

IDENTITY CARDS FOR EVERYBODY

TORY SECRET PLANS FOR POLICE CONTROL ARE REVEALED

THE TORY government is using the Bill for compulsory identity cards for football fans as preparation for a national identity card system.

Secret plans have been drawn up by top Home Office civil servants in consultation with Mrs Thatcher. They have not even been seen by the Cabinet or any of its committees.

These facts were revealed in 'The Sunday Times' last week which reported that the top policeman's body, the Association of Chief Police Officers, was fully behind the scheme.

Such cards would be computer-programmed to give police information on everybody in the country - their political affiliations, movements and past history. It would be another step towards the sort of police state increasingly favoured in influential ruling class circles.

The ID system for football supporters will:

- * Allow only those belonging to the national membership scheme to attend football matches.

- * Imprison for a month or impose a £400 fine on all those attempting to attend a match who are not part of this membership scheme.

- * Empower the Secretary of State to close down any ground he sees fit.

- * Impose fines of £2,000 on clubs who break the rules.

- * Disqualify from the scheme for up to five years anybody convicted of a 'relevant offence', thus effectively preventing them from watching matches.

These measures have nothing to do with the control of football 'hooliganism' most of which is in any case deliberately created by the police themselves through the use of agent provocateurs.

Indeed, the new scheme, with its need for electronically-operated turnstile entry, will bring much greater danger at football matches.

John Stalker, former deputy chief constable of Manchester, has pointed out that as many as 30,000 fans regularly enter the Old Trafford Ground in the last 20 minutes before a kick off. The danger of crushing and other accidents will be far greater in these conditions.

BY GEOFF PILLING

Football fans throughout the country have already expressed their opposition and anger at the ID scheme which is an attack on the democratic rights of millions of people.

Far from mobilising this anger

against the Tories and linking it with the fight of all those other sections of the working class and middle class who face similar attacks on their rights to belong to a union, on their rights to decent housing hospitals and welfare benefits, the Labour leaders moan that the Tory Bill will prove 'ineffective' in dealing with 'football hooliganism'.

The 'Morning Star', paper of the Communist Party of Great Britain, was typical of this treacherous

attitude when it said last week of Moynihan's Bill: 'It is a typically heavy-handed Tory stunt to give the impression of government action against hooliganism without actually doing anything effective.'

A united campaign in defence of all democratic rights is now urgently required throughout the working class movement. To be effective such a campaign will have to fight for a new leadership in the working class against its present cowardly leaders.

VIRAJ MENDIS

BY BOB MYERS

100 POLICE smashed their way into the church of the Ascension in Manchester and seized Viraj Mendis as an 'illegal immigrant', while two of his supporters, the only others in the church at the time, barricaded themselves into a room.

As we go to press Mendis is being deported by a Government whose supporters and predecessors have walked in uninvited and plundered half the countries on earth.

Conservative backbenchers cheered in the House of Commons, as Douglas Hurd said he had arranged to remove him to Sri Lanka as soon as possible. Hurd told MPs that Viraj Mendis's support for the Tamil cause was a 'deliberate and cynical attempt' to avoid deportation. Britain is the only country in Europe which is currently deporting people to Sri Lanka.

Mendis came to Britain 15 years ago. As an outspoken supporter of the Tamil people's fight for self



determination, he is high on the hit list of the JVP, the extreme right wing group who murdered over 1,000 people in the recent election in Sri Lanka.

For more than two years he has defied the Government and its racist immigration laws by taking sanctuary in a church in Manchester. The House of Lords four weeks ago refused to hear his final appeal.

In order to placate the Church hierarchy, the Home Office began private negotiations with them and Mendis for him to leave voluntarily to a third country. Those negotiations were under way. Then at 7.30 a.m. last Wednesday 10 van loads of police in riot gear sealed off the area round the church, smashed their way in with crowbars and hammers, and snatched him.

By 7.40 they had gone, having cut telephone wires and burglar alarms. Mendis was flown to London, and the Home Office announced that he had two days to find a third country to go to.

The Tories decided that he

could not be allowed to leave voluntarily. Mendis has never seen his campaign as an individual question. His stand against the state has encouraged many others facing deportation to fight..

For the Tories it is worth the cost of ruffling the feathers of a few outraged bishops for the mileage to be made by giving the green light to the racists and bigots, above all those in the police force.

In Parliament the Labour deputy leader, Hattersley, pleaded with the Tories to give Mendis the benefit of the doubt. In other words, for thousands of others, racist deportations are OK.

These same Labour leaders opened the door to state attacks on black and immigrant people by their refusal to organise political opposition to the Tories' antirade union laws and other legislation attacking democratic rights. This has created the conditions where each section of the community under attack remains isolated.

A united fight is needed against these attacks on democratic rights. This means the mobilisation of the working class in its own organisations of struggle and power - workers committees and councils of action. While news of Mendis's arrest spread, thousands of people began arriving at the church. By 9 a.m. a march set off to the centre of Manchester and sat down blocking the City's main square.

As darkness fell over the huge council estates of Moss Side and Hulme where the church is

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE

Capitalism and food

AT LEAST 200 people die every year in Britain from eating supermarket food infected with listeria bacteria. This is the finding of Professor Richard Lacey of the University of Leeds.

He was commenting in the wake of a Thames TV sponsored survey that found six out of 24 'convenience foods' purchased at supermarkets were infected with listeria.

The survey was consistent with Lacey's findings that at least a quarter of a test sample of pre-cooked chilled food meals bought from supermarkets in Leeds were contaminated with listeria bacteria, a potentially lethal type of bacteria that can kill unborn and newly-born babies as well as elderly people.

There were 70,000 cases of food poisoning reported last year, twice the number reported four years ago.

In the light of these figures there have been growing demands that responsibility for food hygiene be taken away from the Ministry of Agriculture.

There is no doubt that, second only to the brewers, the farming lobby is the most powerful in Britain. It certainly has the Ministry of Agriculture firmly in its pocket. It was revealed last week that over the last year the Ministry met representatives of the farmers on 37 occasions but met those representing 'consumer interests' only twice.

In the aftermath of the salmonella scandal - salmonella is responsible for between 60 and 80 deaths a year - and in a feeble effort to quell growing fears about the dangers of contaminated food, the Agricultural Ministry announced measures which will give it greater powers to stop unfit or contaminated food being marketed and stricter enforcement powers for new food processes and 'novel foods'.

These measures, as the Tories well know, will do nothing to deal with the mounting scandal of contaminated food.

Throughout its history, from the time of the notorious 'truck shops' of the early industrial revolution, where workers were forced to buy adulterated food from company shops as part of their wages, capitalism has had no interest in the health and well-being of workers. It sees in them only a means of profit. If they are healthy enough to work, that is good enough for the employers.

To ask capitalism to pay attention to the needs of 'consumers' is to ask it to change its very nature. The capitalist system is interested, not in production of things useful for human beings, but in production for profit. That is why supermarkets, controlled by the banks and other financial institutions, regularly sell contaminated and sub-standard food.

Only in a socialist society, where private ownership of the means of production and finance is abolished and the manufacture of food and all the other necessities of life are placed under the control of the working class advised by scientists such as Professor Lacey will the danger of contaminated food be overcome.

WORKERS PRESS FIGHTING FUND

In so far £964

WE ARE making good progress with the fund this month. But don't sit back!

A good friend and comrade of mine pointed out that this column had referred to the 'old tabloid format' of Workers Press, and should have talked about the 'new' paper. Point taken!

The new bigger Workers Press is certainly needed. News is pouring in as more and more people are involved in the struggle against the Tory onslaught.

As I write there is news of the police raid on the church in Manchester and the forced abduction of Viraj Mendis; also a press release has come to Workers Press about the violent police raid on Mr and Mrs Burke, the aged grandparents of Trevor Monerville; and now they are proposing ID cards for all of us.

We have begun the campaign for the Workers Press meetings (see adverts) on 'The defence of democratic rights; the fight against Thatcher'. And the Workers Revolutionary Party Central Committee is issuing its draft programme for public discussion at the same time that it is being discussed by members in preparation for a conference in March.

Buy Workers Press regularly. Assist to launch the new paper as soon as possible by making a donation to our January Fighting Fund. Let's get the £2,000 in good time by the end of the month.

Dot Gibson

Send donations to: Workers Press Fighting Fund
PO Box 735, London, SW9 7QS

Sunday 19 February, 3 p.m. - 6 p.m. WORKERS PRESS public meeting in London - THE DEFENCE OF DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS; THE FIGHT AGAINST THATCHER. Edric Hall, South Bank Polytechnic, 103 Borough Road, London SE1 (nearest tube Elephant and Castle).

Friday 27 January: WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY LONDON DISTRICT PUBLIC MEETING
'70 years since the murder of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht - German revolutionaries'
Speaker: Bob Archer
7.30 p.m., room A35 London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2

Saturday 28 January: join the WRP contingent on the 17th anniversary of the BLOODY SUNDAY DEMONSTRATION - Britain out of Ireland!
Assemble Grange Park, Kilburn 12 p.m. - march to Stonebridge Park.

WRP DISTRICT COMMITTEE SOCIAL

Saturday 28 January 8 p.m. - 11 p.m.

BAR MUSIC FOOD

Abbey Community Centre

222 Belsize Road, Kilburn NW6 (nearest tube Kilburn Park)
Proceeds to pay for transport for the Pollok Republican flute band from Glasgow to the Bloody Sunday demonstration in London
tickets £2 waged (£1 unwaged) can be obtained from the Workers Press office.

STOP THE KILLINGS! Stop executions of political prisoners in Iran! Stop massacring the Kurds! Stop harassing refugees! PICKET:
Saturday 28 January 1 p.m. Iranian Embassy. (nearest tube: High Street Kensington.)

The latest issue of 'Tasks of the Fourth International' is now available, with Cliff Slaughter's report to the extended meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International's meeting last August, together with the transcript of Michel Varga's (Balasz Nagy's) speech to the London meeting to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Fourth International. Issues available from PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS. Price £2.40 including p&p.

Buthelezi collaborates with Apartheid



BY WAYNE POULSEN

ON THURSDAY last week 10 Downing Street not only received half a million signatures for the release of Nelson Mandela and all South African and Namibian political prisoners, but also Chief Gatsha Buthelezi himself.

Thatcher of course will not meet with anyone representing Mandela's banned organisation the African National Congress, but has always had a soft spot for her favourite (black) South African thug.

Buthelezi is Minister of Police in the Zulu 'homeland' Kwazulu, and leader of Inkatha, the Zulu organisation which exercises its non-violent opposition to apartheid through systematic and unbridled violence to all who

oppose apartheid in deed.

In the last two years hundreds have died in Natal's black townships as United Democratic Front (UDF) and Confederation of South African Trade Union (COSATU) activists particularly have resisted the state-supported attacks.

Buthelezi opined on BBC1 that the 1,000 day non-stop picket outside the apartheid embassy didn't make any real difference and declared that he preferred 'low key' discussions with the racist regime.

His respect for Botha and such butchers as General Johan Coetzee, head of South Africa's police, together with his dedicated enthusiasm for capitalism have won him international support. He is feted by the Zionists in Israel, promoted by bourgeois politicians in Europe and the USA, and

welcomed by all those desperate for the safeguarding of capital in the impending crisis, for as Gavin Relly, boss of the most powerful company in South Africa said 'you can't expect us to run away from the single black leader who says exactly what we think'.

In the front line against Buthelezi's thugs are the militant workers of Natal who have played a leading role in the birth and growth of the flourishing black trade union movement.

City Anti-Apartheid Group has highlighted the struggle of one of these fighters, metal workers' leader and socialist Moses Mayekiso who is the chief defendant in the Alexandra Five treason trial. The Five were leaders of the Alexandra Action Committee with which the working class took control of the township in 1986 - for 6 days the working class drove the army and police from the streets. Bail was granted to Mayekiso and his four comrades until 10 February 1989 when the trial resumes.

The bail conditions are very severe. The five are banned from returning to Alexandra township, they must report daily to Hillbrow Police station, they must not attend or address any meeting or rally, or give any interviews or make any public statement, nor be

in the company of more than 20 persons.

The main result of the trial so far has been to show that the reign of the Alexandra Action Committee brought an unprecedented order to the township, and that the residents had approached Moses Mayekiso for his assistance to bring peace and justice to the community, out of their hatred for the corruption of the puppet town councillors and police oppression.

There is a rally for the Alexandra Five on 11 February at 3 p.m. at South Africa House Trafalgar Square. Bring Banners.

POLICE HOOLIGANS AT WAPPING



BY BRONWEN HANDYSIDE

SUMMONSES for assault causing actual bodily harm, assault causing grievous bodily harm, attempting to pervert the course of justice and perjury were issued last week - not to football fans, but 24 police officers.

The charges arose out of police behaviour at the mass demonstrations at Wapping and anyone who went to the weekly marches will bear witness to the brutality of the uniformed thugs on duty - the same violence as was dished out to the miners at Orgreave.

The summonses were served against 18 police constables, one woman police constable and one police inspector.

One thing is for sure, these are the small fry. Orders for the state forces to smash up trade union demonstrations at Wapping, using the most brutal tactics at their disposal, came from the Fleet Street proprietors, via the Tory government.

It was hoped that trade unionism in Fleet Street could be smashed completely.

Two years after the events took place, the police have been forced to issue summonses.

Unfortunately for them, far too much evidence was produced, through films and photographs, for a cover-up to be made.

POLICE DRAG BLACK OAPs FROM HOME

ON SUNDAY 15 January 1989 at 9.30 p.m. police officers came to the home of Mr and Mrs Burke in Hackney. Mr and Mrs Burke are the grandparents of Trevor Monerville, the young man suing the police for assault and negligence following brain surgery in January 1987. The police officers were following up a telephone call by Mrs Burke informing them of a road accident.

Mr Burke, aged 76, was ill in bed at the time. When Mrs Burke, aged 70, answered the door she was held by police officers who demanded to breathalyse Mr Burke. She informed them that he was ill in bed and had not been out all day. Mr Burke refused to be breathalysed.

Mr Burke was physically taken from his bed in his underclothes and dragged into a police van. He was not given the opportunity to dress. Mrs Burke objected to the

way her husband was being treated. Throughout the incident Mrs Burke was physically restrained by police officers. Both Mr and Mrs Burke sustained injuries during the incident. Mrs Burke was thrown onto the floor of a police van with four police officers pinning her with their boots on her wrists and ankles.

Mr Burke was told at Hackney police station that he would not face charges. Mrs Burke was strip searched at the police station and charged with actual bodily harm on a police officer; to attend Old Street Magistrates Court on Monday 6 February 1989.

There was no justification whatsoever for the police's treat-

ment of two old age pensioners. The police first said they believed Mr Burke was the driver responsible for the road accident. Police officers later said they believed Trevor Monerville was driving the car.

Trevor Monerville left Britain in December 1988 to convalesce from his brain operation away from the attention of Hackney police. The brutality meted out to Mr and Mrs Burke is one more example of police harassment of the Monerville family.

Workers Press have since been informed that after a picket was held outside the police station, all charges against Mrs Burke were dropped.

NOT a week goes by - hardly a day goes by, it seems - without some fresh attack on the democratic rights won by the British working class over generations of struggle.

Steadily, sometimes stealthily and sometimes openly, the capitalist state and its various agencies are whittling away our cherished freedoms.

It can be stated with pride that Workers Press has been warning consistently about these sinister moves ever since it began publication.

Its newly launched campaign to defend democratic rights is not some sudden departure, but a logical development of the stand it has always taken.

Workers Press was, for example, the first publication in Britain to warn of the dangers inherent in electronic tagging.

The alarm was first sounded in these pages on 2 May 1987, long before the implications of the electronic bracelet were discussed anywhere in the capitalist press.

Now electronic tagging is to be extended to allegedly 'confused' elderly people in two 'homes' run by Humber-side County Council.

And we have just seen on television a poor old woman, who no doubt simply wanted to go outside for a breath of fresh air, being hauled back by a nurse when the tag she was wearing set off an alarm at the door.

Now we know the sort of thing that's in store for us, unless we act quickly. Three years after 1984, a Big Brother society is taking shape in our midst.

In the same way, Workers Press has led the way in opposing the introduction of identity cards for football supporters, arguing consistently that this would be a major step towards one of the long-term aims of the Thatcher government and its police: the reintroduction of identity cards for all citizens.

Now comes striking confirmation of this paper's stand. 'Government is preparing for ID cards', says the headline on the front page of last weekend's 'Sunday Times', highlighting the news that 'plans could be in place for an ID card later this year' and that Home Office officials, with Downing Street backing, are already working on such plans.

For the time being this is blandly presented as a voluntary scheme. But once such a scheme is locked in place, identity cards could soon become compulsory.

Time is running out. Well before the end of the year Britain is set to be transformed beyond recognition from the civil liberties point of view.

The Official Secrets Bill, soon to become law, dramatically increases the chances of successfully prosecuting civil servants who leak information and journalists who publish leaked information.

It will no longer be possible to argue

DEFENDING FREE S



M. HITCHES

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that information was leaked in the public good. Almost unbelievably, it will even become impossible to justify publication on the ground that the information published was already in the public domain.

'Steadily, sometimes stealthily and sometimes openly, the capitalist state and its various agencies are whittling away our cherished freedoms.'

The revised Prevention of Terrorism Act gives the Home Secretary power to proscribe organisations and gives the police unprecedented powers of arbitrary arrest and detention.

The removal of an accused person's right of silence puts innocent people in peril, since remaining silent for any reason whatever will henceforward lead to presumption of guilt.

The ban on transmission of interviews with members of Sinn Fein - even interviews with elected MPs and local councillors - is the most savage single blow struck at free speech in this country

for many years.

Already at least four-fifths of the dissemination of news and information in the 'popular' press is controlled by a tiny handful of extremely rich men, who can be relied on to do the Tory government bidding.

Now, in addition to the hidden censorship the press barons have been exercising, there has been added this open censorship on the television reporting of events and opinion in British occupied Ireland.

Freedom of speech is at the heart of our democratic freedoms. This central freedom, on which the exercise of all other freedoms depends, is currently in jeopardy.

Today it is Sinn Fein councillors whose views on every question - right down to local drains and road improvements - are banned from our television screens. Tomorrow who else will be subjected to censorship?

For now that this dangerous precedent has been set it can readily be extended to other groups whom this repressive government wishes to silence.

And here it is important to state ye



70 years since the murder of

ROSA LUXEMBURG
and **KARL LIEBKNECHT**

German Revolutionaries

PUBLIC MEETING Organised by
Workers Press/Workers Revolutionary Party:

Friday 27 January, 7.30 p.m.

SPEAKERS: Bob Archer (Workers Revolutionary Party Central Committee)
Tom Kemp (author 'Theories of Imperialism', 'Marx's Capital Today', etc.)

Room A85, London School of Economics
Houghton Street (off Aldwych), London WC2

70 years since the murder of ROSA LUXEMBURG and KARL LIEBKNECHT



ROSA LUXEMBURG

HOMAGE
ROSA LUXEMBURG
and KARL LIEBKNECHT
COMMUNIST

BY

SEVENTY YEARS ago, on 15 January 1919 in a bleak Berlin winter, as the heroic if ill-fated insurrection of the Spartacists ebbed, Luxemburg and Liebknecht were arrested by the brutal soldiery of the Freikorps and horribly murdered.

For several weeks they had feared for their lives as the best known leaders of Spartacus, the German Communist Party. The right-wing Social Democrats in power, in alliance with the army, determined to smash the insurrection, gave a free hand to the right-wing army officers in dealing with its leaders.

The prisoners were mercilessly beaten before being shot. The body of Liebknecht was delivered to a local mortuary as the unknown victim of a street accident; that of Rosa was thrown into a canal and only recovered weeks later.

The manner of their death bore witness to the nature of their assassins and of the system whose guard-dogs they were.

For the Social-Democrat Noske, who probably ordered the killings, it was a deliberately counter-revolutionary act aimed to behead the new revolutionary

party, especially those who, since 1914, had exposed the betrayals of his like.

Karl Liebknecht was a staunch fighter against militarism who took a stand against the war under the slogan 'the main enemy is at home'. Punishment and imprisonment did not break his will.

Rosa, a legend in her lifetime, knew the inside of the prisons of the Tsar and of the Kaiser. So fearful of her were the German imperialists that they locked her up for the duration of the war.

But it was her old party 'comrades' who unleashed the human debris who beat her almost to death before putting a bullet in her skull.

What were they afraid of, these brutes and cowards - of a man worn down by hardships, or a frail woman whose health had been undermined by almost four years in gaol?

Capital

It was what they stood for that they feared. As one bourgeois paper put it: 'The day of judgement on Luxemburg and Liebknecht is over. Germany has peace, it can breathe again'. Thus spoke the voice of German capital whose appetites, with that of its rivals, had just been responsible for the slaughter of millions of young workers on the battlefields of Europe.

What they saw and feared in Karl and Rosa was the revolutionary working class. What they saw in those two people was the leadership which could enable the workers of Germany to follow the Russian example.

When Lenin and Trotsky led the Bolsheviks to power, they were firmly convinced that the German working class would soon follow the Russian example. Beleaguered, isolated and impoverished Russia, with its huge peasant population, desperately needed the assistance which could come from the technologically advanced industry of a workers' Germany.

The fate of the young Soviet republic

turned upon the fate of the German revolution.

Whatever the differences between Luxemburg and Lenin, and they were many and serious, there was no doubt that they shared the same goal: the overthrow of capitalism. Indeed, under the pressure of revolutionary events they drew closer together.

Within the same International some, if not all, of the differences might very well have been resolved.

Murder

As it was, the murder of Liebknecht and Luxemburg made this impossible. It is clear that the German Marxists would never have accepted the parliamentary road, 'socialism in one country' and the other elements of Stalinism.

That is why the Stalinists were never able to refer to Liebknecht and Luxemburg without hypocrisy and distortion.

There is a danger, as Lenin pointed out in *State and Revolution* that after their deaths, revolutionaries will be turned into 'harmless icons'. This is exactly what the Stalinists, and some other tendencies, have tried to do with Liebknecht and Luxemburg. While paying lip-service to their heroism, they reject their heritage of revolutionary struggle.

Unleashed

As for the Labour Party leaders, they are the true successors of Ebert, Noske and Schneiderman, who unleashed the murderous gang and for whom revolutionaries like Liebknecht and Luxemburg are always anathema.

The defeat of the German Revolution was fundamental both in enabling European capitalism to get back onto its feet in the 1920s and in confirming the isolation of the first workers' state.

Within a few years German capitalists saw that they could only survive by calling upon the fascist bands, as they

70 years since the murder of ROSA LUXEMBURG and KARL LIEBKNECHT

GE TO KEMBURG EBKNECHT ST MARTYRS

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KARL LIEBKNECHT

had survived the revolutionary years with the help of the Freikorps.

Imperishable

Their imperishable example remains, as does their theoretical contribution, especially, of course, that of Rosa Luxemburg. In fact, without her knowledge of Marxism, which she always used creatively, and not as a dogma, her career would have been meaningless.

Her attack on revisionism of the

Bernstein variety, from its appearance in the 1890s, was merciless and stands to this day as a powerful demolition of any idea of a reformist 'parliamentary' road to socialism.

Study

Even on other issues, as with the national question, although she was mistaken, her writings deserve study; she was always striving to find a Marxist solution to such questions.

Although Rosa spent most of her active

political life in Germany, she was always concerned with the problems of her native Poland. Above all, however, Luxemburg and Liebknecht (as shown by his wartime stand) were true internationalists.

The Fourth International can therefore justly claim that these two martyrs of the German Revolution were among its predecessors and alone has the right to pay them homage on the anniversary of their death.



Rosa Luxemburg speaking in Stuttgart in 1907

70 years since the murder of ROSA LUXEMBURG and KARL LIEBKNECHT

EFFORTS ARE now being made in France and elsewhere to construct a so-called Luxemburgism as an entrenchment for the left centrists against the Bolshevik-Leninists. This question may acquire a considerable significance.

It may perhaps be necessary to devote a more extensive article in the near future to real and alleged Luxemburgism. I wish to touch here only upon the essential features of the question.

We have more than once taken up the cudgels for Rosa Luxemburg against the impudent and stupid misrepresentations of Stalin and his bureaucracy. And we shall continue to do so.

Criticism

In doing so we are not prompted by any sentimental considerations, but by the demands of historical-materialist criticism.

Our defence of Rosa Luxemburg is not, however unconditional. The weak sides of Rosa Luxemburg's teachings have been laid bare both theoretically and practically.

The SAP* people and kindred elements (see for example the dilettante intellectual 'proletarian cultural': French 'Spartacus', the periodical of the socialist students appearing in Belgium, and oftentimes also the Belgian 'Action Socialiste' etc) make use only of the weak sides and the inadequacies which were by no means decisive in Rosa; they generalise and exaggerate these weaknesses to the utmost and build up a thoroughly absurd system on that basis.

The paradox consists in this, that in their latest turn the Stalinists, too - without acknowledging or even understanding it - come close in theory to the caricatured negative sides of Luxemburgism, to say nothing of the traditional centrists and left centrists in the social democratic camp.

Progressive

There is no gainsaying that Rosa Luxemburg impassionately counterposed the spontaneity of mass actions to the 'victory-crowned' conservative policy of the German social democracy especially after the Revolution of 1905. This counterposition had a thoroughly revolutionary and progressive character.

At a much earlier date than Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg grasped the retarding character of the

*SAP (Socialistische Arbeiterpartei - Socialist Workers Party): a centrist German group formed in 1931 through a merger of left social democrats and former Right Communists, some of whose leaders briefly supported Trotsky's advocacy of a new international in 1933; most of its members eventually returned to social democracy.

ossified party and trade union apparatus and began a struggle against it. Inasmuch as she counted upon the inevitable accentuation of class conflicts, she always predicted the certainty of the independent elemental appearance of the masses against the will and against the line of march of the officialdom.

In these broad historical outlines, Rosa was proved right. For the revolution of 1918 was 'spontaneous', that is, it was accomplished by the masses against all the provisions and all the precautions of the party officialdom. On the other hand, the whole of Germany's subsequent history amply showed that spontaneity alone is far from enough for success; Hitler's regime is a weighty argument against the panacea of spontaneity.

Rosa herself never confined herself to the mere theory of spontaneity, like Parvus for example, who later bartered his social revolutionary fatalism for the most revolting fatalism.

In contrast to Parvus, Rosa Luxemburg exerted herself to educate the revolutionary wing of the proletariat in advance and to bring it together organisationally as far as possible. In Poland, she built up a very rigid independent organisation.

Vanguard

The most that can be said is that in her historical-philosophical evaluation of the labour movement, the preparatory selection of the vanguard, in comparison with the mass actions that were to be expected, fell too short with Rosa; whereas Lenin - without consoling himself with the miracles of future actions - took the advanced workers and constantly and tirelessly welded them together into firm nuclei, illegally or legally, in the mass organisations or underground, by means of a sharply defined programme.

Rosa's theory of spontaneity was a wholesome weapon against the ossified apparatus of reformism. By the fact that it was often directed against Lenin's work of building up a revolutionary apparatus, it revealed - to be sure, only in embryo - its reactionary features.

With Rosa herself this occurred only episodically. She was much too realistic in the revolutionary sense to develop the elements of the theory of spontaneity into a consummate metaphysics. In practice, she herself, as has already been said, undermined this theory at every step.

After the revolution of November 1918, she began the ardent labour of assembling the proletarian vanguard.

Despite her theoretically very weak manuscript on the Soviet Revolution, written in prison but never published by her, Rosa's subsequent work allows the sure conclusion that, day by day, she was moving closer to Lenin's theoretically clearly-delineated conception concerning conscious

ROSA LUXEMBURG AND THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

LEON TROTSKY wrote this defence of the revolutionary heritage of Rosa Luxemburg in 1935; it was published in 'New International' in August 1935.

leadership and spontaneity.

(It must surely have been this circumstance that prevented her from making public her manuscript against the Bolshevik policy which was later so shamefully abused.)

Let us again attempt to apply the conflict between spontaneous mass actions and purposeful organisational work to the present epoch. What a mighty expenditure of strength and selflessness the toiling masses of all the civilised and half-civilised countries have exerted since the world war!

Nothing in the previous history of mankind could compare with it.

To this extent Rosa Luxemburg was entirely right as against the philistines, the corporals and the blockheads of straightmarching 'victory-crowned' bureaucratic conservatism.

But it is just the squandering of these immeasurable energies that forms the basis of the great depression in the proletariat and the successful fascist advance. Without the slightest exaggeration it may be said: the whole world situation is determined by the crisis of proletarian leadership. The field of the labour movement is today still encumbered with huge remnants of the old bankrupt organisations.

Lesson

After the countless sacrifices and disappointments, the bulk of the European proletariat, at least, has withdrawn into its shell. The decisive lesson which it has drawn, consciously or half-consciously, from the bitter experiences, reads: great actions require a great leadership. For current affairs, the workers still give their votes to the old organisations.

Their votes - but by no means their boundless confidence. On the other hand, after the miserable collapse of the Third International, it is much harder to move them to bestow their confidence upon a new revolutionary organisation. That's just where the crisis of the proletarian leadership lies.

To sing a monotonous song about indefinite future mass actions in this situation, in contrast to the purposeful selection of the cadres of a new International, means to carry on a thoroughly reactionary work. That's just where the role of the SAP lies in the 'historical process'.

A left-wing SAP man in the Old Guard can, of course, summon up

his Marxian recollections in order to stem the tide of theoretical spontaneity-barbarism. These purely literary protective measures change nothing in the fact that the pupils of a Miles, the precious author of the peace resolution and the no less precious author of the article in the French edition of the 'Youth Bulletin', carry on the most disgraceful spontaneity nonsense even in the ranks of the SAP.

Distorted

The practical politics of Schwab (the artful 'not speaking out what is' and the eternal consolation of the future mass actions and the spontaneous 'historical process') also signifies nothing but a tactical exploitation of a thoroughly distorted and bowdlerised Luxemburgism.

And to the extent that the 'left wingers', the 'Marxists' fail to make an open attack upon this theory and practice of their own party, their anti-Miles articles acquire the character of the search for a theoretical alibi. Such an alibi first really becomes necessary when one takes part in a deliberate crime.

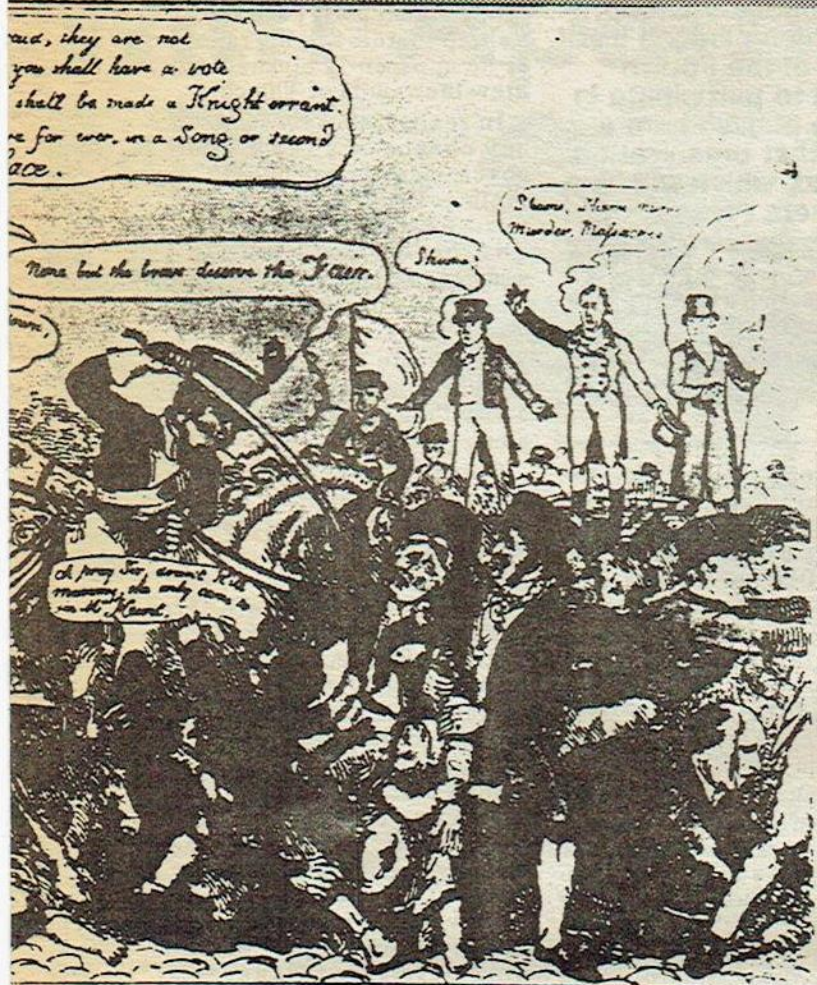
The crisis of the proletarian leadership cannot, of course, be overcome by means of an abstract formula. It is a question of an extremely humdrum process.

But not of a purely 'historical' process, that is, of the objective premises of conscious activity, but of an uninterrupted chain of ideological, political and organisational measures for the purpose of fusing together the best, most conscious elements whose number and self-confidence must be constantly strengthened, whose connections with wider sections of the proletariat must be developed and deepened - in a word: to restore to the proletariat, under new and highly difficult and onerous conditions, its historical leadership.

The latest spontaneity confusionists have just as little right to refer to Rosa as the miserable Comintern bureaucrats have to refer to Lenin.

Put aside the incidentals which developments have overcome, and we can, with full justification, place our work for the Fourth International under the sign of the 'three Ls', that is, not only under the sign of Lenin, but also of Luxemburg and Liebknecht.

FREE SPEECH - THEN AND NOW



TER HEROES

PETER FRYER

again - and it is a historical truth can't be stated too often - that free speech was not a gift that Britain's ruling class handed over to the working class with a bow and a smile.

Quite the contrary. Free speech was won by the British working class in the course of long and bitter struggles, in which every advance was strenuously and often brutally contested.

'The gains of the past must not be surrendered. The rights that were won in struggle must now be defended in struggle.'

Who has not heard of Peterloo, that bloody massacre in Manchester on 16 August 1819, when the city's middle and upper classes, clad in 'yeomen's' uniforms and mounted on horseback, charged with flailing sabres into a dense crowd of disciplined and peaceful demonstrators that included many women and children, killing eleven and wounding some 400 others, among them 100 women and girls?

Who has not heard of London's 'Bloody Sunday', 13 November 1887, when police contested with their truncheons the right to demonstrate in Trafalgar Square, killing three and wounding 150 - and murdering, in a repeat performance the following Sunday, the radical law-writer Alfred Linnell?

It was in struggle against tyrannical rulers that the British working class won the freedom to speak out and demonstrate. And it was in struggle, too, that they won the freedom of the printed word.

When Thatcher's notorious predecessors Castlereagh and Sidmouth introduced legalised repression in the shape of the 'Six Acts' of 1819, they slapped a tax of fourpence a copy on all newspapers or pamphlets sold at less than sixpence.

Against this monstrous law, as against the attempted suppression of allegedly 'blasphemous' and 'seditious' writings, a whole army of resisters emerged, led by the freethinking tinsmith Richard Carlile. And, in the struggle for press freedom in that period, 150 working men and women served a total of 200 years in jail.

But still successive governments tried to shackle the working-class movement by taxing newspapers out of the reach of working-class readers.

Every newspaper proprietor was treated as a writer of sedition, and forced to give substantial securities. Every paper-maker was treated as a thief whose every step was dogged by Excisemen.

Every working-class reader found with an unstamped publication in his possession was liable to a fine of £20.

Everyone who published an unstamped paper was liable to have his presses broken up, his stock confiscated, and himself and everyone in his house thrown into jail. And this happened again and again.

William Cobbett and others tried to evade this 'tax on knowledge', in various ways; others fought it openly.

The journalist William Carpenter was fined £120 and sent to prison in 1831 for publishing his 'Political Letters'.

Eight weeks later the printer Henry Hetherington defiantly brought out his 'Poor Man's Guardian', describing it on the masthead as 'a weekly newspaper for the people. Established contrary to Law, to try the power of "Might" against "Right"'.

'Freedom of speech is at the heart of our democratic freedoms. This central freedom, on which the exercise of all other freedoms depends, is currently in jeopardy.'

His opening address in the first issue began with these ringing words: 'We will demand our right, nor treat but with contempt the despotic "law" which would deprive us of it.'

For defying the law Hetherington was twice imprisoned for six months, and about 500 newsagents and street sellers had likewise been imprisoned before the 'tax on knowledge' was finally abolished in 1855.

The British working class fought for and won freedom of speech - freedom to demonstrate, and freedom of the press - not because of adherence to any abstract principles, but because their class position and class interests urgently demanded it.

The British working class of the nineteenth century needed the freedom of the spoken and printed word as it needed air and bread.

Without this basic freedom there could have been no building of strong trade unions and other class organisations; no opening out of the class struggle; no possibility of the emergence of a socialist movement dedicated to overthrowing exploitation, ending suffering, and establishing a new society.

The gains of the past must not be surrendered. The rights that were won in struggle must now be defended in struggle.

And the working class that won those rights must now be mobilised to defend them.

A LETTER FROM IRELAND

THE FIANNA Fail government will intensify its attacks on the working class with the introduction of its budget when the 26-county parliament, the Dail, reconvenes on 25 January after the Christmas recess.

In spite of better than expected end-of-year exchequer returns, the budget will undoubtedly continue the onslaught on living standards which has resulted in growing unemployment, emigration and poverty.

Official figures released by the government show that they had to borrow IR£800 million less than budgeted for in 1988.

This was mainly due to the savage cut-backs in government spending, which have produced a deep crisis in the health service, and the tax amnesty which yielded IR£500 million in unpaid taxes. This windfall from the amnesty for tax defaulters indicates the massive level of illegal evasion by big business.

However, the managers of Irish capitalism still have a huge international debt problem. The total amount of money owed to foreign bankers rose from IR£23,700 million at the end of 1987 to IR£24,500 million at the end of last year and the Haughey

Workers Press was very pleased to announce on the front page of issue no. 142 that a new Trotskyist organisation, the Socialist Revolutionary Group, had been established in Ireland, which pledged itself to fight for the reconstruction of the Fourth International and committed itself to participate in the Preparatory Committee. We publish here a report from a leading member of that organisation on political developments in Ireland, which will be a regular feature of the Workers Press.



BY JOHN STEELE

administration has made it clear that it has no intention of alleviating the plight of those relying on social welfare benefits. A report from the Combat Poverty Agency based on data from the Economic and Social Research Institute reveals that there are 1.3 million people who are officially poor in the 26 counties, and that one in ten people have to exist on less than IR£34 per week.

Hidden in the unemployment figures of 250,000, representing 19 per cent of the workforce, is the real misery of families relying on unemployment assistance at a basic rate of IR£42.

Historically, emigration has been a safety-valve for Irish capitalism. This enforced economic extradition sent at least 40,000 abroad last year in search of work.

Government ministers admit that 150,000 have emigrated officially since 1981, but it is estimated that 100,000 Irish youth are currently working illegally in the US.

In this situation, as the crisis worsens and the attacks on the working class intensify, the ability of the ruling class to play the 'Republican' card is vital.

Haughey's popularity and his ability to divert attention from

his real role has been strengthened in recent weeks by the Father Patrick Ryan case.

The opinion polls have shown a sharp increase in his ratings as he apparently clashed and drew the venom of Thatcher.

In reality, there was never any chance of a Fianna Fail government extraditing a Catholic priest who was prepared to resume his hunger strike. Thatcher obviously knew this and her 'angry' condemnations were a sop to her backbenchers.

As the late John Joe McGirl of Sinn Fein once said, 'Isn't it a pity that all the extraditees aren't priests!'

Contrary to newspaper reports, the Anglo-Irish Agreement was never threatened by the Ryan case.

The primary purpose of the Agreement is to ensure the collaboration of Irish capitalism and British Imperialism in preparation for 1992 and the increased competition from the EEC multi-nationals.

Opposition on these issues to Fianna Fail in the Dail is virtually non-existent, and the 'born-again' socialists of the Stalinist-influenced Workers Party hit a new low when their T.D.'s voted in favour of extradition and in support of making permanent Haughey's Extradition Act.

AS I SEE IT

BY TOM OWEN

All my sons

In 1947, the American author Arthur Miller wrote a play based on 'an idle chat in my living room' in which a 'pious lady from the mid-west' told him of a neighbourhood family which had been destroyed when a daughter turned her father over to the authorities for selling faulty machinery to the army during wartime.

The daughter is changed to a son, 'Chris Keller', a returned army officer who uncovers and rejects his father's irresponsibility and is shattered by what Miller calls elsewhere 'the revelation of the loathsomeness of an anti-social action'.

The father (Joe Keller) shoots himself once the son knows the truth - that he had shipped off 120 cracked engine-heads for P40 aircraft directly causing his other son's death and framing a long-standing friend and colleague who is disgraced and

imprisoned as an innocent man.

Whilst convincing himself that what he did was for the sake of his family and living a life protected by middle class banality and tedium, he sacrifices the life of one son, and the other one's love, for a capitalist ethic which Miller sees as unsupportable in family and neighbourhood life.

At the moment of truth the powerful moral contradictions of his position break through the studied ordinariness of his language. 'What could I do! I'm in business, a man is business, a hundred and twenty cracked, you're out of business...Chris I did it for you...'

This powerful play of moral corruption and the capitalist ethic of 'success' was Miller's first successful stage play.

He continued to dwell on these themes of contrasting social and moral systems destroying 'ordinary' lower middle-class and working-class Americans in such plays as 'Death of a Salesman', 'A View from the Bridge' and in a more oblique way in the historical and near allegorical play on witch-hunting, 'The Crucible'.

Miller is no Marxist, and although he was associated with 'New Deal' theatre radicalism

in the 30s and has associated himself with a number of liberal causes, he has nowhere committed himself to any form of socialist alternative to capitalism.

His 'moral centre' is his commitment to a 'code of honour' older than US capital that calls on individuals to be responsible to a 'society' greater than themselves. It is this struggle to assert this kind of 'code of honour' against the new gods of economic forces whose powers of predestination he sees as being as powerful as those of Greek mythology, that he sees the tragedy of the 'common man'.

Miller's essentially populist theories of tragedy have drawn fire from both the left and the right who wanted to either dismiss it as a 'left wing piece' or as a 'malfunction of right wing decadence'. I suspect that Miller found the vulgarity of these kinds of criticism comforting and they re-inforced his own particular of aestheticism.

However let us say that a play like 'All My Sons' in spite of its prosaic presentation has a powerful realist impact. This realism I suggest lies within the 'Joe Keller factor'.

Anyone who has read the play recently will grasp this in the

aftermath of the recent terrible air and rail disasters.

Those who have watched the disgusting search for scapegoats, the unctuous reassurances and condolences, and the ritual parade of ultimately responsible politicians at the scene of the disasters congratulating the heroism of rescuers, cannot be unmoved by the implications of Miller's 'domestic' drama. But 'All My Sons' has a much more chillingly accurate relevance.

The former employee who, out of some sense of personal honour or integrity, is prosecuting GEC for allowing faulty parts to service the kind of engines which failed on the British Midlands Boeing that crashed into the M1 embankment killing 44 people, could have stepped out of the play as Chris Keller. And the GEC public relations executive who baldly stated that even if the parts were faulty they would not cause the engines to stop, could have been his father.

As for SNECMA, the French firm involved in the transnational production deal we know that the workers of this company staged one of the longest and most militant strike and occupation movements over wages and conditions last year.

LETTERS

Write to: Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS

The struggle for Eritrea

19 MARCH will be the first anniversary of a largely unreported yet possibly historic battle between forces of the Eritrean Peoples' Liberation Front (EPLF) and the elite northern army of the Mengistu regime's Dergue supported by Soviet 'advisers'.

The importance in the African context of the EPLF's victory at Afabet, north of Asmara, was compared by the only Western eyewitness, Basil Davidson, to that of the Viet Minh at Dien Bien Phu. As well as capturing the strategic town itself, massive supplies of light and heavy arms, vehicles, fuel and rations, the EPLF fighters destroyed three crack divisions, capturing or killing 18,000 troops, including four Soviet 'advisers'.

The Eritrean people of the Liberated Zone receive no external military assistance, are forced to live in camouflaged tents and bunkers, and till their meagre crops by moonlight, because of daily airstrikes. They survive largely through efficient distribution of food aid by the EPLF.

These enormous difficulties highlight the astonishing feat, not only of Afabet, but of their survival as a united liberation force for 14 years. The Mengistu regime, likened by many to that of Pol Pot in Kampuchea, has received billions of dollars of Soviet military aid, directed largely at destruction of the right of self-determination of the peoples of Eritrea and Tigre.

The EPLF, based on its long experience of betrayal by external support and its observation of the progress of the Palestinian revolution and its betrayals in particular, now seeks no assistance from external sources that carry political strings. For this reason it is 'unmentionable', though it has popular support wherever it has a voice that can be heard.

Sadly, this isolation has produced an inward-looking political orientation in the EPLF and quite justified cynicism towards the revolutionary left in Europe, who now fail to report, analyse and support the struggle. Therein lie great dangers for the Eritrean and Tigrean revolutions, at the point where national liberation is in sight, as well as the demise of the hated Bonapartist regime in Ethiopia.

While the fight, its progress and political context are kept

from the labour movement, and indeed the whole international community, the Stalinist support, on which Mengistu depends entirely, continues to flow quietly, yet massively. This occurs at a time when Gorbachev is attempting to stifle revolution in southern Africa, as part of Stalinism's accommodation to imperialist pressure.

Imperialism and its coat tailers know that the Eritrean spark threatens to set NE Africa afire, in Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia and further afield, where bourgeois corruption forms the base of the endemic famine and social devastation. This situation has lasted since the Ethiopian famine of 1973-1974, that ironically generated the revolutionary upsurge of 1974-1975.

At present, the only material assistance to Eritrea is from independent relief and development agencies. The Red Cross and UN agencies stand aside. Despite this, a society of extraordinary resilience, resourcefulness and determination survives in one of the most inhospitable terrains on Earth.

It builds roads, maintains basic and some advanced medical services, runs an impressive educational system, distributes food and even explores for and discovers water supplies.

Reporting this, analysing how it has been achieved, and offering political support to the EPLF's struggle is a responsibility which Workers Press must take up. The fact that the Fourth International has no significant section in NE Africa, is a measure of the failure to shoulder its responsibilities there over the last fifteen years.

Steve Drury, Cumbria

Anonymous falsehoods

A FRIEND of mine (with whom I worked on the Glasgow Ad-hoc Committee for British Withdrawal from Ireland before moving away from Glasgow last year) recently received by post, anonymously, a copy of an article attacking me, published in 1987 in 'Workers News', paper of the Workers Internationalist League. (The WIL was formed by Richard Price and others, who split from Sheila Torrance's 'News Line' group).

When the article was published, I didn't bother replying because I thought it so inconsequential. But now I wish to put on record:

1. I did not (as the article

suggests) help expel Rufus Boulting from the WRP in June 1985, for complaining about its wrong policy on Ireland. On the contrary, when M. Banda and G. Healy demanded he be expelled, I said to Healy this was wrong. Boulting was then NOT expelled.

2. Boulting did ask, in a meeting of participants on the 'Release of the jailed miners' march, why the WRP uncritically supported PLO fighters who undertook individual military actions, but condemned similar acts by the IRA out of hand. Others in the meeting defended the WRP policy. I did not answer Boulting's question, and attacked him for diverting from the matter under discussion, i.e. the jailed miners' campaign. This was totally wrong.

3. I kept quiet not only about

this but about other wrong things in the Healy-led WRP. So did Richard Price and others. Whereas myself and others in the WRP made self-critical analyses of why and how this happened; Price and co. didn't.

4. When Healy's corrupt leadership was finally challenged, I joined the fight to expel him. Price and others opposed the expulsion, and defended Healy's vile regime from our attack. Thus we were able to get to the ROOT of the party's problem, of which sickening concessions to British chauvinism re. Ireland was an important aspect; Price and co. did not do so, and their so-called 'analysis' of their own history has been superficial and dishonest.

S. Pirani

WRITE TO WORKERS PRESS

WORKERS PRESS welcomes letters on all subjects, but please be as brief as possible. Only in exceptional cases are we able to print letters longer than 200 words.

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News briefs . . .

Diplomatic incident

THE RON SMITH Celebrity Look Alike Company, which is based in Hollywood, is reported to have received a call from the Soviet news agency, Tass, in protest about the firm's plans to send Raisa and Mikhail impersonators to a mock Presidential inauguration on 18 January. A spokesman for the company assured the caller, however, that the Soviet leader and his wife would be 'portrayed with dignity'

Statistical rig

EXPERTS are of the opinion that North Sea oil platforms built before 1979 have a typical design life of no more than 20 years. But operators of most of the 23 platforms involved intend to run them into the next century. This is just one of a number of concerns expressed recently about official attitudes towards safety in the industry.

Another is the way the Tory government compiles figures which seriously misrepresents the true picture. The Department of Energy's 'Brown Book' does not take into account any accident which happens more than 500 metres away from an oil platform. For example, there is no reference in the latest edition to the 45 deaths which occurred as a result of the 1986 Chinook helicopter disaster off the coast of Shetland.

Perestroika rock

PAUL MCCARTNEY's recent album for exclusive release in the Soviet Union, as his 'tribute to Mikhail S. Gorbachev's moves toward openness' is fetching black market prices in the US and Britain. The former Beatle's manager said there were no plans to issue the record in the West, 'but we're not happy about Paul's fans having to pay \$200 for the disc if they want a copy,' he said. 'If an American goes to Moscow and buys a record in the shop, there's nothing we can do about that.'

And if some of the Russian people are developing entrepreneurial instincts, well that is what Mr Gorbachev says he is trying to encourage.'

Clampdown

THE SINGAPORE parliament which has only one voting opposition member, has introduced two bills seeking to stop courts questioning the country's controversial detention law. Home Minister Jayakumar moved the bills in the 81-member House recently without offering any explanation.

FORD JOB SHOCK



BY AN INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

FORD has announced that it will be ending production of one of its best selling cars, the Sierra, at Dagenham with the loss of 500 jobs over five years in the plant, and 1500 jobs in supplies..

The announcement, made without first informing the unions, has sent shock waves through the workforce and the union leaderships.

The Sierra helped Fords of Britain make £317 million profit in 1987, tripling the previous year's figure. For some time the company has been using the threat of re-locating production in order to intimidate the unions. The officials and most of the convenors have become willing collaborators in this process.

The reward for their co-operation on efficiencies and rationalisation is now revealed; 500 jobs will be lost in Dagenham's Body and PTA plants.

Transport and General Workers' Union official Steve Hart protested that the job losses were 'an attack on the British car industry', while Dagenham MP Bryan Gould said that Lawson was to blame for putting the interest rates up.

In fact, Ford's central management in Dearborn, Michigan

have begun implementation of a massive global rationalisation of car production.

This entails concentration of production of each model at a single location, hence Sierra production for the whole world will be carried out at Genk in Belgium. Previously production of different models was duplicated in different countries.

Dagenham will be left with just the Fiesta. If this was also produced at just one location then two plants out of Cologne, Dagenham and Valencia face closure.

The key to Ford's plan is the introduction of a \$77 millions communications system in which all the companies' plants will be in direct computerised communication with Dearborn via satellites, giving Ford the largest privately owned data base.

All engineering, design, production control and finance will be centralised and standardised through these computers, eliminating whole layers of engineering and office staff.

A feature of recent developments is that massive capital investment actually produces very few jobs. £750 million is to be spent on a new Fiesta engine plant in Bridgend that will employ only 200 workers.

(In the U.S., General Motors are building what they say will

be the most modern factory in the world at a cost of \$26 million. That will similarly employ only a few hundred).

The ratio of capital invested to surplus value added by labour in these factories points to a falling rate of profit in the long run, a contradiction that cannot be solved under capitalism.

The fight to defend jobs cannot be carried out on the basis of defending 'national interests', which is the only policy the present leaderships can come up with. Such a policy can only pit Ford workers of different countries against each other.

Ford workers must unite internationally to defend jobs and forge a common struggle for socialist nationalisation of their industry under workers' control.

FROM PAGE 1

situated, thousands of people, most of them black youth from the estates, marched to the Moss side police station.

In Manchester the 'left' Labour council turns its back while the thugs in blue rampage through their council estates. The Tories learned long ago how to tie these gentlemen up in their 'union jack'. This time not a policeman was seen. But at the station where hundreds of black youth have been beaten up over the years, the full riot squad was ready, clearly with orders to refrain from any action if at all possible, despite a rain of bottles from the crowd.

Pickets at the Home Office, Downing Street, Pentonville prison (where Mendis was held) and at Gatwick airport were mounted. The VMDC is organising a national march on Saturday 4 February, assemble 12 noon, Crown Square, Manchester. We urge all our readers to attend.

Construction safety for workers

BY ALAN CLARKE

OVER one hundred and fifty construction workers were killed and thousands injured on building sites last year, according to Construction Safety Campaign leader Tony O'Brien.

The campaign is demanding the prosecution of employers who are guilty of negligence. Its leaflets point out that two deaths are reported each week - and the incidence of major accidents is rising faster than ever.

In London last year, 36 deaths and 413 major injuries were reported - while there

were only 18 prosecutions of employers, with fines totalling only just over £1000.

'In the face of poor safety management in sections such as construction, agriculture and quarrying, and several major disasters (Zeebrugge, Kings Cross, and Piper Alpha), I can not conclude that 1987-88 was a satisfactory year for industrial health and safety', wrote Dr John Cullen, chairman of the Health and Safety Commission, in a recent report. He added: 'Some managers still look upon safety as a cost to their organisation.'

The Construction Safety Campaign calls for a one day strike in the public and private sector of construction in

protest against the appalling and ever-increasing death and serious injury figures.

Des Warren, the building worker jailed on conspiracy charges after the 1972 building workers' strike, talks in his book 'Key to My Cell' about conditions on a site he was working on: 'When we stopped for a tea break, the workers would get together in a tin shed. It had a dirt floor and we'd be drinking out of old mugs and jam jars. We'd either stand around or sit on cement bags. We had no heating or washing facilities. As I moved from site to site I found that nothing changed much. Any decent conditions we got were only as a result of a fight by union members.'

The Construction Safety Campaign must be given every support from all workers.