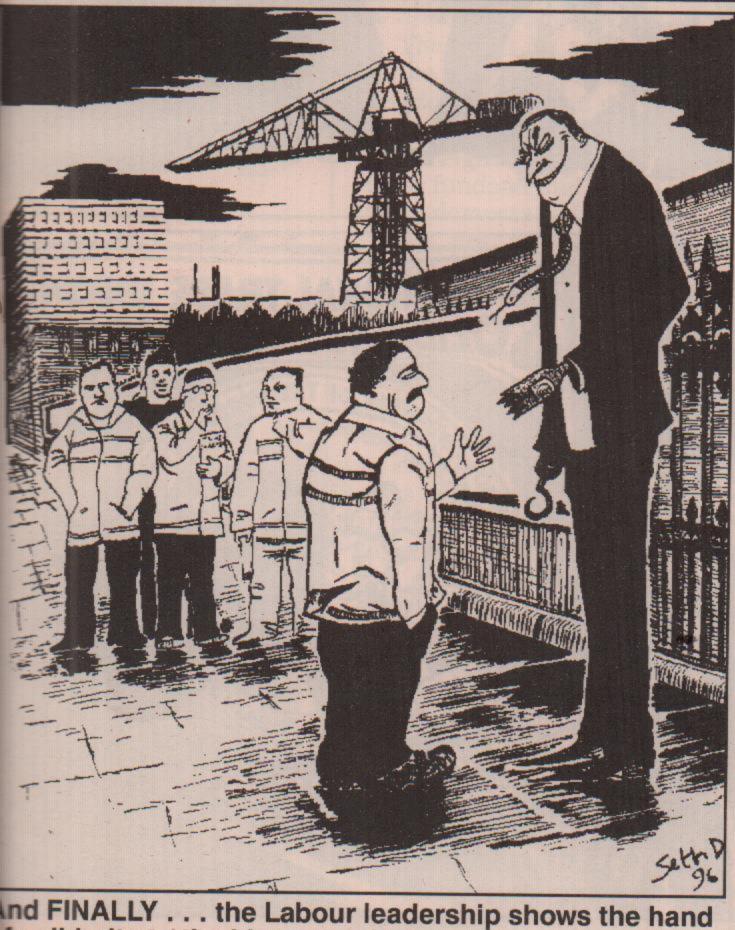
Throughout this century the miners have been at the centre of the struggle for justice, democracy and unity in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Today in Bosnia there are many representatives of various international governments and

institutions giving 'advice' on rebuilding the shattered economy.

All of these gentlemen represent governments who collaborated with the aggression against a united Bosnia-Herzegovina. It was the miners and other working people, inside and outside of the Bosnia-Herzegovina army, who alone ensured that Bosnia survived.

The future of democratic society rests today, as it has in the past, with the efforts of the miners to defend the welfare of working people. Their modest demands must be met immediately.



f solidarity to the Liverpool dockers!!?

IORE support for the 500 sacked iverpool dockers came from the venska Hamnarbetförbundet nion in Sweden. In a message om its vice-president Kenny arjason the union pledged:

'After Bob Ritchie and Jimmy avies from your union visited othenburg and clearly and ainly explained your situation, e Gothenburg dockers decided a members' meeting that we

will not operate any ACL vessels until they have been in harbour 12 hours. This will continue so long as ACL use Liverpool and the dockers don't reach an agreement with Mersey Docks and Harbour Company.'

It has been a key demand of the Liverpool dockers that the ACL company remove its ships from the port until their dispute is settled.

BY BOB ARCHER

PUBLIC service workers are in the firing line over German government expenditure cuts. Strike action spread to ten of the federal states on 21, 22 and 23 May after the employers' side came up with a derisory offer in the fourth round of pay talks.

The public service union OeTV, the white-collar DAG and the railway union registered a failure to agree on Thursday 23 May. Now all strikes are banned as the contract negotiations go to compulsory arbitration.

Employees in the postal service and the post office bank have also registered failure to agree and see their case go to arbitration. Negotiations for Telekomm

The two sides **Employers 'offer':**

 Single payment of 0.5 per cent of income for the period from 1 May 1996 to 30 April 1997. An increase of 1 per cent on the then existing income from 1 May 1997 to 31 December 1997.

 No increase in the eastern salary (former DDR) from 85 per cent of the western wage.

 Increase of 5 per cent in the number of training places. No wage increase for trainees. Trainees starting in 1996 and 1997 to have wages cut by 5 per cent. • 'Thirteenth month' (Christmas bonus) to be

reject 'provocative' offer employees continue. Ten thou-

sand public transport workers struck on Friday 24 in the Ruhr area, claiming they heard about arbitration too late to cancel the There were also spontaneous

rallies and protest actions in Berlin and Brandenburg in the east and Baden-Wuerttemburg in the south west.

'Anger is so great that colleagues are simply giving free rein to their dissatisfaction

until 1999. Overtime rates to be replaced by the 'balancing'

of overtime through time off. Right to employ labour on

short-term contracts at will. Reduction in rest days.

 Medical certificates required from the first day of absence.

Union demands:

 4.5 per cent overall increase in wages plus a promise of job security. Purchasing power in the public sector to grow at same rate as in the private sector. • Better wages for older workers going onto part-time

working in order to secure jobs. Step-by-step progress to wage equality in east and west

again,' said Rudolf Winterholler, a regional leader of the OeTV.

The strike action, in the traditional bastions of the German working class, shows the determined spirit of opposition which the government hopes can be dissipated while talks drag on through a three-week legal 'cooling-off period'.

Employers' insistence that the agreement run to December 1997 'in the interests of stability' is seen as a provocation by trade unionists. They say it means an effective wage cut. Union leaders also say they will fight to retain full sick pay from day one of absence. The government is preparing to cancel this except where it is stipulated in wage agreements. Parts of the media are critcising chancellor Kohl for letting this become a bone of contention in negotiations.

White-collar union president Roland Issen told the press: 'The employers should not speculate on whether we can or will (fight)', and added that the unions were far from being toothless tigers.

A spokeswoman for the OeTV stated the union had 'more than enough funds for a labour dispute'. Nevertheless another OeTV

spokesperson hurried to promise the union would respect the cooling-off period.

The arbitrators are expecting a very difficult task. The employers' choice is former premier of Rhineland-Palatinate Ludwig Wagener, a conservative politician who is currently head of the Thuringian Bank for Reconstruction. The unions have nominated former Bremen mayor Hans Koschnick to the arbitration panel.

There is also trouble ahead in the private banking sector. The Retail, Banking and Insurance Union has announced it will decide this week whether to launch a strike ballot over annual wage negotiations.

A recent opinion poll showed that 53 per cent of those Germans asked supported strikes as a way of obtaining workers' demands. However, only 41 per cent thought public employees should strike against 53 per cent who thought they should not.

Public service workers must become the centre of a movement throughout the working class and middle class to defend welfare arrangements and defeat Kohl's

Australian labour law

DUSTRIAL legislation fore the Australian parliaent is set to hurl workers back the 1890s.

The legislation introduces orkplace agreements'. These individual contracts tween an employer and each 'their' workers that are secret d can be anything that the ss wants.

Workers are prohibited from king anything that the boss ay consider as industrial tion under threat of civil tion for breach of contract. erefore there is no longer any ht to take any form of indus-

al action. The legislation will introce minimum rates which eans that 1.7 million workers, edominantly nurses, teachs, public sector workers can we pay cuts of up to 25 per

A youth wage of \$3 per hour o be introduced. No action will be able to be ken for unfair dismissal.

Enterprise unionism — independent company 'unions' with as little as 20 members part of the offensive to break down national agreements — will be allowed and encouraged while existing unions will have restrictions placed on their right of entry into workplaces. This legislation comes as

part of the government's programme that has already seen the most rascist attacks upon aborignal people, 12 per cent cuts to education and massive attacks on the unemployed and social welfare recipients.

In the face of this barbarism the organised trade union leadership, the ACTU, have a petition going asking the barbarians to, please, not be quite so barbaric!

This slaughter has been prepared by 13 years of Labour government and its wretched 'Accord' with union bureacrats. It has left the working class demoralised, disorganised and in disarray.

excluded from wage increase

The fiscal crisis of the German state

MANY commentators are finding inadequate. A major article in last week's mass-circulation Stern magazine accused the government of not daring to carry out fundamental reforms.

The article described the 50 billion Deutschmark cuts package as waste paper. The huge budget deficit will continue to grow because, as more and more people are thrown out of work, the tax base will shrink, and with it the government's tax income.

Moreover, projected tax income was based on an estimated 2 per cent annual economic growth this year, which few now think will materialise.

In fact Helmut Kohl has run away from the real issue, which, as far as capital is concerned, is to break up the social state (the German equivalent of the welfare state) with its partnership and concensus between workers and employers moderated by a benign state.

The tax system is a jungle of special tax breaks and subsidies which many experts want to simplify. But so far Kohl has dared do nothing to change the system radically.

For example, many employers

the government's cuts completely a tax on consumption, such as an side economists amount to a huge state debt and Germany heading increase in the VAT. This would help to reduce the cost of German exports.

> Economists like Professor Joachim Mitschke say that the social state's role in redistributing income from the prosperous to the needy has long since become a recycling of the citizens money from one pocket to another, filtered through a bloated bureaucracy.

'Some 40 different authorities syphon off contributions and reallocate money in subsidies and benefits.' Mitschke proposes a single citizens' contribution to be used to fund all forms of benefit.

Workers with an income below a certain level would actually receive a pay supplement from this source in his scheme. Meanwhile other experts propose the exact opposite.

Take pensions. Redundancies have often been masked as early retirement with early pensions being paid to what are in effect unemployed workers. Many experts say this is overtaxing the pension contributions, and want the two benefits to be funded quite seperately.

As many workers realise, the

want to replace income tax with solutions proposed by the supply- graphics show soaring rates of attack on their living standards.

> Professor Norbert Berthold proposes that the low-wage service sector should be opened up to create jobs. But these would be insecure, low-paid jobs for workers denied the usual range of social wage benefits and working under conditions of extreme exploitation.

A lot of well-paid academics and media people are currently trying to pursuade German workers to work harder for less money. Beautifully-produced

the European Union table for hourly wage-rates.

One particularly moving pie chart shows that a German worker need only work 207 days out of 365 to earn the annual salary of a British worker. But there is no peaceful way that German workers are going to accept a cut in living standards.

Although the Kohl government is desperately trying to temporise, the social crisis is inevitably opening a chasm under its feet.

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Inside left

ncouraged

D news for Bosnian miners! Not did their four-day strike action t in them winning their rise, but list Worker (25 May) thinks it is uraging'.

eal peace will come only when ters unite in struggle across ethnes against the rulers who have ped up nationalist hatred on all , it says. 'It is encouraging that are signs of struggle.' It menthe strike of 20,000 workers at n southern Serbia, as well as the rs' action.

Socialist Worker was halfway us about supporting workers' gle in ex-Yugoslavia, it could covered events like the recent to Britain of Bosnian miners. It d have learnt that the miners already united 'across ethnic , had fought to remain so, and d to re-establish links across the O-patrolled battle-lines too.

e paper that stands 'for workers' ar and international socialism' d have encouraged its readers to these workers, and support appeals for help. But its sermons intended to comfort Socialist cers Party (SWP) supporters, continue avoiding solidarity the Bosnian working class.

SWP members in the Anti-Nazi ue responded to racist attacks in on the way their paper has done hnic cleansing' and war in Bosthey would have to denounce d 'on all sides'; preach from afar what you need is socialism'; deny workers the right to defend selves; then give workers a mising pat on the back, on dising they can organise in trade as. But that would expose the to ridicule and contempt.

ascal

ERT Meltzer, who died aged 76, May, was described by Emma man in 1937 as 'a rascal who s nothing of anarchism or synism'. But Meltzer, whose autobiphy I Couldn't Paint Golden Is appeared last year, became a ng influence among anarchists is country; author of an erudite entertaining Little Red Quiz and a bitter, lifelong enemy of rotskyist movement.

eltzer denounced 'Trots' in his Black Flag, with a venom that have left hardened Stalinists with envy. When he concend his fire on Trotskyists' alleged hery and 'sabotage' in Spain, one ered where this came from.

hen Viraj Mendis was sheltering racist immigration laws in a hester church, Meltzer's Black editorial echoed the Home and Tory press, claiming is would be in no danger if he ent back to Sri Lanka, and addnat, as 'a Trot', he didn't deserve

ndis was actually a Fight Rac-Fight Imperialism! supporter. WRP comrades had worked him on issues like Apartheid, ad no reason to think he inclined ds Trotskyism. So what? Workress supported the campaign st his deportation, as did others ed to Tory racism. Anarchists in North West who took part in is's defence protested to Black bout its attitude.

t recently some comrades were rking about a nasty article ing Southwark UCATT con-Tony O'Brian, and the Conion Safety Campaign. When I that it was in Black Flag, I ht it maintained a certain tradi-They say you shouldn't speak ill recently dead, but what the

ITUSC/ALISC conference, 8 and 9 June, Conway Hall, London

Below is an abridged version of a more comprehensive and detailed discussion document for the International Workers' Conference next weekend (8 and 9 June), called by the International Trade Union Solidarity Campaign and the African Liberation Support Campaign. The conference will also receive and discuss national and regional reports and resolutions presented by activists from more than 25 countries.

Also on this page is the editorial from the latest International Trade Unionist Bulletin (bottom) on the conference and (right) the speech made by ITUSC organiser Keith Standring at this year's African Liberation Day march and rally last Saturday from outside the Shell Centre in London.

TRADE UNIONS are the oldest, most basic, elementary organisations that the working class has built up historically in its struggle against the employers.

The task of building and rebuilding the trade union movement therefore constitutes one of the most decisive tasks facing the working class today. To discuss this rebuilding, how it is to be achieved, is the central task of the International Trade Union Solidarity Campaign conference.

This task is an international one. If the 'workingman has no country' (Marx) nor has capital: it knows no national boundaries. It roams the world looking for labour to exploit and profit to be made.

It is in the dramatic internationalisation of the recent past — the growth of multinationals, the globalisation of finance, the consequent playing off of workers from one country against those from another — that the real basis for the establishment of international trade union solidarity lies.

The common problems faced today by the working class in the struggle for effective trade unionism

- Anti-trade-union laws.
- The loss of control by the members of their own unions.
- Privatisation of nationalised production, facilities and services.
 - The casualisation of services.

All these trends arise not because of policy options decided by the employers or the governments that are implementing them on behalf of capital. Nor is the complete absence, or in other cases the severe erosion, of democracy in the unions the result of 'bad individuals' who today lead the unions. Each of these four developments represent an international trend that expresses the inner needs of capital today.

Under pressure of an intensifying world crisis of capitalism, the employers must today strip away every semblance of defence that the working class has built up in the past against the employers.

Capital must establish direct, naked relations with the working class, unmediated by effective trade unions, by controls over working hours, by the establishment of minimum wages, by safety conditions, etc.

Casualisation aims to step up enormously the rate of exploitation of labour, to cut down on the labourtime necessary for production, to impose, reimpose, or strengthen the most primitive forms of the exploitation of labour by capital.

Privatisation is likewise aimed at breaking up trade unionism in the state sector as well as bringing every facet of life under the control of 'the market', that is, the naked rule of capital.

These trends mean that the unions are drawn ever closer to the state.

Increasingly the only unions capital will tolerate are those subordinated to its immediate needs. This is the source of the continuing erosion, or in many cases the complete absence, of internal democracy in the trade union movement.

The fight for the rebuilding and regeneration of the trade unions involves the fight for the control of the unions by their own members.

In all these developments, the employers resort more and more openly to the capitalist state to spearhead their attacks on the trade unions. That is why today there can be no purely 'industrial' struggles.

A successful fight against the employers today demands the elaboration of a political-industrial strategy against the employers and the

The conditions now exist for overcoming the old division (especially marked in the older capitalist countries such as Britain) between the 'political' and the 'industrial' strug-

The above trends are a sign of the weakness of capital — more specifically, its decay.

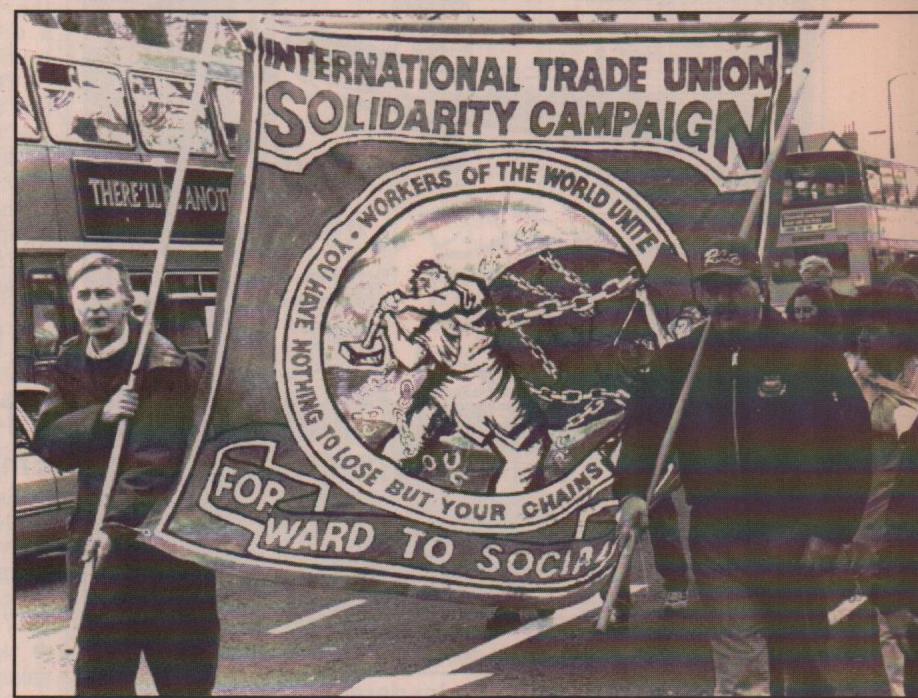
The fact that it is driven to reimpose, even in the advanced capitalist countries, the most barbarous, brutal methods of exploitation and control reminiscent of the last century, is an indication not of its strength, but its weakness.

This is the basis for a successful fight against these trends. The working class is on the offensive in its fight for the rebuilding and building of trade unionism.

Our conference must discuss how to build on this offensive.

REDUI The em





Group photo (top) of the founding conference of the Internation Campaign, 13 and 14 April 1991; and (below) ITUSC banner on th march

'May Day' warning to il

WORKERS across the world have just celebrated May Day — international workers' day. Wherever these events have taken place, workers have registered their knowledge that there are two mutually antagonistic classes. They have by word and deed expressed their optimism in the strength of their own class — the working class — to ultimately defeat imperialism in all its forms.

'May Day' is the universal callsign which indicates someone is in danger. May Day 1996 certainly warned imperialism and its agents that they are threatened by ignominious defeat at the hands of the class they exploit and rule.

Those matters which will be at the heart of the International Workers' Conference on 8 and 9 June are identified in the discus-

sion document for this conference (see this page). Many activists in the workers' movement have indicated their intention to participate in that conference. The fight is now on to ensure that all those wishing to attend can do so, and that means raising the funds for fares. We appeal for your help.

This conference can and must mark a decisive stage in mobilising workers internationally. We need to consolidate our gains and construct an effective, international force which unites all workers' struggles worldwide.

We must seek to improve and expand our monthly bulletin and we must publish it in other languages so that we have the widest possible circulation among the poorest workers in every country.

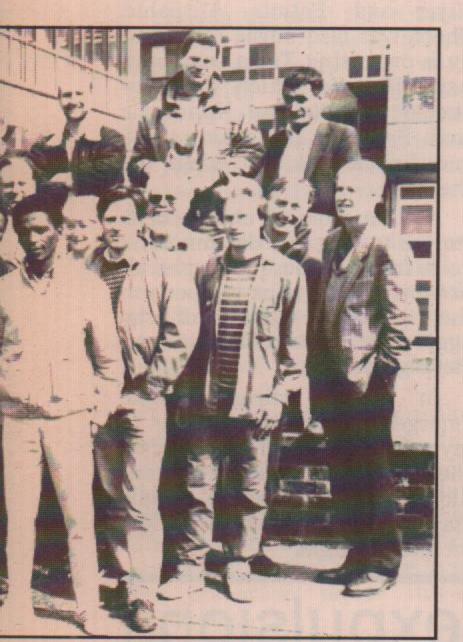
When the Liverpool dockwork-

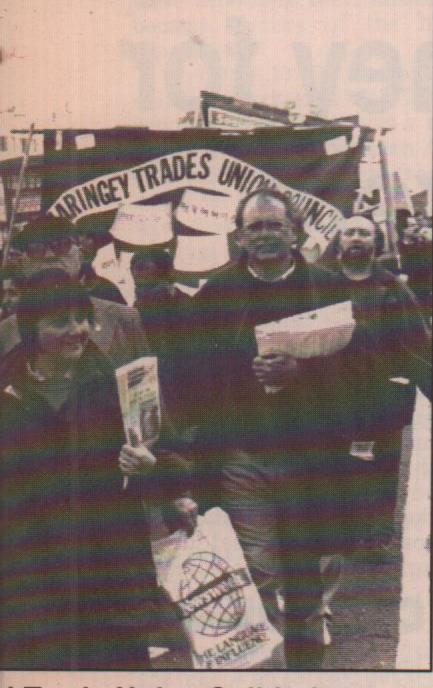
International Trade Unionist Bulletin

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Charlie Pottins

WORKERS ationalism





I Trade Union Solidarity s year's London May Day Photo: Alan Clark

mperialism

ers held their international conference in February, the dockers who attended from countries around the world were amazed to discover that in 1989 they were all undergoing an attack on their basic rights to unions and to permanent employment. Despite the fact that they are all part of the International Transport workers Federation (ITF), dockers in each country were isolated from the rest.

In the fight for reinstatement, the sacked Liverpool dockers have travelled far and wide. In Los Angeles they met the Mexican truck drivers and made common cause on the picket lines.

When the miners in Bosnia were fighting to maintain their multicultural life and union, workers in the rest of the world were fed misinformation by the capitalist media.

We must overcome these divisions and isolation. That is the purpose of the International Workers' Conference.

Workers all over the world have common interests and should have common political-industrial organisation. Capital is destroying the productive forces, the environnent and humanity. The choice is between socialism or barbarism.

Trade unions and Africa

THE right of all workers to combine in democratic trade unions - independent of employers and the state — is a fundamental right.

The right to work, the right to strike, the right to asylum and the freedom to live and work in any part of the world are also basic democratic rights. Laws which take away these fundamental rights are against basic, democratic freedoms.

We are all aware that capital operates globally through multinational companies (like Shell), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations.

Through brutal colonisation and super-exploitation — using worker to undercut worker — capital seeks to create divisions in the working class, using war, nationalism, unemployment, racism, religion, the break-up of communities and control of the media and production to attack us.

Nowhere in the world is this more prevalent than in the continent of Africe!

The structural crisis of capitalism increasingly requires the ruling class to inflict major onlsaughts on workers and their families. This is the basis for a successful fight against these trends.

The working class in Africa and throughout the world is on the offensive in its fight for the rebuilding and building of trade unionism and internationalism.

From the oil workers, journalists and civil servants of Nigeria to retrenched Ugandan workers, South African nurses, the Liverpool dockers in Britain, to garment workers in Bangladesh, bus workers in Mexico city, French railway workers, shoe workers in Indonesia, building workers in Germany, miners in Bosnia, Croatia, Russia and Ukraine all those who have been forced to flee their homes and become refugees workers of the world struggle against the same enemy and must be united in that struggle.

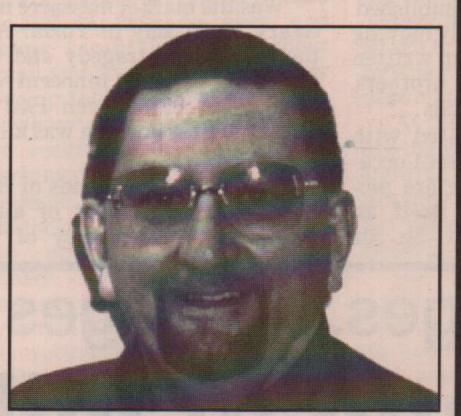
On 8 and 9 June, in Conway Hall here in London, the International Trade Union Solidiarity Campaign and the African Liberation Support Campaign have convened an International Workers' Conference. The conference promises to be a representative assembly, with activists in the workers' movement from over 25 countries present.

Among those taking part will be represented the Campaign for Independent Unions from Nigeria, the president of the National Garment Workers' Federation of Bangladesh, the president of the Bosnian miners' union, and representatives of the anti-asbestos campaign in the US.

Comrades from France, Spain, Greece, Hungary, Russia, South Africa and Namibia will be there.

From refugee organisation in Britain — Iran, Kashmir, Sudan, Iraq, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

ALISC comrades from Ghana,



Keith Standring

Uganda, Somalia, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Zambia will all be represented.

The Merseyside Port Shop Stewards' Committee will send two delegates to participate.

The aim of the conference is to establish real links towards an international and internationalist association of organised workers and the communities. It will bring together people of various political persuasions, but with the universal understanding that the class struggle is as alive as ever it was and that together we have a world to win — for socialism.

We hope organisations here will send a representative.

On the occasion of this Africa Liberation Day 1996 we should convey our special respects and pledge solidarity to the following labour activ-

Frank Kokori — general secretary of the Nigerian petrol and natural gas workers, detained since 4 July 1994 following the oil strike against the military dictatorship in Nigeria.

■ Milton Dabibi — general secretary of the Nigerian oil workers arrested in February 1996 and detained without charge.

Bongani Mkhungo — an ITUSC comrade in hiding with his family in South Africa following a violent physical attack by an African National Congress hit squad while leafletting the Congress of South African Trade Unions tenth anniversary rally in Durban, in support of striking nurses in ex-Transkei and calling for COSATU to end its political alliance with the Government of National Unity.

Namibian liberation fighters either killed or still detained by their own South West African People's Organisation.

All those African comrades, known and unknown, who have suffered and died in the struggle for African liberation.

In the line of march of the workers' struggle, ITUSC and ALISC stand shoulder to shoulder as comrades.

■ Victory to workers' internationalism!

■ Victory to socialism! ■ Victory to African liberation!

City Lights

On productivity and profits

INDUSTRY in Britain is certainly leaner than when the Tories came to office in 1979. But its output is harder and harder to be seen.

A symposium in the January edition of the Economic Journal indicates that the increase in manufacturing output in this country between 1973 and 1992 came to a derisory 1.3 per cent.

Over the same period manufacturing output went up 68.9 per cent in Japan, 68.6 per cent in Italy, 55.2 per cent in the United States, 32.1 per cent in West Germany, and 16.5 per cent in France.

Even more noteworthy is the fact that output per worker in British industry went up by around 80 per cent, much faster than in West Germany, for instance.

In 1979 West German output per person hour was 40 per cent above levels in this country; by 1989 this was down to 17 per cent.

This combination in Britain of a virtual stagnation in output and rapid increases in productivity has had one obvious consequence - a sharp decline in employment in the manufacturing sector, which has fallen in the period 1964-73/1979-89 by a third, involving the loss of 2.5 million jobs.

But while this trend may be particularly acute in Britain - an indication of the structural weakness of capitalism in this country — it is by no means an exclusively 'British disease'.

Thus during these same years French industry shed over half a million jobs and Germany over 1 million. And these trends have accelerated since 1989.

This sharply rising unemployment in manufacturing industry finds its reflection in lengthening dole queues and consequentially inflated government spending programmes on welfare and related benefits — factors which have brought severe imbalances in the finances of most European countries, and thus helped disrupt the best laid plans for European monetary union.

There are at least two lessons to be considered from such data. In the first place they show the bankruptcy of those trade union leaders who pretended that 'productivity deals' - in which wages were tied to changes in per capita output — were some magic remedy for the problems of the working class.

But second they show that rising labour productivity — in part the inevitable result of growing competition between capitalist firms — far from alleviating the crisis of capital is now a potent factor in intensifying just this crisis.

Why has British manufacturing output been stagnant in a period where world demand for such output has been steadily rising? Clearly because of pressure on profits, for under capitalism decisions to produce are driven by profits, or at least the prospect of them.

The intriguing question is: why should it be in Britain - where output per person has risen more rapidly than in most countries in the world — that this pressure on profits should be most intense? In short, why should rising labour productivity and the increased exploitation of labour go hand in hand with the tendency for the rate of profit to fall? It is a question to which this column will return next week.

Kohl cap in hand

GERMANY has asked the European Union to extend aid payments to the former East Germany well beyond the end of the century. The Kohl government has warned that building the economy of the former GDR will involve 'hundreds of billions of D-Marks a year' well nto the next

millennium. Gross transfers of public funds to eastern Germany from 1992 to the end of this year total some £350bn, of which around £70bn has returned to the German authorities in the shape of taxes.

In a memorandum to the EU Commissioners, Germany's economics minister Günter Rexrodt said that his country had come 'half way' in the reconstruction of the eastern Länder, but the rest of the process would be 'more complicated'.

'We will have a long period of time, longer than originally planned, when important and broad public support measures to increase entrepreneurial capacity will be needed. He warned that much of the necessary economic and social infrastructure was still lacking in the former GDR.

'This is not just an industrial question, but a social question about the social coherence of a country and a people,' he told the commission.

Should the EU end its six-year programme of money for structural reforms in east Germany, which is due to stop in 1999, this could lead to intense social problems and the movement of industry to the west, Rexrodt warned.

Replying to the request, commission president Jacques Santer said that all the members of the EU would have to be involved in any decision 'because they also have problems at home'.

You can say that again.

A timely exit

EUROPEAN growth prospects have been revised drastically downwards by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Only six months ago the OECD — the 27-member 'rich man's club' — was forecasting a growth rate of 2.4 per cent in Germany. This has now been slashed to 0.5 per cent.

French growth expectations have also been lowered, although the actual figures are not yet available. Growth in the OECD European countries is now estimated at only 1.6 per cent this year, down from the 2.6 per cent forecast made as recently as last December.

The revisions were made before the stringent budget cutting measures announced in France and Germany. The measures of the Kohl government alone will drain over £20bn from a country already officially declared to be in recession.

Officials at the OECD said they would have to take a 'solid look' at these plans before estimating their impact on growth. This is officialspeak preparing for a further downward revision of the figures.

Announcing the latest figures, Jean-Claude Paye, OECD secretarygeneral admitted that continuing the efforts to reduce budget deficits in line with the Maastricht requirements for monetary union in Europe could strangle economic growth to such a degree that the deficits could end up even higher.

Paye was pointing to the fact that, in trying to reduce their budget deficits in line with Maastricht, countries might raise taxes and cut government spending to such an extent that the reduction in economic activity would be so great that government tax revenues might actually fall, while spending on unemployment and related benefits would undoubtedly rise.

But Paye said, à la Thatcher, 'there is no alternative'. If governments did not get their houses in order, the 'financial markets' would punish them by imposing higher long-term interest rates which would in any case stifle economic growth.

As the old saying has it: 'They're damned if they do and they're damned if they don't.' You will hardly be surprised to learn that Paye has now decided to step down after 12 years in office.

Threadneedle

My debts Malcolm MacEwen

MALCOLM MacEWEN's death last month at the age of 85 carried me back to those years, from 1948 to 1956, when he was my colleague on the Daily Worker.

As L.P. Hartley says somewhere, the past is a foreign country and 'they do things differently there'. By the 1990s this self-proclaimed 'green Marxist' had become a sort of internal émigré: a survival from a distant epoch.

His autobiography The Greening of a Red (Pluto, 1991) reviewed in this column on 21 February 1991 — is the self-portrait of an ex-Stalinist who, a third of a century after the British Communist Party expelled him, still hotly defended pretty well every twist and turn of Soviet foreign policy in the 1930s and 1940s, including the 1939 Soviet-German pact.

The Greening of a Red is of great interest, especially to those of us who lived through those decades; but it shows that Malcolm never really began to understand Stalinism and never got to grips with Trotsky's analysis of it.

Of all that group of ex-CP members around the New Reasoner, he was the only one who ever acknowledged, albeit in passing, the importance of Trotsky's analysis, in an article which that journal published in 1958.

Malcolm's autobiography has several passing references to Trotsky, but none of these is indexed — and it is George Orwell whom he chooses to present as 'the outstanding example' of a 'contemporary observer' who recognised 'the seeds of communist degeneration in Stalinism' in the 1930s.

There is an astonishing passage where, describing his last day in the Worker office - 14 November 1956 — he tells how the editor, J.R. Campbell, just back from Moscow, accused him of 'an anti-Party conspiracy'.

Campbell also 'placed the most sinister interpretation on my action in getting half the editorial staff to sign the statement I submitted to the EC and in having telephone conversations with [Gordon] Cruickshank [Daily Worker correspondent] in Warsaw'.

At that point Malcolm walked out of the meeting, left the building, and never went back. In a British 'people's democracy', he adds, Campbell might well have been one of his accusers in a show trial.

Now, this is astonishing when set against Malcolm's highly emotional reference to Campbell a few years ago, at a conference on "The CP in 1956".

Speaking of his great affection for his late editor, 'whom I loved and admired despite increasing difficulties in our working relations', Malcolm suddenly burst into tears; but he said nothing about the 'anti-Party conspiracy' accusation.

PROFESSIONALLY, I owed a lot to Malcolm MacEwen.

First of all, as my news editor for several years, he insisted on the highest journalistic standards, and I learnt much from having my efforts slung back at me, sometimes more than once, until they were punchy and clear enough to pass muster with him.

He himself was a workaholic — he confesses as much in his autobiography — and he could never understand those of us who, however dedicated to the party and its paper, did enjoy the occasional day off.

If I hadn't liked him so much I would have called him a slavedriver, and I did in fact expostulate when I found myself sent out

PERSONAL COLUMN

on a reporting assignment for the seventh Saturday in a row.

Malcolm set a fine example not only by his industry but also by being a prolific 'ideas man'. Suggestions for stories and treatments sprang from his brain like sparks from a catherine wheel.

One brilliant series of articles he wrote came from his idea of posing as the father of a young son and writing round to all the public schools for their prospectuses and details of the astronomical fees they charged. He liked nothing better than giving the rich a roasting.

I owed it entirely to Malcolm that I was so warmly welcomed by my Commons press gallery colleagues when I became the Worker's parliamentary correspondent at the age of 22.

His geniality; his golfing prowess (he was the gallery's golf champion); not least, his good-humoured refusal to be provoked by right-wing banter: all these had smoothed my path.

The contrast with Peter Zinkin, the paper's lobby correspondent, could hardly have been more marked. The lugubrious Zinkin was loathed by almost everyone at Westminster — and by most of the Daily Worker staff, too.

Frank Gullett, Malcolm's successor as news editor, used to insist that Zinkin must be Stalin's bastard, this being the only possible explanation for our employing such a rotten writer.

That was just a joke — until someone claimed to have checked Zinkin's date of birth and to have found that he had been conceived in April or May 1907, when Stalin was in London for the Fifth Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

Zinkin didn't endear himself to his colleagues when we discovered that he was spying on us on behalf of CP general secretary Harry Pollitt, to whom he submitted a lengthy weekly report on our sayings and doings.

His weekly dose of poison solemnly included such trivialities as light-hearted quips by the younger reporters - the late Llew Gardner and Leon Griffiths about Soviet generals wearing their medals in the bath.

One of my most cherished memories of Malcolm is of him, stung beyond endurance, rising from his news editor's desk and kicking Zinkin in the arse. For that we were all very grateful.

BUT in this year of the 40th anniversary of the Hungarian revolution what is uppermost in my mind is that Malcolm resigned from the Daily Worker in protest at the suppression of my dispatches from Budapest and of Gabriel's cartoon equating the Soviet invasion of Hungary with the contemporaneous Anglo-French invasion of Suez.

That was in no sense a personal matter, of course. But his solidarity wasn't a formality. The day after I got back from Hungary I went to Malcolm's house in Tanza Road, Hampstead, for an early-morning meeting with him and Phil Bolsover, to discuss my resignation statement and be given some good advice on how to conduct my campaign to tell the truth about what I had seen in Hungary.

Whatever political differences we had later — and they were unbridgeable — I was buoyed up by the support and encouragement he gave me that day, and by his quiet assurance that I had no alternative but to resign from the

paper. Here was a helping hand, from someone I respected and admired, at the very moment I was venturing into uncharted waters. Like Malcolm himself, it was unforget-

Tuzla 25 May 1995 massacre

We die to live

BY FARUK IBRAHIMOVIC Independent journalist, Tuzla

THESE days Tuzla lives for the 25 May 1995 — the day when 71 of its innocent inhabitants were killed a year ago. The Kapija (Gate) where the massacre happened is refurbished.

A monument will be erected there, but for this anniversary, as the first stage, a big white stone panel with a short text on it has been built in the nearest building to the spot where the shell hit.

A book, Killing of Morning Sunrise, was promoted on Friday 24 May. It was with the great efforts of all involved in the project, and the financial support of the former European Union governor of Mostar, Hans Koschnik, that the book was published. It is a collection of deeply moving stories about each victim written by journalists, parents, brothers, sisters, neighbours, friends...

The book is illustrated with pictures taken on different occasions. At the end there are pictures of the massacre itself, an UNPROFOR statement on its investigation, poems . . . It is devoted to all civil victims in Tuzla, so, it's not finished. The next edition will be enlarged.

In the foreword to the book, the Tuzla's mayor says: 'A crime against Bosnia and Herzegovina, against her honest people who didn't want anything other than a human and democratic life, is an indelible spot on the consciousness of civilisation which swore that genocide and holocaust would never happen again.

'But it was repeated. At the end of the 20th century it happened. More monstrous than ever before in the history of the whole of Europe, not only here. For four years civilisation gave legitimacy to the ideology of Serbian Nazism based on a pathological desire to massacre what is different.

'Was the market massacre necessary on 25 May in Tuzla? And the Srebrenica tragedy and the thousands of other innocent victims killed in between 1992 when the first Bosnian was killed - to 1995?

nians killed are, first of all, a tonal authorities, parties, civic stayed on guard there until late result of the hypocrisy of the groups and organisations, the

international community, of the gap between words and deeds, and then of executors who were granted the right to kill morning sunrise for four years.'

The morning of 25 May promised to be a nice, hot day. The same as it was a year ago after a long period of rain. At the cemetry silence interrupted by birds singing in nearby trees.

Graves

Parents, relatives, friends gave the last touch to bunches of flowers laid on the graves of their nearest and dearest. People of Tuzla and the young people were waiting for this day to demonstrate their sorrow and obstinacy since the original funerals had had to be organised under the cover of dark.

Thousands of people headed towards the cemetery. They paid respects to these and all other innocent victims from Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the afternoon an official ceremony began.

Wreaths and flowers were laid 'The tens of thousands of Bos- by the mayor of Tuzla, the can- dlelight, Tuzla's young people

city of Bologna, humanitarian organisations, EU monitors, UNHCR, UNPROFOR, IFOR...

All streets leading toward the Kapija were crowded with people in the evening. The beauty and charm of Tuzla was on show. They all had a flower and a candle in their hands. A recital specially prepared for this occasion was written by a father and son, Nijaz and Fatmir Alispahic. There was also music composed by a promising Tuzla composer, Asim Horozic, which was conducted by Sulejman Kupusovic from Sarajevo. It started at 8.15 and finished at 8.55 when the shell hit.

At that moment church bells started to ring and the muezzin's voice from the mosque invited all present to pray, to pay respects to the innocent victims of the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In solemn silence people emerged from nearby streets to lay a flower and light a candle on the spot of the massacre. By canon into the night.

Low wages, no wages, violence and expulsions

No land of milk and honey for Israel's migrant workers

BY DAVID DORFMAN

ISRAELI bosses who hire foreign migrant workers have joined forces to track down and expel any who 'run away'. Press advertisements from the Association of Contractors and Builders invite employers whose workers have gone to come to the association's office and sign an affidavit.

'The sooner you fill in an affidavit about a runaway worker, the sooner you will be entitled to receive a new worker', the ad promises.

Civil rights organisations say the language 'is reminiscent of the relations between 19th century Southern plantation owners and their runaway slaves'.

'Only a slave or a prisoner can "run away", a free person does not "run away" because he is neither chained nor limited in his movements,' says Kav La'Oved (Workers' hotline), the Tel Aviv-based group originally formed to give advice and help to Palestinian workers facing cheating employ-

Repeated use of closure by Israeli governments, whether as collective punishment for bombings, or preventive security, hit thousands of Palestinian workers from the West Bank and Gaza, whose wages contribute more to the economy of these areas than

all foreign aid combined. It has also encouraged many Israeli employers to look further afield for labour.

Foreign migrant workers can be hired and fired at will, they don't have unions or welfare rights. Not knowing the language, local money, the law, or where to turn for support, they're not likely to strike.

At least that's what the employers thought. But there have been strikes. When the AB Calamit company tried to transfer 60 Romanian workers to another contractor, while still owing them two months' pay, the workers struck. Kav La'Oved says it presented information to the Labour Ministry, and the contractor promised to pay the workers their wages.

Disappeared

'Lo and behold, on the day the workers were due to receive their money we discovered that they had suddenly disappeared from their lodgings. Alerting the ministry, we were told (after the latter spoke to a company representative) that the workers were on their way to a new contractor in Eilat.

"We don't buy that story for a minute," we told the Ministry official, and based on painful past experience we rushed off to the airport. Sure enough, we found

the 60 workers huddled in a corner of the airport surrounded by a group of armed security men.'

After much persuasion the airport police accepted a complaint from one of the workers, who told them that armed men had come to their lodgings that morning, forced them to sign a document in Hebrew, and herded them on to vehicles. Any who resisted were beaten.

The rights' group's intervention brought the head of the Labour Ministry's Department for Enforcing Workers' Rights down to the airport, accompanied by the contractor. The workers were paid part of the money owed them, and promised the Ministry would forward the rest of the money to Romania.

Another case concerned 19 Chinese workers who were expelled from Israel on 29 February, after only a few months work. Each of them had paid \$5,000 in China for the privilege of coming to Israel to work for

Of this, \$2,000 covered fares, and the other \$3,000 went to Mr. Motti Orian, director of a firm called Global Manpower.

By the end of February, Orian owed each of these workers two or three months' wages. Instead of paying them he sent ten armed guards who surprised the workers in their sleep, beat them, and drove them to the airport to be expelled.

Kay Yung Chan, 28, was sent to Kav La'Oved by the Chinese embassy, after being beaten by his employer, Oded Cohen of GPA Commerce. 'He was missing a tooth and one of his eyes was a bloody mess. We accompanied the worker to Ichilov hospital, where doctors confirmed that he was suffering from internal bleeding."

Complained

Chan had complained about unpaid wages, and been summoned to the company office. Fearing that he would be deported like others, he ran away to stay with some other Chinese workers in Lod. Cohen, accompanied by a 'heavy', found Chan there, attacked him, and took him to a house in Rishon LeZion. Locked in the basement, Chan escaped and went to his embassy.

After Chan was examined in hospital, Kav La'Oved accompanied him to Rishon Le Zion police station to file complaint. Ten days later the complaint was transferred to Lod police. A month later police still hadn't 'located' Mr Cohen or his assistant.

When it comes to helping employers, for instance by obligingly issuing expulsion orders against troublesome workers, the authorities are much quicker to

Tower Hamlets Fight Against Cuts in Education (Face)

Our children deserve the best don't cut education

Lobby Tower Hamlets education committee

Wednesday 5 June, 6pm Mulberry Place, Clove Crescent, London E14

Buses: 277, D6. DLR: Blackwall Station

This is the new committee's first meeting — make them fight for money for schools

Wolfe Tone Society

James Connolly/ **Bobby Sands**

Annual commemoration Sunday 16 June, 1pm Camden Irish Centre, 50-52

Camden Square, London NW1 Mitchel McLaughlain (Sinn Fein), Tony Benn MP, Kurdish representative,

representative Workshops, rally, video, social until late

Indian Workers Association, Basque

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Leicester Support Group for Liverpool Dockers

First meeting Thursday 20 June, 7.30pm Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester

Phone: 0116-270 7730

Liverpool dockers are sending a speaker Their struggle is against casualisation, low pay and whether employers have the right

to trample on workers IF THEY WIN WE WIN, SO SUPPORT

THEM

Brazilian state murders landless workers From SOCIALIST VOICE Socialist League, British

Magazine of the International section of the International Workers League/Fourth International (LIT/CI)

ONCE again rural workers have been massacred in Brazil. The military police of Pará, a north eastern state, cowardly assassinated 21 evicted small farmers and their families in April on the direct orders of the ruling PDSB party governor, Almir Gabriel.

Among the dead was a threeyear-old child. Of the 21 dead, 19 bodies were completely mutilated, with broken legs and smashed heads. Another 20 critically ill people were hospitalised in Marabá. Dozens have disappeared, among them women and children.

The March of the Landless was on highway PA-50. They had left the municipality of Curionópolis for Marabá where they were to have a meeting with the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INCRA).

According to film-maker Jonias Cardosos (whose film equipment was confiscated by the military police), the military police came out of a bus firing. The marchers resisted with sticks and stones and ran into the forest for protection under intense police fire.

Some of the journalists who were reporting the conflict also became victims of the brutal repression.

The Pará Federation of Agricultural Workers (FETAGRI) has reported that there was a meeting in the capital between Almir Gabriel and landowners from the south of Pará, many of whom have been denounced for assassinations and violence against rural workers, just before this incident.

The landless rural workers' movement is a national movement of small farmers and landless workers. It includes people who settled on uncultivated land decades ago and paid the large landowners about 40 per cent of their crops.

Large landowners are brutally forcing these people off the land to use it for things like the expansion of cattle production.

The investigating police are acting under the same orders as the ones who carried out the killings and under the orders of INCRA (Institute For Colonisation and Agrarian Reform) which

is dependent on the Ministry of Agriculture of Brazil.

On 19 April demonstrations covering the whole country were organised demanding investigation into the repression, condemning those responsible and denouncing Cardosa's government.

The crisis generated by this movement and the government's inability and unwillingness to deal with the problem meant that, after the massacre in Pará, there was no Minister of Agriculture in Brazil, the last one having locked herself in her house for two days and then resigned!

The Pará killing was no isolated event. This year alone there have been more than 100 rural workers assassinated in Brazil by the police in their struggles for land. The judicial investigations are started but never concluded and no one is ever charged.

The case of the Corumbiara massacre is a terrible example of this when Rondonia's military police stormed a colony of 600 families squatting on a ranch on 9 August. Eleven were killed, including a seven-year-old girl.

Survivors say police tortured squatters for 12 hours, forcing one to eat the brains of a dead comrade.

On 16 December, councillor Manoel Ribeirio, who had protested at the killings and supported the peasants, was shot dead in his doorway.

The failure to punish the police responsible for the Corumbiara events confirms that the struggle for agrarian reform has been met by the bullets of the government in the service of the large landowners. In the most recent case Diolinda and other peasant leaders of the Pontal de Paránapanema in San Pablo were imprisoned.

Decided

The Landless Movement of Rural Workers (MST) had decided in 1995 to seize and occupy vacant land throughout Brazil and, in an effort to further develop their national campaign they have gone into the cities and are seeking support from the working class.

On 31 January Landless activists took over one of Sao Paulo's city parks until they were evicted. They had been given promises for years. Cardoso had promised 280,000 families would be resettled by 1998.

Brazil has one of the most unequal land distributions in the

world and there is a rise of evictions and killings of the poor.

The landless workers are, in one way or another, directly confronting the plans of imperialism just as were the Zapatistas in Mexico who had to fight not only the landlords and national government but US agri-business and Nafta (the economic block of the US, Canada and Mexicio) as

The MST is seeking deeper solidarity from the urban working class and was helped by the oil workers union in Santos, Brazil's main port city, to occupy a farm located in the western area of Sao Paulo.

The rural workers are fighting the landowners and the government who are opening up Brazil to a frenzy of privatisation by the US, European and Japanese multi-nationals.

At the same time as the massacre the Brazilian working class is fighting the privatisation programme of the government and its labour and social security reforms.

An indefinite strike on 16 April was called by the federal public sector workers demanding an end to the cuts in social security and reforms of their public sector and a 46 per cent pay

increase — to keep pace with the rise of inflation.

Eight days later a national day of struggle and mourning was called throughout the country.

On May Day the CUT (the trade union federation) called for a general strike against the government's policies.

There has been a slowdown in privatisations brought about by resistance to the plans by trade unions. But many of the world's multi-nationals are increasing their investment, for example, General Motors, Volkswagen and AT&T have all announced increased investment in Brazil. In general and against the norm in Latin America, 'investments are pouring in even though the privatisation has been stalled' (Latin America Review, May).

It continues because of the vast internal pickings and because Brazil is part of MERCO-SUR which will give the multinationals in Brazil access to Argentina, Paráguay, Uruguay and soon Chile - a combined GDP of \$1 trillion.

These attacks are not only occurring in Brazil.

In Latin America we have seen the assassination of comrade Neco Balbuena in Paráguay, the imprisonment of comrades

Horarcio Panario and Alcides Christiensen in Argentina, the state violence in Bolivia.

The new economic and political changes have been called a process of 'globalisation', but for workers and the landless globalisation is nothing more than a globalisation of violence and repression aimed against them.

Condemn the Pará assassinations

THE International Workers League (Fourth International) and its party in Brazil, the PSTU, asks that the labour movement condemns the assassinations in Pará.

Please send your messages repudiating the massacre and demanding an immediate investigation into the events and the sentencing of those responsible including those in government to Fernando Henrique Cardoso-Presidente de Brasil c/o the Brazilian Embassy: Fax: 0171-493 5105. 32 Green Street, Mayfair London W1Y 4AT.

Messages of support to the MST, Landless Movement of Rural Workers.

Trade unions' battle lines being drawn with Labour

Comment by ROY THOMAS

'WE DO NOT expect favours and we will give no favours,' Bill Morris told a meeting of some 200 Transport and General Workers' Union senior officers and over 250 businesspersons last week.

The favours he wasn't going to give were in response to Labour leader Tony Blair's comments that he 'would be fair to the unions' but that there would be 'no favours'.

Morris then went on to say that in the public services a Labour government would be treated just like any other employer.

'I can tell you,' said Morris, 'the T&G attitude to pay policy. We have been there, seen it, done it. It does not work, and we are not having it.'

While this was a clear message to the Labourites and employers at the meeting, Morris was looking back to 1979 when the T&G conference rejected the pleas of general secretary Jack Jones to support the failing incomes policy of the last Labour government which had been agreed with the TUC.

The facts of life at that time for working people expressed themselves in that T&G decision and led to the defeat of the incomes policy.

Morris could also have been looking across the world to Australia. Thirteen years of a Labour government there, and its accord with the Australian Congress of Trade Unions (ACTU), has resulted in union organisation breaking up with membership falling from 74 per cent in the 1970s, through 42 per cent ten years ago, to just 37 per

This has forced the ACTU to look at their organisational methods. Many ACTU officials have never worked under anything other than a Labour government. The Labour defeat a few months ago has produced a new crisis for them.

cent today.

In the US, the service workers' union and the confectionery workers have been in the forefront of new organising drives. These unions are spending up to

30 per cent of their budgets on organising the low paid. The resulting increase in

membership from this new approach has resulted in an unexpected — and for the old union machinery unplanned change in the AFL-CIO union federation's leadership.

The old relationships are breaking down when faced with the changes in the needs and ways the working class is organising itself.

The pressure from the Labour leadership's attempt in Britain to control the unions has actually pushed them further further along the road of separation.

When Tony Blair egged Jack Dromey (Harriet Harman's husband) on to run in opposition to Bill Morris for the T&G general secretary post. Morris was forced not just to distance himself from Dromey, but from the blind acceptance of Blair's speedy move to the right.

Bill Morris won that election and found more support than he had expected for the break with Blair.

Leading

Leading national figures in the T&G now talk of looking for a new party in which they would feel more comfortable. 'One that begins to think of the needs of the working class,' as one put it.

Morris himself has said that he rejected the view of some on the left that the last 17 years had been wasted. 'For us in the T&G they have been learning years.'

While large parts of Morris's speech were welcomed by the 250-odd employers, others made it clear that they were with Blair when it came to the removal of the anti-union laws.

When it comes to how the

T&G and other unions respond to the events following the general election, the words of a rising star close to Morris must be watched: 'We are responsible to our members, not the government.' Such people say political independence is the name of the game. They shall have to be kept to their words.



Rural workers in Brazil suffer one of the most unequal land distributions in the world

Yale workers to hold an alternative 'araduation'

UNIONS at Yale University have been engaged in a 'rotating strike' strategy, with white-collar and blue-collar employees taking turns at being on strike for a month.

With the spring strikes over, and the conflict still unresolved, workers at Yale have decided to own 'people's hold their graduation'.

The dispute centres around the fact that all Yale's workers teaching assistants, secretaries, dining hall workers, etc. — are employed without a contract.

The strike could be easily settled, but so far the administration has refused to back off demands for radical cuts in the wages, benefits and job security for the university staff. As a result, the campus remains embittered and divided, with many people wondering about more strikes in the autumn.

To settle the contract issue, the 'people's graduation' is to coincide with the start of Yale's official ceremonies on 27 May.

The event will be jointly sponsored by Yale's unions and a coalition of New Haven churches

and community organisations. Delegations are now planned from a number of other colleges, including Harvard, Columbia, Barnard and New York.

Despite cosmetic manoeuvreing, Yale's bargaining position has changed little in the past few months.

The administration is still asking for the unlimited right to fill all job openings — whether due to growth, turnover or retirement — with subcontractors, who will inevitably employ people at lower wages, with fewer benefits and no job security.

Worst of all, these people will have no ability to even improve their situation, since they will have no bargaining rights with Yale. But unionisation has been moving forward.

At the end of April, there were union elections for a group of 'casual' or 'on-call' workers at Yale, who do the same work as everyone else but are paid less, get no health insurance, and can be hired and fired from day to day.

Yale tried to block this election, arguing that these weren't 'real' employees and therefore not

entitled to a union election. This was overruled. When the election took place, the workers voted 61-2 in favor of unionisation.

Despite this, Yale continues to push for more regular jobs to be replaced with subcontracted, temp or 'casual' workers.

Since many of the university's harshest proposals affect future workers rather than current union members, this fight has become a wider community issue.

Poorest

New Haven is the seventh poorest city in America, and Yale is by far its biggest employer, accounting for one in seven city jobs. For this reason, a wide number of churches, neighbourhood groups and community organisations are joining in sponsoring the 'people's graduation'.

On the morning of Memorial Day, the alternative graduation 'processional' will start with a mass march from one of the city's poorest neighbourhoods into the Yale campus.

There is no question that Yale can afford to settle fair contracts. The university's investments

manager recently revealed that Yale's endowment had had its best year in a decade.

In 1995-96, the endowment will earn roughly \$1 billion after accounting for all expenses, Yale is earning almost \$2 million a day, every day of the year. Since Yale is realising this level of profit under the current contracts, it cannot be that drastic cuts are required for the university's fiscal health.

Over the past few months, many people have asked what if not money - is behind the administration's position.

It may be a gut-level ideological commitment to making Yale union-free, an aristocratic sense that administrators will not let dining hall workers tell them how to run their school, a carryover from Yale Corporation members' instincts in the private sector, or a result of competition to match Harvard's endowment.

Whatever the explaination, the fact is that the administration has so far chosen to stonewall rather than settle, leaving the campus in what now seems like endless turmoil.

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Saturday 1 June 1996

Newsdesk 0171-387 0564

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Tory-Serb connection goes right to top **DETAILS** revealed so

far about the 'Chetnik connection' - Serb business donations to the Tory party - show that Prime Minister John Major was told about it four years ago, right at the start of the Bosnian war; and the connection goes to the top of the Milosevic regime in Belgrade.

There is also a Russian connection, through trading interests.

According to the Sunday Times, in 1992, the then MI6 chief, Sir Colin McColl, received a report from one of his officers that five-figure cheques were coming from people connected with Serb nationalist leader Radovan Karadzic, MI6 information came from a Tory MP who had toured Yugoslavia, and from eavesdropping on Karadzic supporters here.

McColl wrote on the report: 'This should be treated as a hot potato and should be passed immediately to the Prime Minister' (Sunday Times, 26 May).

Two years later, John Kennedy, aka Jovan Gvozdenovic, then Tory candidate for Barking, introduced a Yugoslav businessman to then Tory chairman Jeremy Hanley. Over lunch at Mark's Club in Mayfair they discussed business in Russia. A large cheque followed for Tory party funds.

According to solicitors Carter-Ruck, their client, 'a British citizen of Yugoslav birth', was 'outraged' by any suggestion that he was linked with Karadzic. Workers Press said last week that an investigation should not be confined to the war criminal Karadzic, but must extend to the Milosevic regime, which started the war.

The businessman has now

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

been named as Zoran Tancic, managing director of Metta Trading, a London-based metal trading company, and former chairman of Metalchem International Ltd. Both firms were on a US Treasury Department blacklist at the time Tancic met Hanley, because they were seen as 'owned by, or controlled by, or acting on behalf of Serbia'.

According to a report in the Independent (25 May) Metalchem, an offshoot of the statecontrolled Jugometal, established Metta Trading in January 1991, to 'develop the export possibilities of the Soviet metallurgical industry'. Serbian Finance Minister Jovan Zebic came onto the board nine months later. Another director was Alexander Larin, Russian deputy minister for transport.

Scheme

As a former vice-governor of the National Bank of Serbia, Zebic had been the man behind a 1990 scheme by which money was printed without the knowledge of the Yugoslav federal government, and used to buy federal reserves of hard currency, withholding it from the other Yugoslav republics. This helped Serbia prepare for

Zebic is now deputy primeminister in Slobodan Milosevic's rump 'Yugoslav' (Serbia-Montenegro) government. Tancic, whose office said he obtained British citizenship 'two or three years ago', recently moved to France. Through his solicitors he said that Zebic had been removed from the Metta board in July 1993 to comply with sanctions.

Statements on the Conservative funding scandal

The following statements were made by the Bosnia Solidarity Campaign and Workers Aid for Bosnia concerning the Tory funding scandal. The Workers Aid statement was part of a message sent to Tuzla on the anniversary of the massacre of 71 young people in Tuzla (see page 6).

ALLEGATIONS that the Tory party have been receiving financial handouts from supporters of Serbia, and have apparently maintained friendly relations with them to the point where a leading spokesman for the ethnic cleansers plans to stand as a Tory candidate should come as no surprise.

While repeatedly refusing on the grounds of 'neutrality' to protect the people of Bosnia, an internationally recognised sovereign state under brutal attack, Western governments, and particularly the British, have worked to an agenda of covert support for the Serbs that constitutes complicity in war crimes.

The extent of this support, and it's practical results, should be subject to the widest possible public scrutiny so that we can judge for ourselves the morality of the politicians who purport to lead us — an aim towards which the Bosnia Solidarity Campaign is working.

Bosnia Solidarity Campaign, c/o ADBH, 12 Flitcroft Street, London WC2H 8DJ.

WORKERS Aid for Bosnia is holding its national meeting in Britain today, 25 May - our

thoughts are with you as you remember the horror of one year

Every day journalists are revealing more and more details of the cynical calculations that lay behind all the actions of the international politicians and diplomats - calculation that had only only their own interests in mind and not a thought for the suffering of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

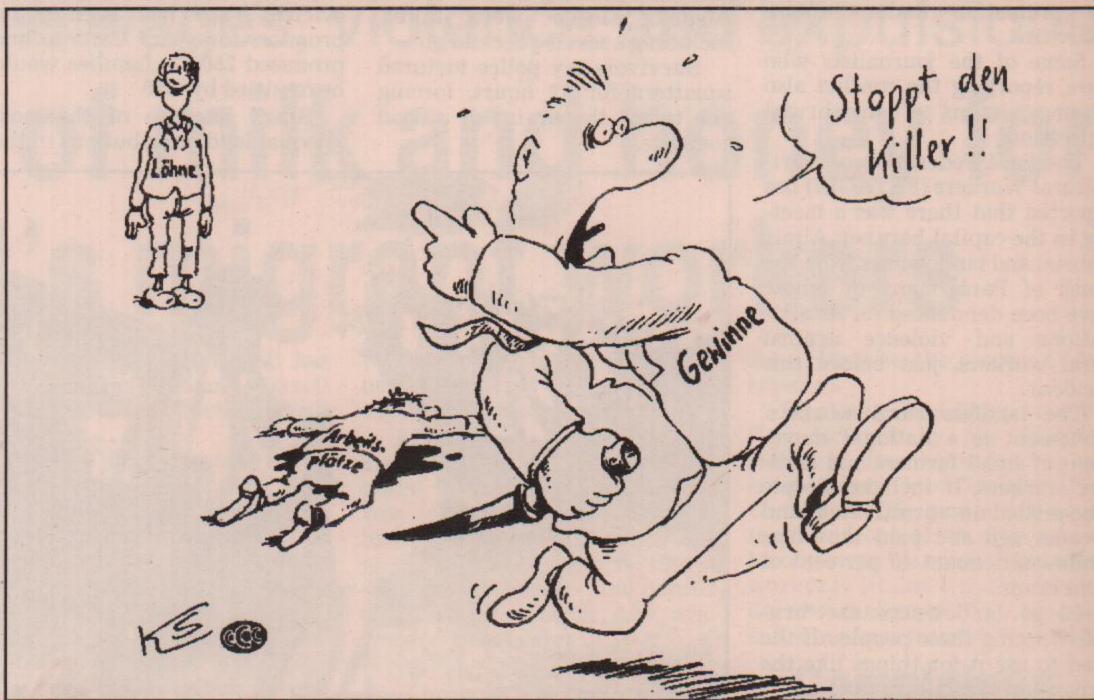
In Britain in the last week it has emerged that the Conservative Party of John Major may have received funds from busi-

piece of information that helps to explain the British government's support for ethnic cleansing.

The foreign affairs spokesperson for the Labour Party Robin Cook denounced the possible payments but only because they may have endangered British troops in Bosnia-Herzegov-

Cook should be reminded that a year ago in parliament he admitted that the UN had been pursuing the wrong policy in Bosnia-Herzegovina — support for division - which he then nessmen associated with the recognised was against the Serb nationalists. One further wishes of the majority of the population. So his concern that money passing from Karadzic to Major may have threatened the lives of British soldiers, who as part of the UN force facilitated ethnic cleansing, is laughable.

The sordid international diplomacy and intrigue was aimed not against UN troops, but against the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The massacre of the young people of Tuzla was a result of this intrigue. Workers Aid will continue its efforts to support all in Bosnia-Herzegovina who stand for democracy and human society against the politics of Major, Karadzic, Milosevic and Tudjman.



IG Metall trade union view of what's happening in Germany (Gewinne/profit, Löhne/wages, Arbeitsplätze/workplaces). See page 3

'Black flag' for Bridgestone at Indianapolis 500

BY JAMES B. PARKS

MEMBERS of the United Steelworkers of America are taking their fight against the Bridgestone-Firestone tyre company to the famous Indianapolis 500 car race.

'We are dropping the "black flag" on Bridgestone-Firestone, first at the Indianapolis 500 and its rival race, the US 500 in ing up to and including Memorial Day weekend, USWA president George Becker said.

The black flag is the tradi-

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tional racing symbol for disqualifying a car for outrageous rules violations.

Union members have been in Brooklyn, Mich., in the days lead- dispute over a contract with Bridgestone-Firestone since July

After 4,000 workers walked off the job, the company hired 2,300 'replacement' workers. After ten months the workers suspended their strike, but 700 of the strikers have not been rehired.

The union decided to take its protest to the races because the company has invested \$20 million a year in the races, hoping to win on Firestone, and boost its tyre sales to motorists.

Campaign

The 'black flag' campaign will ask consumers not to buy Bridgestone-Firestone products or services, such as tyres, golfing equipment, sporting goods or auto repairs at MasterCare centres around the country, until all workers are returned to work with back wages and a fair contract is negotiated.

The AFL-CIO says it will urge local union councils to support the campaign, and place its 'Union Summer' organising campaign behind it.

the town hall at Vigo, northern Spain, and staged a hunger strike to draw attention to their strug-

Following a 50,000-strong demonstration through Vigo in support of the Grupa Empresas Alvarez workers, the regional government agreed to a loan so the company could pay the workers back pay owed them. But the struggle continues.

Workers are bitter about the former Socialist Party (PSOE) government selling the company, and against union leaders who didn't support their fight.

Manuel Gil, of the shop stewards' committee, explains:

'The origin of the conflict is the privatisation of the company, five years ago, by the National Industry Institute. The sale was a

'The wages of the 1,060 workers plus management amount to 130 million ptas and the company was sold to ESTUDESA for the ridiculous amount of 100 million ptas. On top of that the company received 1,500 million ptas subsidies from the state.

'From then on the problems

WORKERS fighting privatisa- began. At the beginning there have 100 ptas (50p) to get the bus. tion and sackings have occupied where delays in the wages pay- People have got mortgages to pay, ments but then the situation worsened to reach the current situation where we haven't received our wages for 11 months.

Spanish workers

occupy town hall

'All this time we have been fighting and demanding solutions. First we fought the privatisation, and I think that if at that time we had received more support from the union, the PSOE government wouldn't have sold the company.

'We have organised demonstrations in Santiago (regional capital), in Vigo, we have been to many meetings, and reached many agreements, which the workers were the only ones to respect.

Youth

'For the last few months we haven't receive our wages but nevertheless we kept working as the only way to keep the factory open. Also because GEA's jobs are the future for our sons and for Vigo's youth.

'Having been 11 months without wages the situation is desperate. There are people who have to walk home as they don't

loans, etc. Some people had to sell their cars. All this stress is translated into our families, when we don't have money to give to our sons and daughters if they want to go out, we cannot buy school books, etc.

'There are even people suffering actual hunger. Most of us suffer from nervous problems, we have to take sleeping pills.

'We have felt a bit isolated all the way through. But now that we have been in the town half for a week and some comrades have started a hunger strike we are starting to receive some solidar-

'We know that the struggle will be long and difficult but we are determined to keep on fighting. We want everybody to understand that the actions we are taking and will take in the future are the only way we have to defend our future and our families' future.'

Send messages of support to: Comite Intercentros de GEA, Grupo de Empresas Alvarez, Avda. Ramon Nieto, 464, Vigo, Spain.

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