

job to vet the buyers, that is the job of government.

The countries who were represented at the 1994 event included Iran, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Israel and Colombia, all of which have a poor human rights record and some of them have been accused of torturing people. The police formations involved in the abuse of human rights in such countries are likely to be the organisations who would have a requirement for some of the equipment COPEX had on offer. They would also be the people interested in electric shock batons etc. Companies interested in selling such equipment could expect, therefore, to make a number of useful contacts at such an event. Since COPEX does not take measures to ensure that torture equipment is not sold unofficially at

this exhibition and does not vet the people attending, it is reasonable to assume that such sales could take place at the event. It is also safe to assume that the methods used within repressive regimes to combat those who they regard as terrorists and international criminals may well be similar to those used to suppress trade unionists and the political opponents of the regime. In some of the countries with reps attending the event the political opposition are referred to as 'terrorists' by the authorities. In some of them police officers have been heavily involved in the drug trade.

The exhibition attracts countries who are guilty of torture. It is likely to attract the organisations within those regimes, responsible for that torture. COPEX appear to have done nothing which breaks the law, but this is hardly

the point. Ignorance of such sales is hardly a defence in such instances which makes COPEX International complicit in the sale of torture equipment by facilitating it, which is morally reprehensible regardless of whether or not it is legal.

Their legal actions are almost unique. There has been a well established principle for peaceful protest in Britain which involves measures such as objections to the venue hosting arms trade events. COPEX's action in trying to take legal action against those sending letters of this nature would, if successful, overturn a long standing and honourable tradition of public protest. CAAT are appealing for funds to fight this case. Their address is Freepost Lon 6486, London N4 3BR

TRADE UNION CND AGM - FEBRUARY 1995

A DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE STRUGGLING FOR PEACE

It is no secret that TUCND have had considerable problems over the previous year, and these remain unresolved. With a fall in income from trade unions and cuts in the grants from CND, in October 1994 we slipped below the level where were able to sustain a worker.

The problem is circular, the lower our income the less we can do, the less we do the lower our profile within the trade union movement and the less relevant people consider it to be to continue their affiliation. Then our income falls accordingly. A key part of breaking this circle has to be to regain a position where we can afford to sustain a worker.

At core the problem has to be a political one. CND is still regarded largely as an anti-nuclear weapons organisation. In the 1980's there was a clear and distinct possibility of a nuclear holocaust between the 'superpowers' - a danger which was considerably enhanced by Reagan and Thatcher's acceleration of the arms race. That triggered a massive upsurge in support for CND. With the end of the cold war, however, the threat of an all-out nuclear war between the superpowers ceased to be a possibility

but that simply means that the threat to peace in the world has changed, not that it has gone away. The death of a million people in Rwanda, thousands in the former Yugoslavia, the terrible plight of the people living in Angola, Mozambique, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Kurdistan, Iraq and a number of other countries in the Middle East should be testament enough for us to see that there is something fundamentally wrong with the way in which those with power in the world, use that power.

Trade Union CND has always seen its campaigning brief as being far broader than opposition to nuclear weapons. Nuclear Weapons are part of and a product of a foreign policy, economic policy, industrial policy and defence policy mixture which has made Britain almost unique in the world. To get rid of nuclear weapons

will mean a profound change in our defence policy and in order to be effective in campaigning for that change, we have to understand that defence policy. And the same is true of the other government policies.

Trade Union CND members, on the whole, believe we have it more or less correct in terms of the way we would like to develop our work. The work we do is slowly beginning to have an effect in terms of the way in which people in the Trade Union movement perceive TUCND and we are slowly beginning to be recognised as a vehicle for campaigning on a range of issues relating to peace.

This years AGM will take place in London on the 29th of February. It would help enormously if branch delegates could register as soon as possible, by writing to:-

**TUCND
65 Bishops Rd
Newcastle
NE15 6RY**

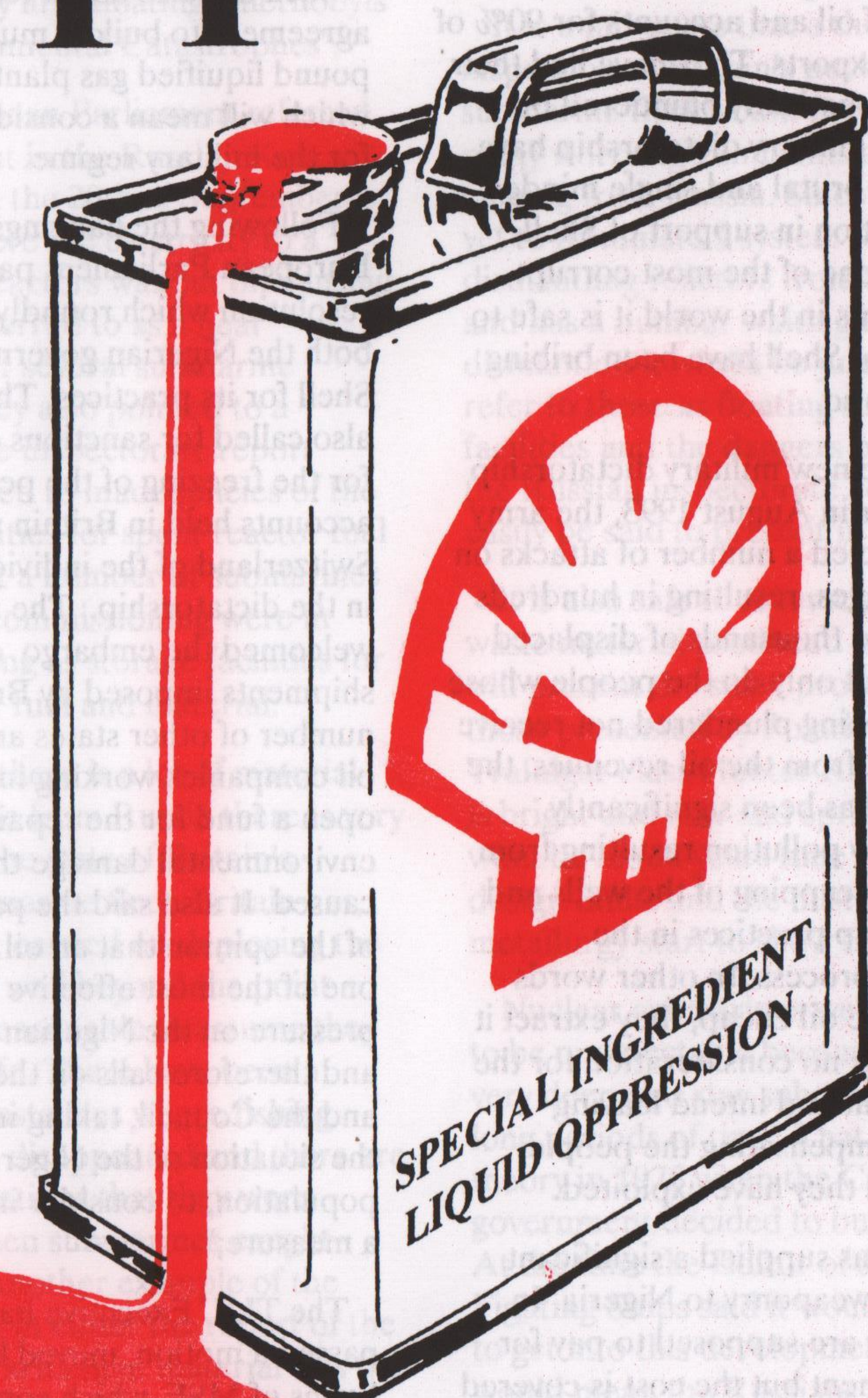
TUCND

NEWS

Issue 16 - Spring 1996

BOYCOTT SHELL

BECAUSE SHELL
SUPPORT THE
REPRESSIVE
NIGERIAN
REGIME



THERE'S BLOOD IN THEIR OIL

NIGERIA HANGS OPPOSITION LEADERS WHILE BRITAIN TURNS THE OTHER WAY

THE BOYCOTT OF SHELL GATHERS PACE

On the 10th of November the Nigerian government hanged 13 members of the opposition, including Ken Saro-Wiwa, a writer and one of the principle leaders of the Ogoni people. The British government response has been mild critical words and the deportation of other Nigerian anti government activists to face a similar fate. One deported at the beginning of November has not been heard of since.

The Ogoni are one of 20 ethnic groups which make up the 6 million people living in the Niger Delta, in the South East Nigeria. This area has rich reserves of oil and accounts for 90% of Nigeria's exports. They have had their lands systematically plundered by Shell. The military dictatorship have acted with brutal and single minded determination in support of Shell. Since it is one of the most corrupt governments in the world it is safe to assume that Shell have been bribing them to do so.

Since the new military dictatorship took power in August 1993, the army has conducted a number of attacks on Ogoni villages, resulting in hundreds of dead and thousands of displaced people. Not only do the people whose lands are being plundered not receive any benefit from the oil revenues, the land itself has been significantly damaged by pollution resulting from inadequate capping of the wells and sloppy cheap practices in the extraction process. In other words Shell get the oil cheap, they extract it with little or no consideration for the environment and intend leaving without compensating the people whose land they have exploited.

Britain has supplied a significant amount of weaponry to Nigeria. In theory they are supposed to pay for this equipment but the cost is covered by a government insurance scheme known as the Export Credit Guarantee Service. In the mid-1980's Nigeria bought a number of Jaguar aircraft from British Aerospace, who have yet to see any money from the Nigerian government. The £380 million price tag has been picked up by the British government. The depth of Britain's vested interest in Nigeria and in the current government there, can be seen in the British governments willingness

to deport anti-government activists in the face of wide ranging popular protests in Britain.

Shell and Chevron, faced with demands for roughly £10 billion pounds in compensation and royalties from the Ogoni, have withdrawn from the area, passing on direct control over oil extraction to a Nigerian company. Given the corrupt nature of the regime this should only be seen as a cosmetic exercise and they continue to handle the export, refining and distribution of the oil - and continue to make the lions share of the profit.

Shell are also about to enter into an agreement to build a multi-billion pound liquified gas plant in Nigeria which will mean a considerable income for the military regime.

Following the hangings the European Parliament passed a resolution which roundly condemned both the Nigerian government and Shell for its practices. The resolution also called for sanctions on Nigeria, for the freezing of the personal bank accounts held in Britain and Switzerland of the individuals involved in the dictatorship. The resolution welcomed the embargo on arms shipments imposed by Britain and a number of other states and called on oil companies working in the area to open a fund for the repair the environmental damage they have caused. It also said the parliament "is of the opinion that an oil embargo is one of the most effective ways to put pressure on the Nigerian Government and therefore calls on the Commission and the Council, taking into account the situation of the Nigerian population, to consider imposing such a measure."

The TUC Executive have also passed a motion, moved by Roger Lyons of MSF, which committed the TUC to seek a meeting with Shells management to discuss a series of demands.

These include:-

1) That Shell should suspend operations in Nigeria and that it suspend cooperation on the Liquified Natural Gas project

2) That shell clear up the areas polluted by its joint operations with the Nigerian National Petroleum Company.

3) That they pay compensation to the communities whose land shell has operated on, for the damage done.

4) That Shell should institute environmentally friendly practice in their operations in Nigeria as a precondition to resuming their activities.

If the Shell management turn down this list of request then the TUC will consider supporting a boycott of Shell. Some unions, specifically the GMB, were of the opinion that the TUC should move to a high profile public boycott immediately but were persuaded to wait the outcome of a meeting with the Shell management. Some unions are already acting unilaterally - UNISON have instructed their officers not to use Shell products and have written to their branches urging them to likewise. Other unions are considering doing similar things. Some of this is symbolic but it will have the effect of raising the issue with their members and of helping build a structure for a long term.

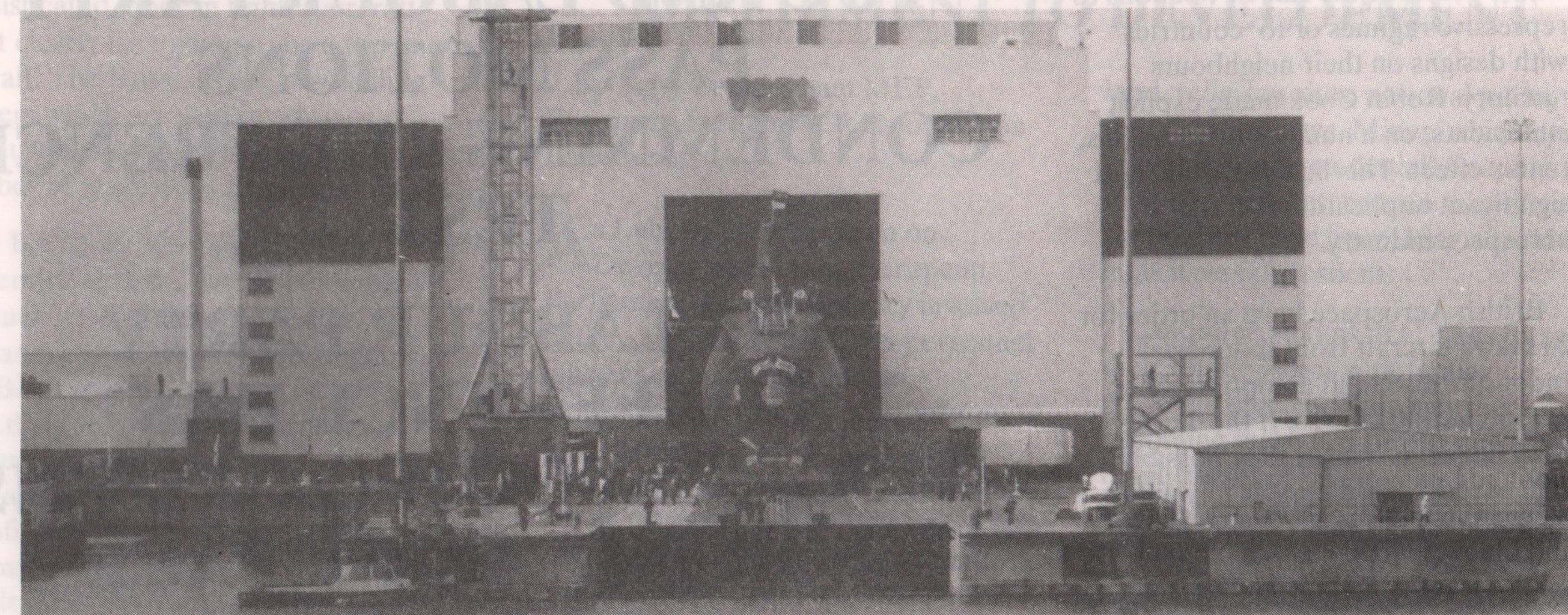
The T&GWU have been calling for a boycott of Shell for over a year now, since Shell withdrew recognition of the union working for their company. The T&GWU believe that the de-recognition of the union in Britain and the support for the repressive regime in Nigeria have the same cause - Shells ruthless brutish management philosophy.

Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, although initially reluctant, have also now agreed to start organising a boycott of Shell. The bulk of the ground-work for this boycott campaign has however come from the Body Shop Campaign Team, who appear to have resourced much of the campaign work in Europe carried out by Ken Sara-Wiwa, before his death, and now carried out by the organisations with which Mr Wiwa was associated.

The experience of the boycott of Barclays Bank, because of its association with the Apartheid regime, tells us that such boycotts are effective if they are tightly focused, but also that it takes a great deal of time to build up the necessary pressure. This then, will be very much a long term project.

For further information on the boycott please contact the TUCND office on 0191 272 2046

TRIDENT A FLOATING CHERNOBYL



The European Parliament has passed a resolution urging the main Naval powers to inform the United Nations about nuclear reactors and warheads lost at sea. It has also said that it will hold hearings into the threat to global security and the environment which this material represents. The major part of this threat comes from nuclear powered and armed Submarines operated by the nuclear weapons states - Britain, France, China, Russia and the USA.

The resolution is a reaction by the European Parliament to a report by the US based International Centre for Technology Assessment (CTA). There report, published recently, catalogues the number of incidents involving nuclear reactors and nuclear weapons at sea and it is this report that points to submarines as a being a significant danger. Some of the results of this study are quite disturbing. What is just as disturbing is the realisation that the report is based on publicly available material and so does not refer to incidents where submarines have been implicated but not proven to have been involved.

There are 19 US and Russian Nuclear reactors and reactor screens dumped from submarines dumped on the seabed. There have been 50 US and Russian nuclear warheads lost at sea. Since 1965 there have been 612 accidents involving nuclear submarines from Russia, USA, France, Britain and China, including 13 direct collisions.

Because of the nature of the Russian regime and the considerable change in the politics in that society over the past 6 years, a great deal of information is now available. the report quotes

Alexei Yablokov of the Russian Ecological Safety Commission as saying that many submarines in the Russian Navy are "floating Chernobyls" and "Environmental Catastrophes".

The European Parliament referred to an incident in the Russian Kola peninsula on the 20th of September this year where the electricity to a number of reactors was cut off causing what was referred to as a near melt-down of several submarine reactors. They also pointed to a Russian state inspectorate report which referred to inadequacies of the storage facilities for spent reactor fuel and said that a number of submarines awaiting decommissioning were in practice acting as storage facilities for their reactor fuel and material.

Although there is a lot of material now available from Russia there is very little about the state of Britain's nuclear submarine fleet. Britain has, for instance, carried on deploying the polaris fleet well beyond the point where it is reasonable to assume they would be safe. There have been a number of instances where fishing vessels have disappeared and there are strong indications that they were capsized when submarines caught their nets. Another example of the material not in either the report of the European Parliament material was the fire involving the Warspite in Liverpool a couple of years ago. The Warspite was a nuclear powered 'Hunter Killer' submarine. It was docked in the centre of Liverpool when smoke was seen to be coming from within it. The Navy towed it at speed, out to sea but denied that anything untoward had happened.

There is also some anecdotal evidence from former US submarine

personnel about practices such as the dumping of reactor coolant in the Firth of Forth.

It is a fair guess that a thorough inspection of Britain's nuclear submarine fleet would produce as many worrying comments as those now coming from Russia. Since Britain has yet to formulate a system for dismantling reactors from Submarines and has a number waiting to be dismantled it would be just as valid to refer to those as floating storage facilities and the dangers pointed to by the Russian inspectorate could just as easily be said to present in ours.

It is also safe to assume that the waste material produced by Trident will present the same problems as those presented by Polaris and the Trafalgar class Hunter Killers. Trident is bright and new and sprightly but it won't be in ten years time when the design faults and the mistakes in the metallurgy start to show themselves.

Nuclear submarines were intended to be undetectable because they go very deep and stay submerged for very long periods of time. That was the theory in 1975 when the Calaghan government decided to buy the thing. At the time the Editor of Janes Fighting Ships said it would be foolish to get into this development because it would mean the Russians would build similar submarines and develop the technology to detect them. This is exactly what happened.

The decision to go ahead with Trident was a political one, bearing no relation at all to any military threat or possible response. It was clearly a highly irresponsibly and dangerous decision.

The Labour Party conference this year agreed to a formula which would preclude the sale of weapons to repressive regimes or to countries with designs on their neighbours territory. Robin Cook made explicit statements, on a number of occasions, to this effect. This has important and significant implications for the aerospace industry.

British Aerospace have an order for 24 Hawk aircraft from Indonesia. Indonesia also hold an option for an additional 100 Hawks. If the Tories hang on for as long as they possibly can, as they would appear to want to, the first part of the order will have been completed by the general election. The aircraft are due to begin delivery in the spring next year and 2 per month will be delivered up to the spring of the following year. The option for the additional 100 would presumably be blocked by the incoming labour government and there may be a question mark over the delivery of spares and technical support.

Although the Hawk is not one of the worlds best aircraft, the technical support offered by BAe makes a significant difference for airforces trying to get the best out of their aircraft. The market for spares and support for equipment such as the Hawk can be as significant as the original sale. It is open to question whether a ban imposed by an incoming Labour government would cover such things as the - at least if it doesn't it ought to.

TUC AND LABOUR PARTY PASS MOTIONS CONDEMNING THE FRENCH TEST

THE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE HAS IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

What is clear is that without being able to sell to cold psychotic genocidal regimes such as Indonesia, BAe is in serious trouble. If BAe is in trouble so it the rest of the aerospace industry and the effect on the rest of stock market were a manufacturer of the scale of BAe going down, would be panic.

WHAT HAPPENS TO BAe

BAe depend on orders such as the Indonesian one and without them they will be in serious trouble. What the incoming Labour Government will have to decide is what other orders they can place with the company to overcome some of the very serious problems it would create with the cancelation of Hawks or the blocking of spares.

There are a number of options - i) buying a large quantity of Hawks themselves ii) ordering a substantial number of Eurofighters iii) buying other aircraft. All of these will be dependent on the results of the promised defence review.

i) Hawks have some advantages in that they are relatively cheap but there are a number of situations where it may be dangerous to use them. If whoever it is you are using them against has relatively sophisticated anti-aircraft equipment it is possible that large numbers could be shot down. It is unlikely therefore the RAF would see them as being much use to them.

ii) The Eurofighter's costs now appear to be spiralling out of control.

This aircraft is seen as almost the last attempt to keep in the production of sophisticated modern fighter aircraft - but it clearly isn't going to be a top line aircraft. The Russians are now selling fighters which are well in advance of the Eurofighters capabilities which is a number of years away from production.

iii) BAe have a cooperation agreement with the Swedish company producing the Griphen. This has similar technology to the Eurofighter and BAe clearly feel that it is something they could be involved in producing under licence in the increasingly likely case that the Eurofighter will be scrapped. Producing this may well help BAe over its problem but it would considerably undermine its ability to gain significant export orders.

That is if the incoming Labour Government continue with roughly the same defence policies as the Tories. They will probably end up building a modified version of the Griphen.

A REAL ALTERNATIVE

If the Labour Party are truly committed to the view that the MOD should now be involved in peace keeping in a number of places throughout the world, then the type of equipment they order would also be reflected within this. One of the major weaknesses in the current range of equipment currently used by the armed forces is the shortage of large, heavy lift, aircraft to transport men and equipment.

The RAF have just ben through the decision making process over whether to buy a Boeing or a new plane being produced by the European consortium Airbus. That the Boeing was even considered given the impact on the British aerospace industry is quite remarkable but the MOD appear to have pushed quite hard for this aircraft.

What the Labour Party's new policy could mean is that more of this type of aircraft are bought. Since they are similar to civil aircraft the research and development for the military version will be directly applicable to the civilian aircraft industry. If more air freighters are bought and less fighters Britain could establish a position as a leading aircraft manufacturer.

LANDMINES; A MURDEROUS IMPEDIMENT TO DEVELOPMENT

By Tony Cunningham MEP,
European Parliament Rapporteur on
Landmines

As Labour Spokesperson on Development in the European Parliament, I have been very involved in the campaign to ban anti-personnel landmines. These landmines jeopardise the process of development by making the earth a threat to life rather than a source of life. Landmines kill or maim someone, somewhere on the planet once every fifteen minutes, and the majority of their victims are women and children. Years of investment in childraising, education, nourishment and healthcare are wasted in a split second, vast tracts of land are written off, inaccessible, polluted by an estimated 80 - 110 million mines sewn in 65 countries in the world. There are a further 100 million stockpiled in storage.

The scope of the problem is such that anti personnel landmines are now seen as the biggest impediment to development in many regions, worst affected are Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Iraq, Laos and Mozambique where the scale of rural civilian casualties represents a major emergency.

Mines destroy indiscriminately. They have been described as "blind weapons that can't distinguish between the boot of a soldier and the footfall of an old woman or a child".

Children make up a large proportion of mine victims (in Cambodia they are 26% of the injured). They are vulnerable because they are small and cannot always see mines visible to adults. Some cannot recognise graphic minefield warnings or cannot read the written signs. Others temporarily forget to fear mines, having seen their casings as wheels for toy trucks or as flower pots. In Cambodia they play boules with B40 anti-personnel mines. In Afghanistan young boys compete in throwing stones at PFM-1 Butterfly mines, the winner being the child whose stone detonates the mine. Some children make collections of mines and detonators.

In some cases, where whole countries have become the theatre of battle, little is left untouched; transportation systems, power supplies, agricultural land, grazing

land, religious sites, national parks, forest and villages. Mines, which are often sold as "area denial" weapons for military purposes, remain long after the soldiers have gone, long after the guns have fallen silent.

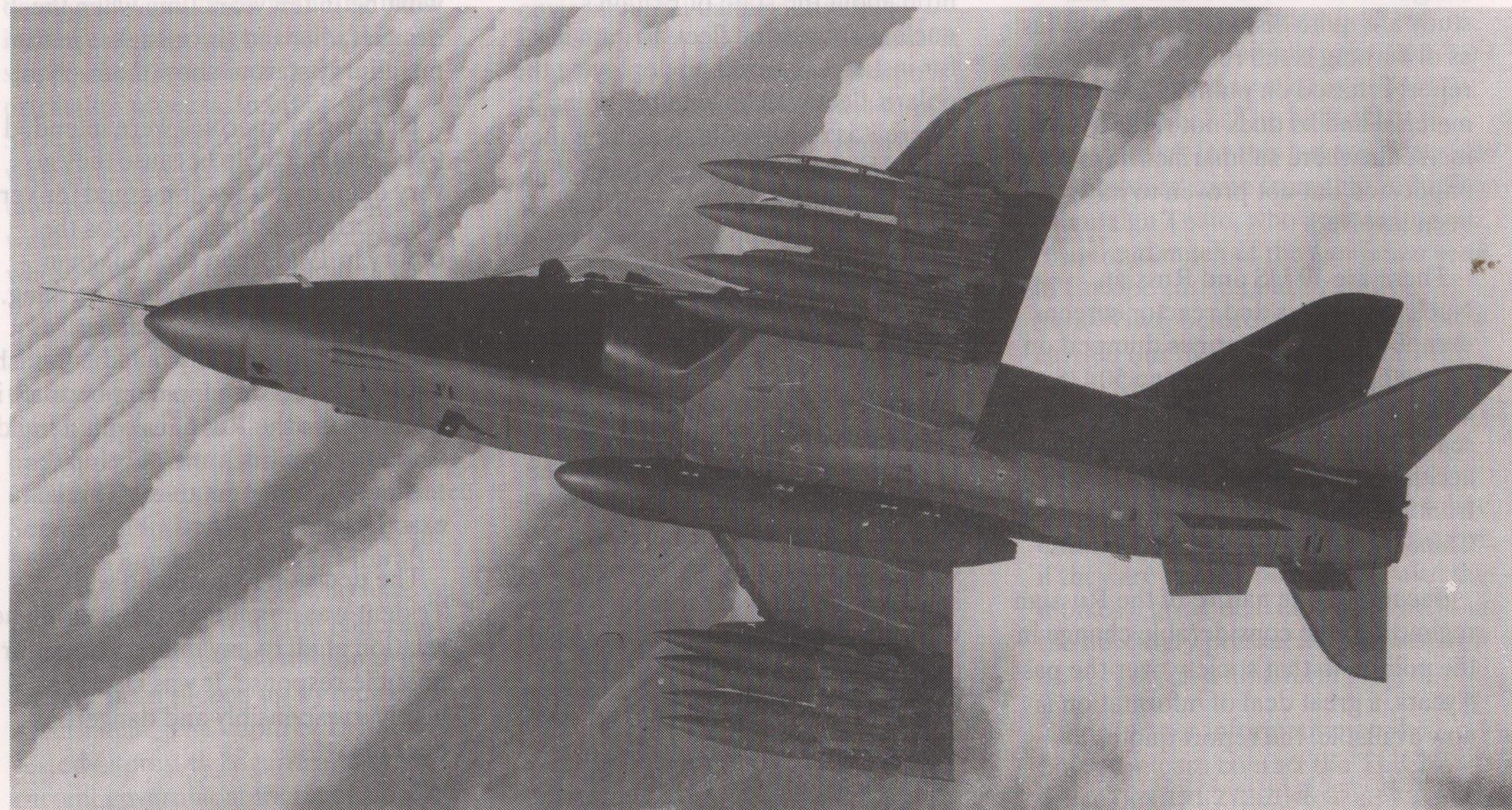
Landmine victims in Cambodia say their relationships with family members change. They mention becoming more dependent upon family members; losing the ability to support the family; divorce/desertion; inability to marry and children no longer able to attend school. Victims report losing friends, losing jobs and being embarrassed by their appearance following recovery. Oxfam reports that in Cambodia amputees are sometimes shunned in case their bad luck is contagious.

"Life as a disabled person humiliates me with every breath I take", said Chan Serey, a Cambodian ex-farmer, in a message to mine producers. "I am a young man who always believed that I could live with dignity and the ability to serve my society. Regrettably my hopes and plans are taken from me. Who are the ones to make me disabled, a punishment from Brahma or the result of your mine?"

Choy Li, a 28 year old woman farmer said "Before, I had many friends and people liked me. But now, after becoming an amputee, so many people look down on me and have nothing to do with me. Please send my leg back to me."

Mines also cause psychological wounds, at least half of Cambodians live in constant fear of a mine.

It is clear that before there can be any hope of sustained development, we must rid the world of these murderous weapons. I am doing everything I can to put pressure on the international community, via the European Parliament, for an outright ban on the manufacture, distribution and stockpiling of anti-personnel landmines whatever their type or particular technical characteristics. The sickening thing is that mines are being made in the UK today. We must do everything we can to urge British companies to give up these abhorrent weapons.



THE CONTINUING CON JOB ON THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

The tragedy within the former Yugoslavia is continuing relentlessly and so does the distortion within the media about the causes and the possible solutions. The media have ruthlessly distorted the events and have promoted a particular view of the events. That distortion has served to draw out the civil war and to reduce the possibility of a solution.

Tragically parts of the trade union movement have been drawn into what amounts to support for military aid to fascist organisations in Bosnia and Croatia. The situation is complex. The need for aid for the people of that country is pressing. Some of the aid organisations which have sprung up associated with the trade union movement have been drawn into supporting the British government view - that the bad people are the Serbs and the goodies are the Bosnian/Croat federation. The net result is that the bulk of the aid drawn from the trade union movement has been channelled towards Tuzla, a mining area in part of Bosnia with strong links with Croatia.

For example one report carried in a union journal included this comment "We went to the market place where 65 people were killed by a single Chetnik Serb shell. They were sitting in at a cafe in the square on a warm May evening...". Chetniks were a fascist formation in the second war - its a racist term. The bombing incident referred to is similar to one used by the United States as a justification for launching a large scale bombing of Serb formations. It was latter proved by British and French forensic experts that the shell came from a Bosnian Government area. In other words the union journal article was being used as a way of promoting the interests of a government prepared to bomb its own people for a the sake of a propaganda coup. As a result of the events made possible by the US and NATO bombings in Bosnia this summer vast numbers of people were displaced by the Bosnian/Croat military offensive. They are now living in camps in Serb held territory, they are displaced and their plight is desperate. The use of terms such as Chetnick has hindered the possibility of raising aid for these people.

Another example of the British trade union movement being drawn into supporting British government propaganda is a fringe meeting organised at the TUC this year. At the back of the platform was a banner calling for the lifting of the arms embargo on Bosnia. A GMB official on the platform, interpreted this as being a call to "arm the workers" who would then throw out their nationalist leadership. He didn't appear to appreciate that lifting the arms embargo would mean supplying the nationalist governments. When questioned he clung firmly to the need to 'arm the workers'.

DANGEROUS GAMES

The dangerous game Western governments, specifically Germany and the USA, will leave rifts in that area which will persist for generations. It could leave large parts of the country dominated by a running civil war. It could even lead to a full scale war between Serbia and Croatia, that is what has been risked by the US and Germany in their pursuit of their own interests in someone else country.

Prior to the Croatian/Bosnian offensive in Bosnia and in Krijajina in the spring of this year, Bosnian government forces began a series of military attacks from the "safe havens" on the surrounding Serb dominated areas. There were two reasons for this. One was to pin down as much of the Serb military machinery away from the impending offensive and the other was to generate popular support for this offensive in the west - using the inevitable Serb reaction to these attacks as a justification for intervening militarily on the side of Croatia/Bosnia. The Serbs, of course reacted with gratuitous brutality, fuelling this reaction.

Just prior to the offensive, a rocket was fired into a market place in Sarajevo killing a number of civilians. Serb forces were blamed and the US used it as a justification for a large scale NATO air offensive against Serb positions. As shown above, its since been proven that this was the Bosnian government that fired the shell. The idea that US were not aware of this when they began the air attacks lacks credibility.

The air assault on the Serb military infrastructure was aimed at softening it up for the Croat/Bosnian offensive, not, as was stated, to protect the safe havens.

A BBC Panorama programme in September carried a report of a series of landings by C130 transport aircraft at Tuzla airport, much earlier in the year. The aircraft were American and were seen to be being unloaded by Bosnian government forces. While this was going on a couple of American fighters were circling above. The landings took place on nights when the USAF were responsible for monitoring the airspace in the area. It was clear the US were supplying weapons to the Bosnian Government for the military offensive in the summer.

THE ARMS EMBARGO

Some trade union bodies have been drawn into calling for the lifting of the arms embargo on Bosnia. Since the US government is already breaking the international embargo and breaking its own laws in order to do so, and Germany is breaking it to supply weapons to Croatia, there appears to be little point in lifting the embargo. It would however, open the way to a much larger flood of weapons to the Croat/Bosnian coalition and would, almost inevitably lead to direct conflict between Croatia/Bosnia and the rest of the former Yugoslavia.

THE PEOPLE BEING ARMED

In a letter to the Sunday Times recently Nora Beloff wrote the following.

"Richard Overy has a masterly grasp of the nature of fascism but he is wrong to dismiss the ideology as "a thing of the past". It is embodied today in Franjo Tudjman's HDZ, the party in power in Croatia. If Overy had studied the rule and writings of Franjo Tudjman, he would not have dismissed fascism as "out of touch with the current political world." Unlike other aggressive dictators, fashionably but wrongly described as 'Fascist', Tudjman's regime is characterised by racialism and militarism. His last book, Wastelands Of Historical Reality, blames the Jews for anti-semitism and

treats the Serbs as sub-human. His American publishers have produced and expurgated edition, eliminating the most shocking paragraph."

The Bosnia has in practice been all but absorbed by Croatia. People living in Bosnia with Croatian written in their passports were allowed to vote in the recent Croatian election, and the Bosnian Government were powerless to prevent this. It means that the basis for the electoral role in that election was race rather than where people lived.

There are two significant factors which come out of this. One is that the Croatian regime is heavily dependent on the civil war to maintain support within the population - it has little possibility of delivering any material benefits for the population and therefore has no other basis to present to the population. It also means that it will remain expansionist. It has to, it has nothing else to offer.

At the beginning of the civil war in Bosnia, Croatia grabbed a large chunk of land from the Bosnian Government (Including the area around Tuzla). They have shown a tendency to gain land by military force in the past, and will do so again in the future.

After the Croatian assault on Krijajina, there were repeated reports of mass killings by the Croatian forces. There are also now reports of people being moved into the areas taken. Croatia and Bosnia are as guilty, therefore, of ethnic cleansing and of genocide as Serbia and they are guilty of colonising areas taken by force. They will do this again if the situation favours them doing so.

This gives a radically different picture to that presented by the media.

DON'T BE CONNED - DON'T SUPPORT NATO MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

Lifting the arms embargo would have encouraged the war. It would have encouraged the process whereby Bosnia was absorbed by Croatia and it would have brought forward the day when what remains of the Bosnian government structure will be removed by Croatia. Lifting the arms embargo would have signalled a rapid escalation of the war and in the long term made Yugoslavia a similar mess to that in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan remains racked by a civil war which has lasted 16 years, and there is no sight of it ending. Several

different ostensibly ethnic groups fight out a land grabbing exercise, funded largely by competing outside backers, such as Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. That is what is still on offer for the former Yugoslavia if the current diplomatic policies pursued by the west continue. That is what was being supported some trade union based groups when they accept the grossly distorted view promoted by our own and other governments.

The Yugoslav conflict happened because of the support Germany and others gave to fascists in Croatia. It was prolonged by Germany, the US and the EC policies of blaming the Serbs for the war. It could have been avoided. The Trade union movement in Britain should have been a vehicle for arguing for peace in the region and for measures which could bring about a just settlement in the region. Instead a large part of it was sucked into supporting measures which were staggeringly dangerous in their possible effects.

WE SHOULD DO ALL WE CAN TO MAKE SURE WE ARE NOT CONNED IN THIS WAY AGAIN.

BRITISH EXHIBITION ACCUSED OF BEING A MARKET FOR TORTURE EQUIPMENT ORGANISERS SUE CAAT

A recent "Dispatches" TV programme, called the Torture Trail, accused British Aerospace of complicity in a trade in Electric Shock Batons. Amnesty International consider these batons as being the 'the universal tool of the torturer'. The programme also questioned the role of the annual 'Covert Operational and Procurement Exhibition' (COPEX). This is being run this year at Sandown racetrack.

The Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) has suggested that the exhibition is a market place for such batons and other torture equipment. COPEX International are suing them. They also took legal action against the National Peace Council, who made a similar accusation, and, in an out of court settlement, has persuaded them

to part with £3,000 and an undertaking not to repeat the allegation - that COPEX facilitates the trade in torture devices. CAAT, on the other hand, are vigorously contesting this case.

CAAT suggested in their newsletter that people might like to write to Peter Wynn, the manager of Sandown Racetrack, to express concern that his organisation should provide a venue for a marketplace for torture equipment and a number of people responded. Some of these have now been contacted with a Solicitors letter demanding £176 for legal costs and demanding an apology. These include a 78 year old quaker and a 17 year old studying for her A levels. The people contacted in this way are also vigorously contesting the case.

COPEX International deny that they have acted as a market for torture equipment. Their view is that the equipment they act as a market place for is intended to be used by police forces fighting "drug traffickers, terrorists, international criminals and money launderers".

Electric shock batons are illegal in Britain and COPEX have never shown them at their exhibitions. Julian Winkley, the director of the Watford based company, is quote in the Observer as saying "if a company were in possession of them legally and wished to exhibit them, then we would have no problem with that because it would be totally legal. But we might have an ethical problem with it."

Mr Winkley is also quoted in the same article as saying that it is not his