

CHARTIST

LABOUR'S REVOLUTIONARY VOICE No.64 MARCH 1978 10p

WHO IS BEING BANNED?

THE USE OF THE Public Order Act to ban the National Front march through Ilford has been widely acclaimed throughout the Labour movement as a 'great step forward' in the fight against racism and fascism. McNee's ban was welcomed by Labour, Communist Party and Trade Union leaders, as well as the SWP-dominated Anti-Nazi League, who described the ban as "an important victory for all who are concerned at the growth of a Nazi organisation."

Such a view is not only mistaken, it is extremely dangerous. Indeed it actually disarms the working class in the face of the growth of fascism and the strengthening of police powers.

By Frank Hansen

The lessons of Tameside and Ilford should be crystal clear. A ban imposed under the Public Order Act and 'enforced' by the police, does nothing to stop the activities of the National Front and does not advance the anti-fascist struggle one inch.

At Hyde, Webster was allowed to stage his one-man march against 'red terrorism' protected by an escort of 3000 police. In Ilford a police army of 6000 ensured that the National Front meeting went ahead.

Far from stopping the Front, the use of the Public Order Act has allowed them to gain spectacular publicity coups on both occasions. At the same time the ban has divided and defused the anti-fascist movement. Many anti-fascists simply did not turn up in Barkingside because they imagined the battle had already been won. Compared with the mobilisations at Wood Green and Lewisham where the Front was seriously chal-



Photo: by Colin Chalmers

Anti-racists on the march in Birmingham, February 18th.

enged, both Hyde and Ilford were ineffective, because of the small turnout and the fact that the police used the Public Order Act as a means of dividing and conquering the left.

Those in the Labour movement who support the ban ignore the lessons of history. The Public Order Act was introduced in the 1930s under the pretext of stopping Mosley's Blackshirts. It has always been used primarily against the left, as means of increasing police powers so they can more easily crackdown on the activities of the working class. Under its provisions ALL political demonstrations are banned for 2 MONTHS - the vast

majority of which are of course Labour movement or radical marches.

Ilford reinforces these historical lessons. The police deliberately attacked the peaceful picket organized by the Anti-Nazi League, despite the fact that the League urged its supporters to comply with police instructions. 21 anti-fascists were arrested by police 'snatch squads' in an operation of military-style precision.

Whatever their intentions, all those who support the use of the Public Order Act are in effect paving the way for a massive curtailment of democratic rights.

Marches by the NUS, the Garners' Steak House strikers, the Provisional Sinn Fein, Friends of the Earth and the Anti-Apartheid movement have already been halted by the ban.

ILLUSION

Moreover, support for the Public Order ban sows the dangerous illusion that the police and the courts and other organs of the capitalist state are somehow 'impartial' and can be used to defeat fascism and racialism. Illusions that the Metropolitan Police which smashed up the Grunwick picket lines and uses 'sus' charges to victimise hundreds of black youths can stop the growth of the NF. That laws administered by judges like McKinnon, who acquitted Kingsley Read and wished him well, will halt racialism.

The struggles of the last two years in Birmingham, Manchester, London and other major cities, have proved beyond doubt that the police and the courts are the protectors of the racists and the fascists. The police have used National Front provocation as a training ground to introduce new techniques and to step

up violence and intimidation against anti-racists.

At present the ruling class does NOT need fascism in power - the Labour government has proved quite adequate in containing working class struggles. But fascist provocations do enable a successive build-up of police power for future confrontations, for example, in the May elections, the Lambeth Central (Brixton) by-election - bans may be introduced.

OPPOSE

This does not mean that socialists should not oppose every manifestation of fascism. The National Front are planning to field 318 in the next General Election - they cannot be ignored. But opposition to the fascists must come from the independent mobilisation of the Labour movement and those most threatened by the growth of fascism - blacks, women, gays. Such an opposition to the fascists must make clear the links between the manifold oppressions which maintain the capitalist system and which find a heightened expression in fascist ideology and in the fascist movement. Abstract anti-Nazi sentiment and legal bans are hopelessly inadequate where not downright counter-productive.

Immediately this means demanding the repeal of the Public Order Act and the ending of police protection for fascists. If further legal bans are imposed as they are likely to be, then anti-fascist militants must work to ensure they do not demobilise the movement by organising such activities as are possible short of a head-on confrontation with the police. Above all the watchword for such activities must be "no confidence in legal bans!"

UNDERCOVER ARMY ASSASSINS

EARLY LAST month, an attempt was made to kill Kevin Hannaway in Belfast. He and his 21-month-old son were shot at and wounded near their home. At first sight this incident seems unremarkable in the context of the north of Ireland. A report in the Dublin review 'Hibernia' suggests otherwise.

Last December 12th, Colm McNutt - an active member of the Irish Republican Socialist Party - was shot dead whilst walking across an open car park in Derry. He was murdered by a plain-clothes soldier, shooting from a parked car. The following day members of a Provisional IRA unit executed army intelligence officer Paul Harman in west Belfast. Among documents found on Harman's body were 73 photographs of Republican activists. One of these 73 was Kevin Hannaway.

Army complicity in the attempt on Hannaway's life seems even more likely when other factors are considered. Hannaway was shot near to his home to which he had but recently moved. Who supplied the would-be assassin with this information? The incident took place near Mackie's engineering plant - a bastion of

by Steve O'Brady

protestant employment - at a time when the Army's presence, to reassure the Mackie workers is usually marked. On this day the Army was marked by its absence. Why? Moreover, it was reported that 10 shots were fired at Hannaway from a heavy, semi-automatic handgun - virtually the only weapon with a magazine that size is the Army Browning.

This suggests the possibility that Harman's list was an assassination list for the use of Loyalist paramilitaries or the Army itself. It would not be the first time that Army intelligence had been passed over for Loyalist use - in 1975 it was discovered that Army information on Republicans including their addresses workplaces, social habits, had been given to a number of Loyalist groups.

This undercover Army activity is just one aspect of the campaign of the security forces against the most active, left-wing political (rather than military) sections of the Republican movement.

(CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE)

THE CHARTIST

Monthly Journal of the Socialist Charter Movement.

Editor: M. Davis, 60 Loughborough Rd., London SW9 (01-733-8953).

Betrayals and Ideology

LIKE A LINE OF dominos, one by one, each union with a wage claim above 10 per cent is collapsing. From the assaults of firefighters and water workers through to tanker drivers and miners, the 10 per cent 'guideline' has remained unbroken. Only a few firms in the private sector have paid over the Government ceiling, and now workers here face not only their own boss but also the blacklist as an added weapon.

Workers in the public sector have been faced with the iniquitous 'cash-limit' system which has an even greater effect on holding down incomes because the Government has direct control of the purse-strings.

collapsed

The wages fight hasn't collapsed—it never got off the ground. Other aspects of the workers' situation are no better. Unemployment has remained constant at the post-war record high of 1.5 million. All major economic forecasters predict this level or higher into the '80s. Accelerating the job-loss is the state's bulldozer of rationalisation which has declared as prime targets 30,000 jobs in the British Steel industry, with the first 3,300 being accepted by steel-workers themselves at a plant near Cardiff.

New British Leyland boss Edwardes declared 20,000 jobs must go. The Speke plant, halted by a seventeen-week strike, has been singled out for guillotine treatment first. At the Cowley plant militant shop stewards who recently unseated the right wing in plant elections are being victimised by their own union (TGWU) eager to clear all obstacles to Edwardes plans. The situation looks bleak—espec-

ially when compared to the hey-day of 1974 when the same miners who recently accepted divisive and dangerous productivity schemes brought down the Tory government.

Labour activists in the CLPs have seen one conference decision after another ignored by the Labour Government. They have also seen the consequences of pro-capitalist policies lead to demoralisation and bitterness reflected in Tory election victories from Ashfield to last May's council elections.

What lies at the root of these developments? Is it simply the betrayals of the Labour Government confronted by international capitalists and the state? This is part of the answer. But betrayals don't explain why the Labour Party conference has successively supported pay controls and the social contract and TUC conference has done likewise—except last year when it only backed the 12-month rule. The betrayals theory, on its own tends to ignore the toleration by millions of workers of government policies.

Neither is it enough to attack the Labour and union lefts. True, the Tribuneites alternative—agreed by the LP National Executive, of £400 million budget reflation package of tax cuts, welfare benefit increases, statutory planning agreements, £810 million to the NEB (Benn's proposal),

import controls and the like answers none of the fundamental problems posed by the capitalist crisis. True, it is a recipe for inflation and a dangerous 'nationalist' blind-alley. The programme and practices of the lefts must be exposed in the eyes of advanced militants but this is insufficient. Unfortunately, many on the far left ascribe the current downturn to these factors alone. Stressing the organisational strength of the working class exaggerating every molehill of militancy into a mountain.

But organisation without an idea of how to use it is no help. Militancy without political perspective is blind and vulnerable.

A pervasive feature of revolutionary organisations and would-be Marxists is an underplaying of the strength of bourgeois, reformist ideas, illusions in democracy, the neutrality of the state and law and order, and the most reactionary manifestations, racialism, sexism, patriotism etc. Two examples of this weakness are the Anti-Nazi League (largely an SWP brainchild) and Socialist Unity. The ANL in placing the main emphasis on Nazi character of the National Front pitches propaganda at the level of an appeal to an ambiguous anti-Nazi sentiment, probably as much an anti-German, pro-British sentiment as anti-fascist. Its worst aspect is that it tends to deny the main problem,

namely the widespread prejudices/ideas in the working class. Without being challenged ideologically, these ideas will continue to provide the NF with a base which the Tories are equally well aware of. In short, it plays down the ideological struggle against the main problems of racism and nationalism, substituting the NF.

The Socialist Unity campaign on paper also has laudable aims—to achieve a unified revolutionary organisation and against sectarianism. But in attempts to slay the sectarian dragon SU is consumed in its fires. On the one hand, it counterposes itself on the electoral field to the LP, cuts itself off from many LP supporters and members who, whilst hostile to the Labour government and wanting to keep the Tories out are not yet convinced of the need for a revolutionary organisation. IF SU is a focus for revolutionary regroupment it also cuts itself away from those tendencies who tactically oppose standing candidates against Labour.

the point

The point is that we don't need an electoral organisation to counterpose revolutionary politics to those of reformism, especially before the struggle in the LP has been fought through and a credible revolutionary pole exists.

The CHARTIST will continue over the next period to attempt to provide at least part of that alternative revolutionary socialist pole within the mass organisations, the women's, anti-racist/fascist and anti-imperialist movements. For us the ideological battle is paramount, not the mistaking of the problem as lack of organisation, or the right slogans.

Why a conference?

AFTER 18 months of bitter struggle the Grunwick strike has reached a very low ebb. With the involvement of the movement in the firemen's strike and now the Steak House strike, donations and support on the picket line has fallen to a trickle. However at the same time the fines and prison sentences imposed on people arrested on the picket line have reached staggering proportions. At least eight people have been imprisoned for periods of 21 days to three months.

One unemployed Irishman who declared that he could not afford a fine of £75 was told by the magistrate, "pay now, or else it's 21 days inside." Another young student from Bradford, was labelled in court as the most violent man at the Grunwick picket line and accused of assaulting between two and three dozen policemen! Many trade union branches and students unions have organised numerous benefits and collections to help their members. The Grunwick Defendants Campaign itself has been sorely stretched. As soon as a large donation of £50 arrives so does a fine of £175, as well as solicitors fees.

SOLIDARITY

The UPW members on the LDC involved in the magnificent solidarity of the Cricklewood UPW received a total of £1,400 in fines from their executive, due to their blacking action. A fund set up by militant branches has now been taken over by the LDC to pay off these staggering fines.

The strike reached its lowest ebb when APEX (the strikers' union) decided to go for another ACAS ballot, after the House of Lords decision in favour of George Ward. The House of Lords stated that ACAS had not conducted the ballot correctly, as the scabs had not been balloted. The Lords ignored that this was due to Ward's refusal to cooperate. When the APEX EC decided on another ballot, they ensured they had control of the strike fund, removed the typewriter and threatened the Strike Committee and strikers with suspension, basically for any activity which inflamed the strike. The Strike Committee are solid in the view that the crucial question still is recognition and reinstatement. APEX wants to win recognition as a face-saver and are prepared to offer jobs to all the strikers when the strike concludes QUIETLY. APEX says it is fighting for reinstatement but what is it actually doing to win it? The few militant branches in APEX have resolutions for their annual conference condemning the executive, for its role in the dispute.



Mrs Desai receives a donation — still needed

A National Conference held one weekend would attract hundreds of supporters, and would provide a useful forum to thrash out the lessons to be drawn from this historic dispute. Although APEX leader Roy Grantham has hinted he would support a conference his conception of tasks is likely to differ radically from the Strike Committees'. Grantham's reliance on parliamentary reform is useless. All the legal procedures have been totally exhausted and it is clear that short of effective mass picketing only UPW blacking would bring about reinstatement.

However, this possibility is an embarrassment to the UPW leaders, and certainly the Buchan Bill (as we show) will not guarantee the UPW's right to strike. It therefore becomes of urgent importance that a Conference be called to take up the questions of defendants being intimidated by the courts, (for instance, quite often an appeal, sentences are stiffened). The question of the law and ACAS in relation to winning disputes must be tackled. Most importantly, the role of the police and the SPG and the attitude of the trade union leaders and the Labour Government, needs to be examined.

Kamlesh Gandhi, the chairman of the strike committee has stated that "We are prepared to wait for the UPW to be given the right to strike, we are still fighting for union recognition and reinstatement, and we would like a Conference to take up these demands thoroughly".

Finally it becomes quite clear that Ward could well say he is prepared to accept union recognition of those workers that want it, purely so he can be sure that the strikers will go away, the blacking be lifted and the threat of mass pickets this summer would be extinguished, for that would surely break him.

As the struggle continues at Grunwick, ANGIE SHARRIFF (left) explains why a conference is vital to discuss the fate of the strike and ALAN CRISP (UPW) shows why the Buchan Bill will not give Post-workers the right to black Grunwicks.

Buchan Bill no answer

A BILL IS at present going through the Commons designed to give Post Office workers the legal right to take industrial action. A right that they enjoyed until they blacked Grunwick's in November 1976.

This Bill is seen as a great step forward by the general Secretary of the UPW, Tom Jackson. In an article in *Tribune* of February 3rd, Tom Jackson emphasises the need for maximum support at the second reading on February 17th.

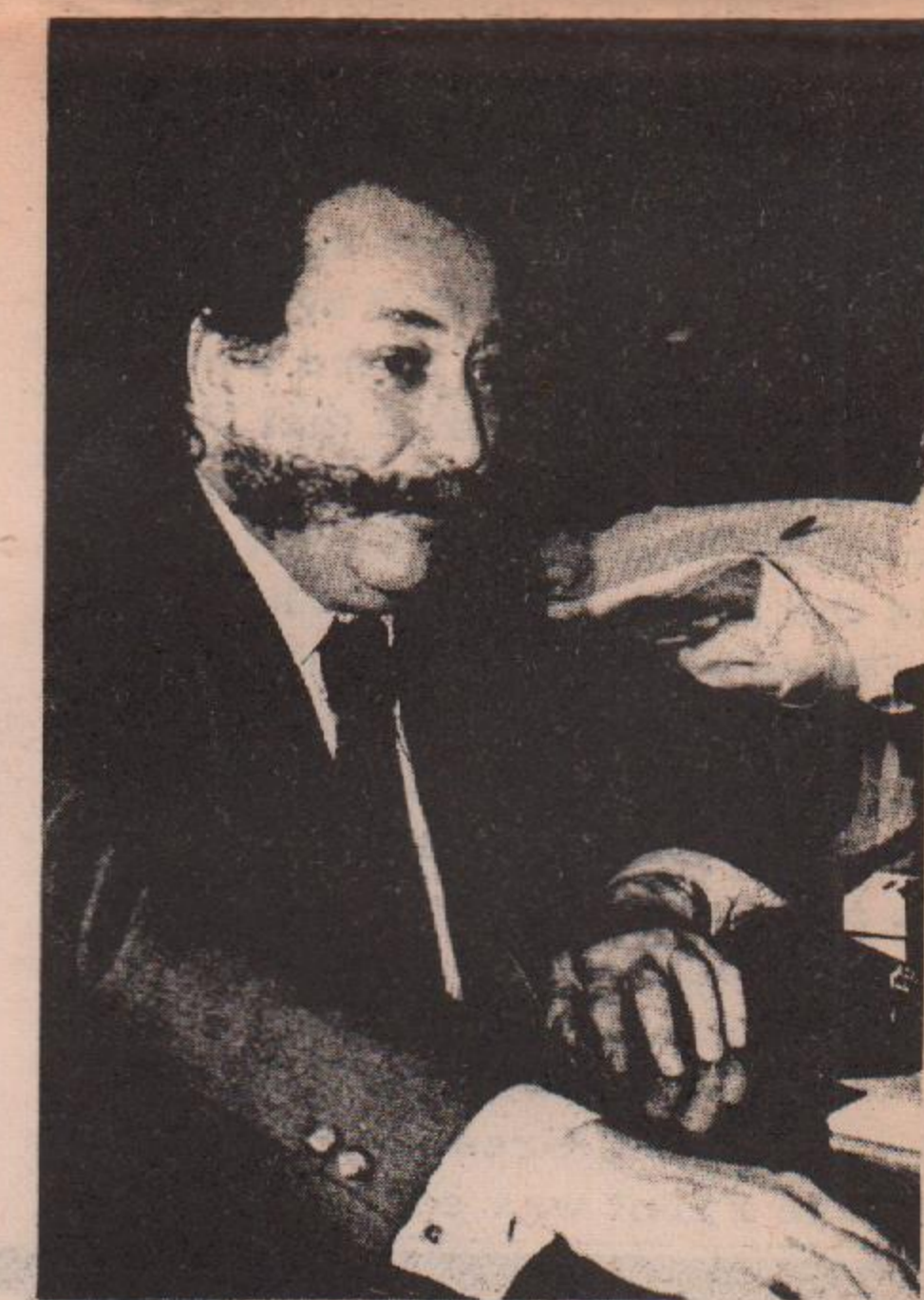
In putting forward his case the UPW General Secretary goes briefly into the history of the sudden discovery of the lack of basic rights for Post Office workers. In his article he at no time challenges the right of the NAFF (National Association for Freedom) and the Lords to tell workers in the Post Office when and against whom to strike. On the contrary he accepts that the Bill "would not give Post Office workers an unfettered right to take industrial action of a 'secondary boycott' character (as in the case of Grunwick or the South Africa boycott). That would be asking too much in the present parliamentary situation. ..."

His failure to challenge the right of the courts and the Lords at this time is no surprise since it only follows from the previous undermining of support for the Grunwick strikers by the UPW leadership which they carried out in the name of obedience to the law and the constitution. So diligent were the leadership of the UPW in applying the law that they fined seven of their own District Council officers a total of £1400 for supporting a blacking of Grunwick mail.

VERDICT

For, of course, Tom Jackson does not have to accept the verdict of the Lords and neither does he have to accept the present Parliamentary Lib-Lab pact limitations. If in the first instance the UPW leadership had maintained the blacking of Grunwick, despite the courts, and demanded support from the TUC and Labour government the right to strike need never have been lost.

What is on offer from Parliament is a sham. As Norman Buchan said in moving the Bill: "discrimination in the sense of blacking a particular firm or person will not be permitted." In other words Post Office workers will still have to cross picket lines. Of what use is the right to take action on our own. Unless we can take action in conjunction with other groups of workers we are likely to be defeated in any major battle. Furthermore,



Tom Jackson — UPW chief

the Bill in no way challenges even the Tories. This is shown in the vote for the Bill's Second Reading on February 17th, being 212 for and 20 against (only the most die-hard NAFF supporters).

Tom Jackson makes a number of wrong assumptions in his article but the most dangerous is when he says that the Post Office workers are unique in that "we alone in the TUC, cannot exercise the inalienable right of every worker to withdraw his (sic) labour." This begs the question of: if this is "inalienable", how is it we have lost it. He fails to recognise that the right to strike is not inalienable. It has to be continually fought for.

It cannot be left to the likes of Eric Varley, Industry Secretary, who urged opponents of the Bill to vote for it and "scrutinise it closely in committee". This ensures that the Bill would not allow Post Office workers the right to refuse to cross picket lines.

It is not too late for the Post Office unions to inform the world that they intend to ignore the restrictions imposed on their democratic rights and that they will exercise their right to industrial action whenever they see fit. They should advise the government that it would be wise of them to legalise the "inalienable" right to strike.

The best way to signal our intentions as Post Office workers is to refuse forthwith to handle Grunwick mail.

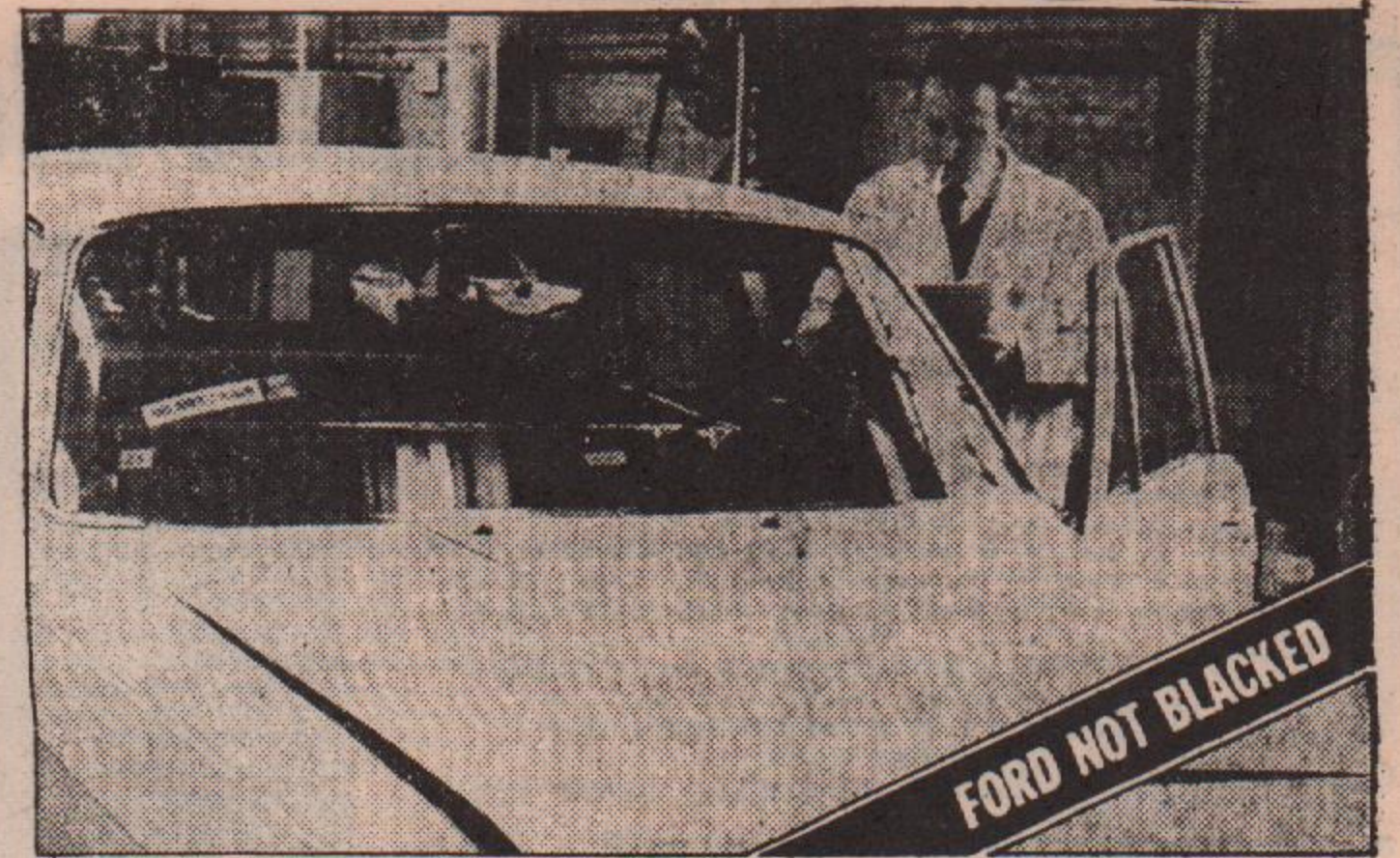
THE LABOUR government is now poised to mop up union resistance to its 10% limit and begin preparing stricter 'voluntary' controls for phase Four covering autumn/winter 1978. This government which was elected in 1974 due to mass pressure against incomes policies is now presiding over the strictest and most successful statutory incomes policy in the 1970's. The decision of the NUM Executive to accept 10% instead of going ahead with its 90% claim leaves the door open for the isolation and destruction of other opposition, as with the firemen. Only where militancy is strong enough — as possibly in the case of the powerworkers — will the government invent a productivity deal or some other formula to head off trouble. So determined is the government to enforce its statutory limit — which has been agreed only in the Cabinet that it now openly boasts of its plans to employ increased sanctions against employers who pay above 10%.

Before examining this pay blanket it is worthwhile to see how the governments' arrogant wage-cutting has been made possible. The basic problems of the British economy stem from the international recession which began in 1973. All the factors of this recession in Britain, low productivity due to under-investment and hence low profits, are linked to the world crisis of realising profit and falling profit rates. (See *Chartist* No. 57).

BACKGROUND

Against this background of world crisis, a British recovery cannot occur through the traditional solutions of reflation (government spending in various forms to stimulate investment) or through use of the older reactionary method of protectionism (import controls). Yet these utopian demands are precisely those being put forward by the TUC and by the Tribune group. Worse than this, the left opposition has consistently argued for the wage-restraint social contract and for the need to work harder for Britain. We have charted the way in which the Labour government has used this confusion to force through wage restraint and pressures creating unemployment. This 'weakest to the wall' approach is the only way in which the British economy can re-create profit-making based on increased extraction of surplus value. The impending closure of the Speke plant and the pay blacklist are simply the latest two steps along the road for Callaghan. The final aim is the driving down of all wage-rates (by means of 'increasing unemployment and further defeats for the unions), far below the value of labour so as to allow the rate of profit to rise.

The pay blacklist is a typical subterfuge by Callaghan to avoid direct conflict between unions and government. There are three essential ways in which the blacklist operates.



Pay blacklist tightens wages noose

BY GRAHAM DURHAM

1. The Government has powerful weapons to force through its policies. Direct contracts with local authorities, nationalised industries and government departments are to be cancelled with any firm breaking 10%. In addition a fantastic variety of aid including industrial grants and loans, export credit guarantees and employment subsidies will be halted.
2. The Department of Employment monitors all contracts (32,000 since 1975) and acting with a special Cabinet committee directs the contracting work of other departments; to give two examples:—
 - a. The Property Service Agency (PSA), responsible for all government building, stopped contracts with heating and plumbing contractors who agree to pay 20%–30% increases. As a result, the increases were reduced to between 9%–10%.

POLICE

- b. Tony Benn, Energy Secretary, has told the coal, gas and electricity boards to remove haulage contracts from a W.Midlands Firm who paid a 15% increase to drivers.
3. The government may decide not to police the 10% limit in 'special' circumstances, minnows like Redfeams of Manchester and easy targets like the John Lewis group will be picked on. However important multinationals may escape the blacklist — as with Fords who paid 11.9% increases. In this case, the government allowed the breach of 10% because Ford was making a new investment of the Bridgend engine plant. Yet of £180m investment money, more than £70m comes



Tony Benn—blacklist for haulage firm

from the government in direct and indirect grants. The Fords case demonstrates a major plank of government policy — to continue throwing vast amounts of money into private industry without exercising any control — except over pay-levels. The howls of 'illegality' from the Tories and protests from the CBI show that big business would prefer the Labour Government to directly police a pay policy. Nevertheless big business understands the unique position Callaghan is in to continue compromising both with militant wage claims and with 'special' cases in the employers sector. The Labour government continues to prove its determination to impose 10% in the public sector and to pressure employers to stick to this limit in the private sector. The question for the labour movement is how has this fantastic return to the most rigid of statutory incomes policies come about? The answer lies in the behaviour of the

leaders of the trade-unions and the Parliamentary left. We have already analysed the belief in wages being responsible for inflation which underlaid the social contract. The important response to the pay blacklist demonstrates again the commitment of the TUC, 'left' trade union leaders and Tribune to a capitalist solution to the crisis. The demands for reflation free collective bargaining and import controls do not have any relevance to such a solution. Callaghan knows this and knows that his 'left' opponents' will not do anything to organise a working class fight back to his policies.

WHINES

David Basnett, president of the TUC, pleads for "no blacklist and more flexibility". Joe Gormley, NUM President, notes the danger to Labour if its remains "the only party committed to wage control from on high" — The Tribune group whines about public accountability and lack of investment. But no-one proposes taking action to co-ordinate working class activity against 10%. Gormley and Basnett busily supervise 10% deals — and in Gormley's case even divide the union to force 10% through via the productivity deal. *Tribune* meanwhile congratulates its MP's for not voting with the Tories and therefore effectively backs Callaghan! As we have said before, with enemies like these who needs friends? Big business knows that the Tories version of 'kitty bargaining' would bring on an industrial crisis. The only alternative to the Labour government's wage-cutting is a working class response along the lines of a unified campaign against 10% and future pay policies. Such a campaign requires a leadership committed to workers control of all nationalised industries and to an internationalist solution of the crisis of capitalism.

SNP laughs as Scotland yawns as Westminster mumbles...

VERY MANY people on either side of the border are showing very little concern about the devolution legislation's staggering journey through parliament. This does not mean that the Scottish political question is unimportant, only that none of the participants have generated an ounce of principle to share between them. The most honest and consistent line has been the Scottish National Party's (SNP) estimation that any movement towards "self-government", even the tepid devolution Bill, would assist them in present circumstances.

The Labour Party, as if trying hard to prove the SNP right, faces towards devolution as a task grudgingly conceded in the manner of appeasement to an electoral hostage. The abject and semi-public cynicism of its proponents only matched and mirrored by that of the rearguard anti-devolvers in Labour's ranks.

This wretched crew, drawn from left and right, from Scotland and Wales as well as England, are largely the same team who began the great "sovereignty of parliament" crusades over EEC membership and foreign capital, which then as now brought them close to right wing Tories. Their numbers are reduced only by those who can sense the potential electoral disaster which Labour's present approach beckons. As for the Tories, their mainstream standpoint was best summed up in the *Economist* (18.2.78) as "I say, look here, hang on a moment, let's have a good talk, what?" The task for Socialist in the Labour Party (the breakaway Scottish Labour Party (SLP) having duly collapsed as we mercilessly predicted in our last treatment of the Scottish question in *Chartist* No. 49, December 1976) is to be to the fore in defending the right of Scottish peo-

ple to self-determination meaning ultimately their right to independence.

Specifically, here and now, it means supporting the cretinously inadequate devolution legislation and vigorously opposing the deliberate actions of some Labour MPs to rig the referendum. It is not that an Edinburgh assembly in itself solves anything, or that independence provides any solution for the Scottish working class. Rather it is the attempt to obstruct legitimate aspirations for more power concentrated in Scotland which bestows on the bourgeois SNP a veneer of radicalism which it does not deserve. Moreover, this English nationalist arrogance provides it with

The rise of the SNP

Date	Type of poll	Per cent of votes for SNP	Seats at Westminster
1966 March	General election	5.0	0
1967 March	By-election, Pollok	28.2	0
1967 November	By-election, Hamilton	46.0	1
1969 October	By-election, Gorbals	25.0	1
1970 March	By-election, South Ayrshire	20.3	1
1970 June	General election	11.4	1
1971 September	By-election, Stirling	34.6	1
1973 March	By-election, Dundee East	30.2	1
1973 November	By-election, Govan	41.9	2
1973 November	By-election, Edinburgh N.	18.9	2
1974 February	General election	21.9	7
1974 October	General election	30.4	11

the dynamism sufficient to skate over the different class outlooks and interest groups contained therein and thus keeps it together as a major political force in Scotland and a potential electoral arbiter after an indecisive general election.

The SNP's opponents in the Labour movement, rather than predicting its demise or stealing its shapeless clothes, would be better

advised to take a stand in favour of a real measure of devolved administrative and government power, in favour of the right of secession and against its advocacy and against manoeuvres whether they be through referenda or through making the present voting system "more representative" designed to blunt the nationalists' thunder without mobilising mass political involvement on a class programme.

DOCKERS DEFEND CHILEAN SEAMAN

CHILEAN SEAMAN, Ernesto Andrade, recently released from Risley remand centre near Warrington, has found allies amongst Liverpool's 7000 dockers. Dockers' leaders have pledged to boycott any ship carrying Ernesto back to Chile where he faces imprisonment or death at the hands of the country's military rulers.

On the voyage out, Ernesto, a union representative, had complained on behalf of his members about long working hours and unsafe machinery. The ship's officers threatened to hand him over to the

military as a "Communist" on his return to Chile. (In fact, Ernesto is a supporter of the Christian Democratic Party). In the face of this situation, he jumped ship in Liverpool last December, handing himself over to the port authorities and had been in Risley ever since.

Liverpool dockers are well aware of the fate which Ernesto would face back in Chile — a Chilean trade unionist, Hector Rojo was 'shot while attempting to escape' on his return from a fraternal visit to Liverpool.

Merseyside MP, Eddie Loyden and the Roman Catholic Archbishop and Anglican Bishop of Liverpool have all appealed to the Home Office on Ernesto's behalf.

Given the sort of policies pursued by the Home Office in relation to Philip Agee, and in the recent case of Tam Kwai Yuk who was deported to Hong Kong last month he will need all the help he can get. The dockers' support is crucial. Resolutions in support of Ernesto's plea for political asylum should nevertheless be sent to the Home Secretary.

May Municipal Elections

LABOUR PARTIES throughout London have been thrashing out their policies for the Borough Council Elections in May.

The immediate future of inner London will be at stake in these elections. For the past six months Labour boroughs such as Lambeth, Brent, Hackney, Wandsworth and Camden have been arguing over new and radical policies to meet the 'crisis of inner city life'.

Reports of infighting between old-style groups of Labour Councillors and new radical campaigners have been widespread. The record of the massively populated London boroughs since 1974 has been put into question with the recurrent rent rises and refusal/inability to resist spending cuts or remedy the decay of the fabric of inner city life. The credibility of Labour in its traditional working class areas will be in the balance in the May elections, with Tory and even fascist successes on the agenda.

Failure

The failure of the Labour Government since 1974 to implement any programme of socialist measures has led many local activists to turn towards the local councils as a means of renewing the struggle for radical policies to meet the economic and social crisis.

The Tory take-over of the Greater London Council in 1977 has only added weight to this recent trend. But there are big problems ahead.

Despite the removal of many of the old guard Labour right-wingers in places such as Newham, Hackney, Brent and Wandsworth and despite new radical manifestoes, now nearing their completion, the problems of economic decay, housing stagnation and racialism will present great, almost insurmountable barriers to radical and socialist solutions.

The machinery of borough councils, with their new corporate management structures, executive officers committees and technocratic bias will compound the frustrations of many elected Labour councillors as it



Chaucer House, a hostel for homeless families in South London

has already done so everywhere. Additionally the financial control and blackmail by central Government departments on local councils has been a continuing theme of socialist criticism.

Recent research on the machinery and politics of Local Government like the work of the now defunct Community Development (CDP) especially titles like 'Local Government becomes Big Business',



THE DOWNWARD SLIDE—public services and schools suffer . . . fares soar . . . housing plans evaporate.

Which way for Inn

or the recent book by Cynthia Cockburn - 'The Local State' - have detailed the manipulation of local Labour councils into the service of the capitalist administration.

Cockburn argues that the promotion of 'community participation' and neighbourhood councils in a case study of Lambeth has been little more than a deliberate plan by central administration to nullify potential working class opposition at the local level.

Whether this analysis is entirely true may well be put to further test by new Labour Groups on inner London councils. The proposed manifesto of the joint Hackney Labour Parties has this to say on housing:

"All citizens - in Council or private property can look to a Labour Council to take a direct interest in their housing conditions and to involve the people in decision making by increased participation. . . Only a massive injection of funds can lead to achievement of our housing programme and the proposals which we make will depend for their complete success on the provision of sufficient financing. . .

There is no room for private profit to be made from housing need. We believe that public ownership, under the best obtainable system of popular administration and control, of the major financial

and capitalist institutions will provide the funds which are urgently needed."

The insoluble scale of the housing problem in Hackney is recognised by these introductory comments. Housing development is being run down due to shortage of capital from central government whilst at the same time it is estimated that fully half the current plans it will take thirty years for the 12000 on the housing list waiting to be housed.

by MARK DOUGLAS

At the same time the condition of new housing will demand renewal every thirty years or less. The time scales involved show how the housing need of Hackney's 200,000 will never be met!

This is all despite the hair-raising financial situation of such boroughs as Hackney. Loan repayments of over £10 million per year on a capital debt of well over £100 millions account for the entire income of all rent from Borough Council tenants. In short it is impossible to solve the housing needs of Hackney under the present system. Only City bankers and finance houses gain from this system.

Many prospective socialist councillors will realise that they are only scratching the surface of such conditions. To challenge the system of finance capital itself

Labour Party anti-racism campaign

"UNITE AGAINST Nazis" shouted the banner headline of the Labour Weekly 'Race Special' which was issued about the same time as the famous political broadcast on TV which also called the National Front Nazis.

This was a welcome change to the previous attitude dominant in the Labour Party of "ignore the fascists and they'll go away". But it was insufficient because it ignored all the racist forces outside the NF and because it wasn't even specific enough in its denunciation of organised racists.

The broadsheet didn't mention the thousands of physical assaults on black people and their property. In parts of East London it is unsafe for Bengalis to walk the streets alone after dark.

HARASS AND ATTACK

These Bengalis have learnt the hard way that far from defending them against physical attacks, the police will harass and attack them. Any black youth caught standing still at a bus stop can join the thousands arrested on 'sus' or conspiracy charges. The police reckon that if they're young and black they must be muggers, while if they're older they must be illegal immigrants. They also do their best to protect fascist marches and public meetings. Thousands of police with horses and riot shields will protect a few hundred fascists.

The broadsheet hardly mentions the police. Yet while young West Indians in many parts of Inner London and other cities face continual harassment from the police, the fascists only turn up occasionally. The only time white anti-fascists get stuck in to the NF is after they've either outmanoeuvred or charged through several lines of police.

The broadsheet demands that fascists activities be banned. Fine, but by whom? Commiss-

BUT WHAT DOES IT IGI



Police 'protection' for fascists at Lewisham

ioner McNee succumbed to pressure to ban the NF march through Ilford. Did he ban the march because their racist politics are abhorrent or because fascists need to look impressive on the streets to gain credibility and increase their active membership? Of course not. The march constituted a 'threat to public order'. And to be especially vindictive, he banned ALL political marches in London for two months, most of which would be entirely peaceful.

By law, election meetings in schools cannot

be banned. Labour conferences have always opposed calls to physically, and illegally, stop fascists holding election meetings in schools. "Change the law first" they cry. Well, the government won't change the law before the coming local election (and probably won't after). The broadsheet urges "The Labour Party must give active support and join ALL GENUINE (?) anti-racist and anti-fascist activities". Are these unlawful pickets 'genuine' and will the NEC organise for them? Or do they

BY BERNARD MISRAHI

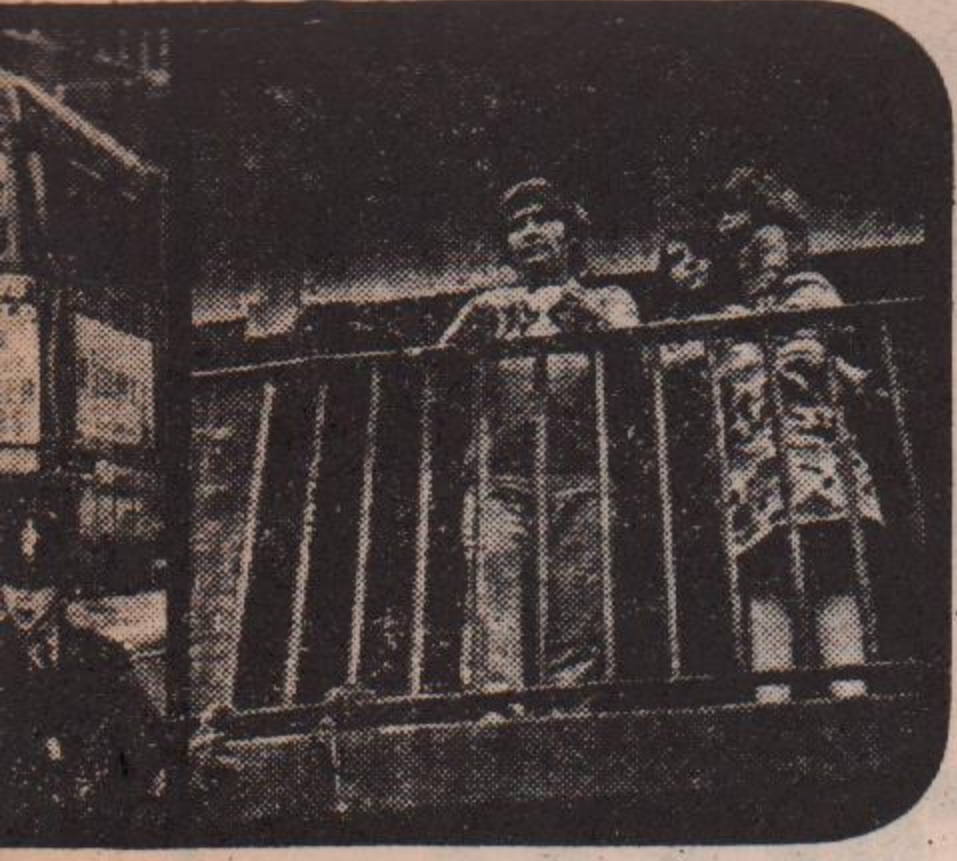
still believe that fascist activities must be stopped by the police rather than by physical illegal mobilisations?

Declarations of hostility to the NF can be an alibi for a refusal to fight against all the other manifestations of racism in Britain. Three Race Relations Acts cannot prevent covert, and not so covert, racial discrimination. Why do so many blacks work on the night shift? Why do blacks (and Irish) still do most of the dirty, unpleasant and dangerous jobs? Why is it more difficult for equally qualified black workers to be promoted?

In recent years, when black workers struck, they often faced the active hostility of white workers. At least the Grunwick strikers won massive support from the trade union movement. But that doesn't mean that racist ideas are no longer widespread there. Unless socialists are willing to deal with these less flamboyant racists then all their protestations against the NF will not sound very convincing to black workers.

Black people still find it more difficult to get a council place. Local councils are so afraid of a white backlash if black people are seen to be treated favourably that they put most black families on the worst estates. This confirms the prejudices of racists who invert reality and claim 'Blacks bring estates down'.

Black school students are even more alienated from the education system than white working class kids and have the added problem that the teacher doesn't usually speak their language or dialect. Many who opt out of school are then branded as 'educationally sub-normal' (ESN).



er Cities?

and the relations of power between the working class, the local council and the central state becomes the only long-term political strategy. But in the meanwhile the direction of council expenditure and the amelioration of some of the existing conditions can be the only goals.

Hackney Council will spend £14 million on social services in the current year projections. This is just under 50% of the total revenue budget annually. The costing of the proposed manifesto commitments are estimated to increase this budget by 50%, that is, another £7 million. Where will the money come from particularly at a time of Government spending cuts and cash limits?

This problem is the starkest and most persistent confronting all Labour councils. Refusal to pay the enormous amount of interest (50% of most local council income) on loans from the banks and finance houses, though necessary, will not solve the problems. Essentially a socialist councillor can at best use the local platform to open up discussion of socialist policies and strive to maximise the involvement of local working class people, women's groups, ethnic communities in taking over the functions of bureaucratic local government.

In a sense, the more successful a councillor/council becomes in doing this, the sharper will be the conflict with the centralised capit-

NORE?

This term suggests that their low level of educational attainment stems not from social causes but to smaller brain capacity.

The broadsheet only deals with some of these problems, and these cursorily. It contents itself to asking the government for money for the inner cities to arrest the decline in living standards that has driven the poor whites to vote fascist. What are we to do if the government doesn't provide enough of this cash?

IMMIGRATION CONTROLS

The most glaring omission is the silence on immigration controls. This issue really sorts out those who believe that race relations harmony is destroyed by too many blacks from those who think the problem is too many racists.

Some Labour conference decisions are outlined. But Composite 41, passed at 1976 conference, which demanded the repeal of the 1968 and 1971 Immigration Acts, was not mentioned. Callaghan has insisted that he has no intention of implementing this resolution. He claims that race relations would be improved by keeping blacks out. He wants us to believe that if few immigrants enter this country then racists will be nice to black people already here and won't feel threatened. It is more likely that these racists will be encouraged that successive governments have adopted some of their programme and will demand that governments implement the rest of it - starting with repatriation.

We expect nothing else from Callaghan. But will the NEC agree? They prefer to keep on safe

alist state and its laws and the greater will be the diminution and undermining of the local authority apparatus.

Back in Hackney the next Borough Council can look forward to a supplementary handout from the Labour Government of £9 million a year up to 1981. This cash is for 'deprived inner city areas'. It must be spent on new plans and community projects in the borough. It may well ease the problem of hard cash in the short term, but may also hide the underlying depths of the structural need in the economy and social make up of Hackney - 'the poorest borough in England'.

Money alone will never cure the historical decline of our inner city districts. If council budgets were doubled or trebled it would never be enough. 'Socialism in one borough' can only be a reformist nightmare in a bureaucratic system of power brokerage.

Potential

The political weight of a local Labour council still has great potential despite these barriers. Those who are involved in local and community politics may recall the lessons of the Clay Cross Council in 1971 to 1974 and can begin by questioning the powerlessness of a local council under these conditions. Seeking to expose the patronage of the local government system, to open up the channels of information and secrecy, to attempt to democratise 'workers' participation' by fighting for real control; all these means can be employed to challenge the myth of local democracy and piecemeal (non) reform. Without such a conscious attempt to challenge at every stage the bureaucratic mystifications which surround local government and to generate a grass roots movement to ensure the fullest accountability of elected members the only alternative for aspiring socialist councillors will be the indefinite postponement of working class power and the eradication of future and existing gains by workers in favour of maintaining the economy and state administration of capitalism in Britain.



LONDON: Asian women workers protest at slave wages and working conditions at Heathrow Airport

ground and limit themselves to anti-Nazi propaganda. Those self-styled anti-racists who support immigration controls in any form concede to the racists that black people do at least exacerbate unemployment and poor housing. They admit that if there aren't 'too many blacks' in Britain now that there could be too many if there weren't any controls on entry. The only answer to Thatcher's demands for stricter controls is not 'the present controls are effective' but 'end ALL immigration controls'.

So the Labour Weekly broadsheet is ambivalent about how the fascists can be fought, does not see the police as an enemy, does not concern itself much with racial discrimination and doesn't mention immigration controls. Not a very big step forward. Nevertheless this issue is being taken more seriously now. It is up to anti-racists in the Labour Party to widen the discussion and fill in some of the gaps, create controversy that smashes the smug consensus and thus give the campaign a firmer political basis.

Behind glossy ads

Reality of British Army life

By IAN PHILLIPS



THE RECENT use of troops to break the firemen's strike is something not seen on such a large scale since the General Strike of 1926. The existence of this enormous, well organised and highly disciplined scab force, with its undoubted ability to go into the mines and the docks if need be, has added a whole new dimension to industrial disputes.

It is important therefore that trade unionists in particular and the Labour movement in general develop an understanding of the Armed Forces as a first step to combatting and undermining their involvement in future industrial and political disputes. This short article, based as it is on personal experience, is intended to give an insight into the reality of some of the popular ideas about service life.

As is quite usual in periods of high unemployment Armed Forces recruiting tends to flourish. For an unemployed youngster coming from Liverpool, Glasgow, Birmingham or any major depressed area the services seems to offer an attractive alternative to the dole queue or dull jobs. Two common reasons for joining are the opportunities for travel and trade training.

AT FIRST SIGHT

First travel. During 3½ years in the Armed Forces I visited the USA, West Indies, Cyprus and Northern Ireland. At first sight to many youngsters even this seems exciting and interesting. However, let me explain the reality. Having worked anything up to double the average civilian working hours during a 10 week period of Exercises in the West Indies and America we were given the grand total of 3 full days leave in Puerto Rico. The leave was subject to the normal petty restrictions which make a serviceman's life a nightmare, i.e. uniforms must be worn - which immediately identifies you for every pimp, rip-off artist and a dozen other dockside touts, not to mention those who have genuine grievances against imperialist powers such as Britain.

Other restrictions on area of movement, for instance rules which state that leave can only take place within a one mile radius of the Garrison of Dock. Or even strictly enforced time deadlines which usually result in dozens of people spending days in cells for being minutes overdue. These are just a few examples of what travel is really like for servicemen. One doesn't visit countries, one visits dockside and garrison towns which rarely vary no matter which part of the globe you're in. My visits to Northern Ireland and Cyprus were of course operational, on both occasions we worked long hours without any leave for months on end and in disgusting conditions.

The possibility of joining up for a few years, learning a trade and then purchasing your discharge is an attractive plan for any young person with few available opportunities. The recruiting agencies realise this, after all it is they who create and exploit these popular ideas.

However, leaving aside the fact that not all the dozens of trades offered can be used in civilian life (e.g. tank driver, air gunner etc.) of all the many people who joined up with this idea in mind I never knew one who was successful in his plan.

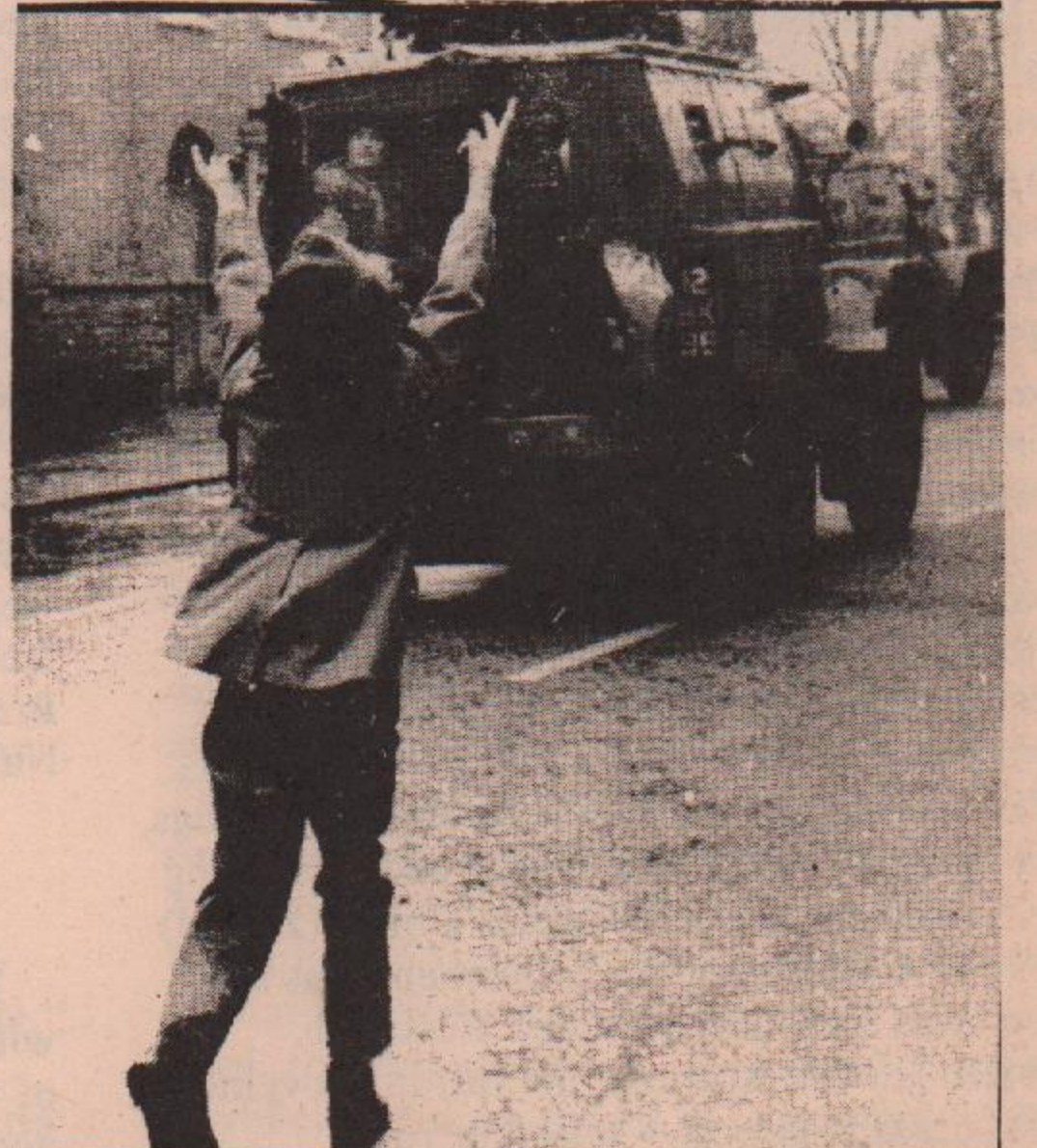
TRICK

You see the trick is to make it as difficult as possible for a tradesman to obtain his discharge. If after 3 or 4 years a serviceman who has learnt a trade applies to purchase his discharge he will find that although he has every right to make this application he doesn't actually have the right to a discharge, it is purely a matter of his Commanding Officer's discretion. And, as a tradesman he will find it nigh on impossible to obtain his discharge within one or two applications. A signaller in my unit applied 5 times and waited more than two years before he was successful.

A typical reason for refusal was 'operational requirements' or major exercise. For example, if a unit was due for a tour of Northern Ireland it was necessary that they be up to full strength in terms of drivers, signallers, cooks, clerks etc. Another catch is that some tradesmen are required to serve a certain period of time after qualifying before they can even apply for a discharge.

From the point of view of the Armed Forces such restrictions are quite logical given the costs

IAN PHILLIPS
Serving three-and-a-half years in the Armed Forces was discharged in 1975 as a Conscientious Objector. 1973 spent four months in Belfast as a member of the Security Forces, now living in Humberside.



A welcome for British soldier in Ireland involved in training tradesmen. However, few recruits realise these points on joining and they are not always made fully aware of them until it is too late.

This brings me on to the general question of soldier's rights, particularly in relations to their terms of contract. Having worked for a short time in the unit Records Office where it was my job to deal with enquiries concerning applications for discharge and terms of contract it was constant source of amazement to me how ill-informed many soldiers were when it came to their rights.

It remains for me a vivid memory having to inform young soldiers who had joined as juniors that they were not due for discharge at eighteen despite what they may have been told on joining up. So disappointed were they on hearing that they had to serve on until they were twenty one, many of them would go absent without leave (AWOL) or even commit serious crimes in order to be Court Martialled and hopefully discharged after serving a prison sentence.

Many soldiers were just simply unaware of how to redress the most basic of grievances. And, even if they were aware they would soon find that the bureaucratic character of military administration was completely insensitive to their problems. The padre acted as a mere apologist for the system. Even the ineffective Welfare Officer was only concerned with married soldiers. His pathetic attempts to keep the wives and kids sweet while their husbands spent yet another Christmas in Northern Ireland became noticeably more difficult during each tour.

My own case was a classic example of what can happen when soldiers do not know their rights. After a 4 month tour of Northern Ireland I had become convinced of the need to disassociate myself from the military and seek my discharge.

I had become, although I wasn't aware, a "Conscientious Objector". But because I did not know that there existed an officially recognised status of "Conscientious Objector" under which it was legally possible to obtain a free discharge I had to spend another 17 months in the service which culminated in my being driven to commit an offence resulting in nearly 5 months imprisonment. I eventually found out this vital piece of information whilst I was in prison. The person who gave it to me was a civilian who was subsequently tried at the Old Bailey for giving out leaflets to soldiers explaining their rights! (British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign 14 member).

In conclusion then we can see that the demand for the trade unionisation of the Armed Forces is not simply a means of bringing them into the fold of the Labour Movement for political purposes, it is also the only way in which soldier's grievances, whether they be on pay, welfare, conditions etc., can be aired openly in a democratic fashion without recrimination for those who do so.



IN AGREEMENT: Muzorewa, Chirau and Sithole with Smith.

THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

BY JOHN LAYTON

IN the early post war years a new spirit of militancy developed among the urban African working class. The city of Bulawayo was the scene of major strikes by railway workers in 1945 and Municipal workers in 1948. In this favourable atmosphere, steps forward in political organisation were possible. In 1957 the African National Congress was launched under the leadership of Joshua Nkomo.

The ANC rapidly expanded from its urban base into the countryside through a campaign against the Land Husbandry Act. This piece of legislation, enacted by the settler government in 1951 aimed, by abolishing tribal land rights, to increase the migration of Africans to the towns and farms as cheap labour. As a result of the campaign, the ANC was banned in 1959 in a wave of mass arrests.

The movement survived a series of bannings, reviving itself under new names and becoming the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) in 1962. A year later the movement was split on an issue that has remained a central problem for the National liberation movement to the present period — whether to concentrate on the development of a mass movement within Rhodesia or to concentrate on external pressure from 'world opinion' on the Rhodesian government in favour of majority rule. Nkomo chose the latter course.

'WIND OF CHANGE'

In this he was influenced by the apparently increasing liberalism of British colonial policy. Harold Macmillan's famous 'wind of change' speech in South Africa and the report of the Monckton Commission in 1960 recommending a general policy of decolonisation, convinced Nkomo that the main task was international pressure on the British government. This marked out Nkomo clearly as a petty bourgeois politician unable to see that majority rule would immediately pose class questions, the chief among which would be that of land and the ending of the land monopoly which underpinned the whole economic basis of the white regime. Any settlement short of a social revolution would amount to the replacement of direct by indirect colonialism.

Even from a neo-colonialist perspective however Nkomo's attitude was mistaken and has been responsible for major setbacks to the liberation struggle. Firstly, Rhodesia was unlike other British African colonial territories (except South Africa) in having self government by the settlers, from 1923. Thus the main immediate barrier to democratic rights, irrespective of the attitudes of the colonial office in London was the settler government entrenched in Salisbury. This was better understood by Mugabe and Sithole who led the rival Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) after the split with Nkomo.

NEO-COLONIALISM

A second point followed from this: British decolonisation policy epitomised by Kenya and Nigeria, was a scarcely disguised policy of neo-colonialism in which power was transferred effectively to conservative African elites. Again, Southern Rhodesia differed in that an African bourgeoisie able to lead the masses, yet compromised with the interests of the multinational companies and imperialist governments, was very weak. It was weak precisely because the white settler regime had done their best to prevent the growth of such a class who would eventually compete with them for land and drive up the price of labour power. Edgar Whitehead, the last of the 'Progressive' white premiers of Rhodesia intended to modify the Land Apportionment Act (which reserved the bulk of the productive land for whites) if he was returned to power in the 1962 elections, to encourage the growth of such a class as the basis for a 'peaceful' transfer of power.

It was his unwavering opposition to such a

prospect that brought Smith and his Rhodesian Front government to power in 1962. By 1964 Smith had banned both ZAPU and ZANU. UDI followed a year later with the African masses, due to the lack of a strong united internal leadership, unable to organise effectively against the illegal regime.

The failure of effective resistance to UDI led both ZANU and ZAPU to embark upon a long period of mainly guerilla activities. The guerilla war developed against the background of Wilson's negotiations with Smith on HMS Tiger in 1966 and HMS Fearless in 1968. The guerilla forces hoped to sufficiently weaken the Rhodesian Police and Army to create an internal crisis and so force the British Government, or even the United Nations to step in.

DIVISIONS

Wilson's open refusal to take a strong line with the Smith regime coupled with the lack of military success in the field made this a decreasingly realistic perspective and resulted in major divisions in both the ZANU and ZAPU leaderships. This crisis resulted in the emergence of yet a third grouping of the National Liberation movement, the Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe (FROLIZI), formed from elements of both ZANU and ZAPU. FROLIZI never became anything more than an insignificant grouping however, being overtaken by the events of the 1970's.

The first of these events was the visit of the Tory government's Pearce Commission to Rhodesia in 1972 to 'sound out' African reaction to the latest British government capitulation to Smith (under which majority rule could not come about until 2035 at the earliest). Mobilisation against the proposals gave a new impetus to internal politics in Rhodesia and the African National Council was formed under the chairmanship of Bishop Muzorewa, a conservative figure with little connection with the guerilla forces, to coordinate opposition. The bulk of the ANC council was drawn from ZAPU and ZANU.

OPPORTUNITY

Although the mobilisation around the Pearce Commission, with the unique opportunity for a period of open political work inside Rhodesia, led some ZANU and ZAPU leaders to admit that the guerilla struggle had hitherto been conducted without much regard to the political mobilisation of the urban masses, and to announce unity intentions, the conclusion of the period was the intensification of the guerilla war in 1972.

In view of the fact that a sizeable portion of the African working masses were urban workers (37%) it is easy to see the ZAPU and ZANU tactics as a form of 'guevarist' deviation ignoring the role of the urban workers. There is some truth in this. The relative lack of a clear socialist strategy for the urban workers left something of a political vacuum in the towns and is one reason why Smith in his eleventh hour has



Joshua Nkomo

been able to further delay the march of history by turning to urban politicians like Muzorewa for a diversionary 'internal' settlement.

It must be remembered however that the hegemony of Smith's army and police made it very difficult for urban political groups associated with the armed struggle to operate openly. However the most important factor giving impetus to the re-emphasis of the armed struggle in the 1970's was the success of such struggles in the (less urbanised) neighbouring territories of Mozambique and Angola. Mozambique under FRELIMO now provided a vital base and training ground far more secure than that of the vacillating Kaunda regime in Zambia.

PRESSURE

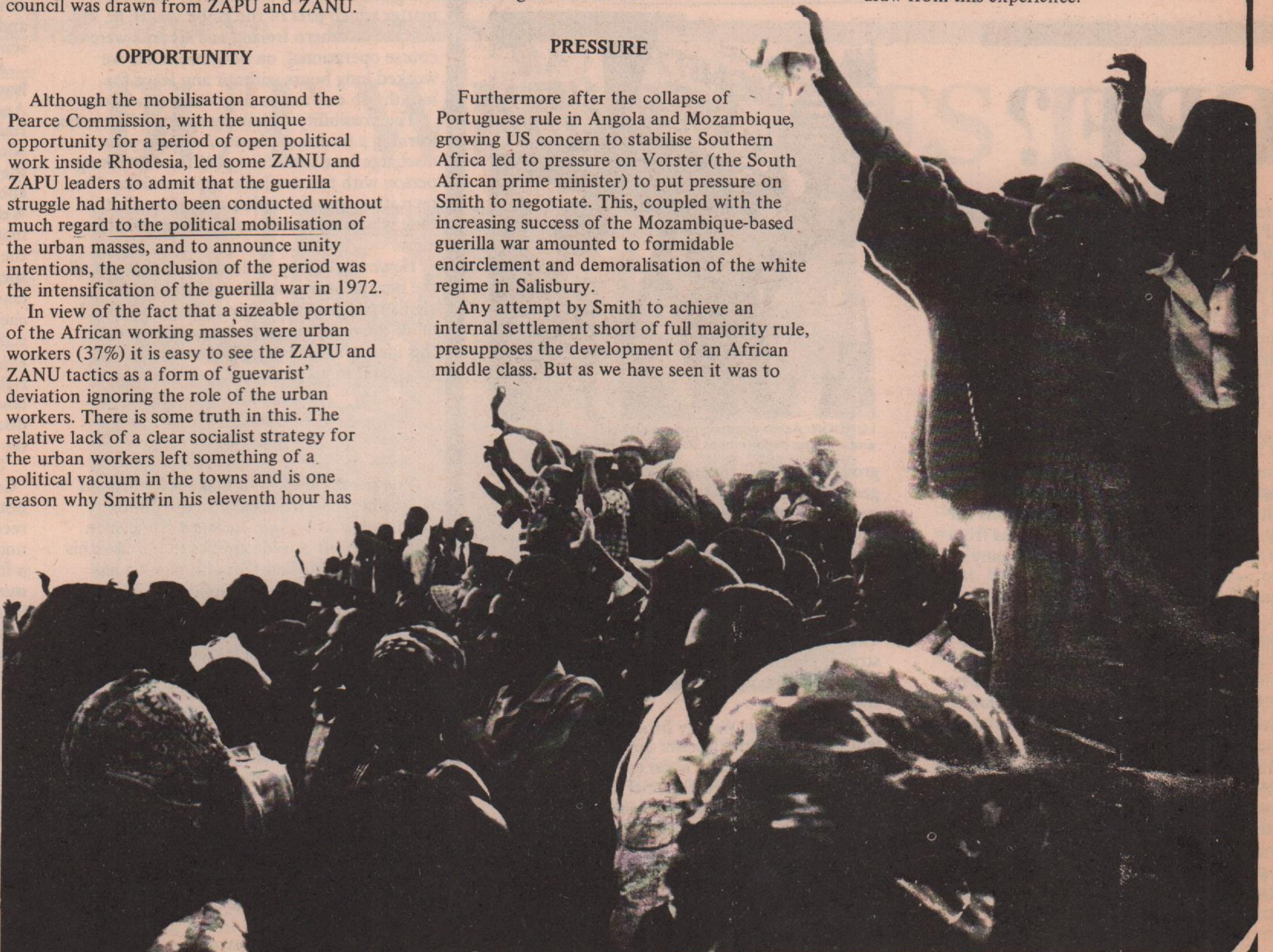
Furthermore after the collapse of Portuguese rule in Angola and Mozambique, growing US concern to stabilise Southern Africa led to pressure on Vorster (the South African prime minister) to put pressure on Smith to negotiate. This, coupled with the increasing success of the Mozambique-based guerilla war amounted to formidable encirclement and demoralisation of the white regime in Salisbury.

Any attempt by Smith to achieve an internal settlement short of full majority rule, presupposes the development of an African middle class. But as we have seen it was to

prevent just such a development that Smith seized power in the first place. Smith is thus caught in his own trap. He attempted in 1975 to create such a grouping by bringing aged tribal chiefs into his cabinet, despite the fact that they have little credibility as political leaders among the masses. Yet they are represented in the Muzorewa internal settlement circus in the person of chief Chirau. Smith again, last year, flying in the face of the axioms of the Rhodesian Front, decided to contemplate allowing Africans to buy farming land in the 'white' areas, thus provoking a major rumpus in his own party.

The main basis for the internal settlement is Muzorewa, an opportunist of some popularity and Sithole who still carries some of the charisma of his earlier leadership of ZANU. But these people are not representative of a strong middle class, nor are they workers' and peasants' leaders. They are the inhabitants of a vacuum left by the separation of the guerilla struggle from the open mobilisation of the urban masses. They cannot possibly survive for five minutes without either open collaboration with Smith's military machine and the consequent loss of mass support, or coming to terms with Nkomo, Mugabe and the guerilla movement.

But the latter are in the last analysis a petty bourgeois leadership. Nkomo is well known for his associations with 'Tiny' Rowlands, chief of the British-based multinational company Lonrho. Rowlands has extensive interests throughout Africa and a 'progressive attitude' to Black leaders. He is quite prepared to see the passing of Smith and his cantankerous farmers if the result is the installation of a majority rule government which will end the guerilla war and accommodate to the interests of international capital. As the Smith regime crumbles, Lonrho will no doubt become a major force 'behind the scenes' in the political stabilisation of Zimbabwe. The African masses will have plenty of conclusions to draw from this experience.



SPECIALISTS IN REVOLT

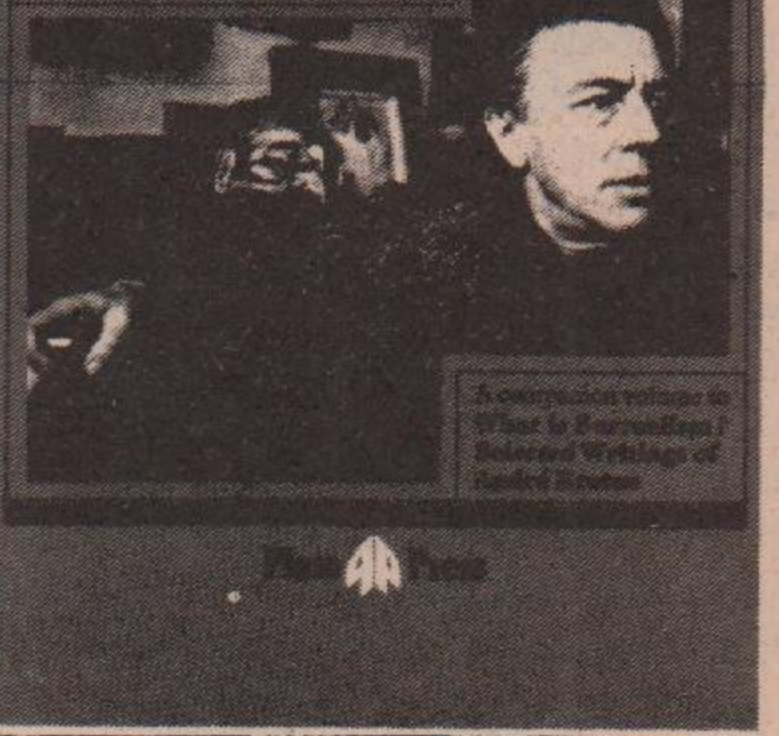
by GEOFF BENDER



André Breton, Diego Rivera and Trotsky in Mexico.

and the First Principles of SURREALISM

by Franklin Rosemont



"Contrary to prevalent misdefinitions, surrealism is not an aesthetic doctrine, nor a philosophic system, nor a mere literary or artistic school. It is an unrelenting revolt against a civilisation that reduces all human aspirations to market values, religious impostures, universal boredom and misery."

Franklin Rosemont's book is no mere introduction to the writings of André Breton, leading French surrealist from the '20s and '30s until his death in 1966, it is not simply a companion volume to his selection of Breton's writings, nor a literary biography; it is above all a manifesto, polemically restating the revolutionary principles which informed the life and work of Breton and the other surrealists and asserting their contemporary relevance. Clearing a way through the confusions and distortions of the enemies and false friends of the surrealist movement Rosemont makes his case — a necessary corrective to the atmosphere of cultist veneration which pervades the current Hayward Gallery collection reviewed in last month's *Chartist*.

His approach is well expressed in the title of the magazine he edits in Chicago — *Arsenal/Surrealist Subversion* — arsenal: a storehouse of marvellous weapons in the cause of human emancipation. For those for whom such an approach appears too partisan Rosemont himself answers: "Ours is a fiercely partisan age: those who pretend not to take sides merely play the existing orders game according to the existing order's rules".

A revolutionary period involves not only massive transformation of social life and consciousness it also involves a restructuring of their mutual relations. If the spontaneous revolt of the Dada movement reflected the chaos of the First World War, then the advent of surrealism paralleled the period of great revolutionary struggles throughout Europe and beyond which open up with the Bolsheviks' victory in 1917. Yet it was not until 1925 that the French surrealist group took their first steps towards revolutionary political involvement commencing discussions with the left wing of the Communist Party around the review *Clarté*. It was a further two years before they were to announce their membership in the Communist Party. Prior to this both surrealists Louis Aragon and Paul Éluard had dismissed the Russian Revolution as 'a ministerial crisis' of little importance or interest. Breton himself

only became aware of the importance of the Russian Revolution through his reading of Trotsky's *Lenin* in 1925/6 and exhorted his fellow surrealists to a study of Bolshevik literature. Within two years the relationship between the surrealists and the French Communist Party was to provoke a new crisis, but before we look at this, we must answer the questions what is Surrealism? and in what way can it be seen to be related to the revolutionary turmoil of the early '20s even before its proponents recognised that fact.

Rosemont describes the surrealists thus: "*Specialists in revolt*: the surrealists thus described themselves in an early tract. Born of the appalling conflict between the inexhaustible powers of the mind and the impoverished conditions of everyday life, surrealism aims at nothing less than complete human emancipation. . . surrealism aims to reduce, and ultimately to resolve, the contradictions between sleeping and waking, dream and action, reason and madness, the conscious and the unconscious, the individual and society, the subjective and the objective. It aims to free the imagination from the mechanisms of psychic and social repression, so that the inspiration and exaltation heretofore regarded as the exclusive domain of poets and artists will be acknowledged as the common property of all."

transcend

This attempt to transcend the existing frames of reference in art and consciousness rejected from the outset the false polarities of an ivory-towered 'art for art's sake' and all attempts to reduce art to propaganda as the Stalinists were to under the banner of 'socialist realism'. It sought to establish a unity of art and life not by reducing art to life but by raising life to art. Plunging deep into the hidden depths of the unconscious, the surrealists did not for a moment turn their back on the world around them in mystic contemplation of their own psyches; passionately interested in the world around them they did not merely content themselves with the given immediate reality apprehended by the senses.

By what techniques did the surrealists embark on this adventure? Rosemont recounts their use of the techniques developed by Freud and the psycho-analysts for the exploration of the unconscious — hypnosis, dreams etc. While rejecting the reactionary and metaphysical sides of Freud's system they developed his methods. Rosemont passionately defends the use of automatic writing and trance-like

states against those who see in them something facile, an abandonment of artistic responsibility. He points out that psychic automatism in the surrealist fashion attempts to delve beyond the reach of immediate perceptions and consciousness and to create in Breton's phrase 'a true photography of thought' of which the conscious part is only an infinitesimal component.

As Rosemont remarks in a style appropriate to his subject, "Its aim is to escape the dust storms of all immediate frames of references; to release the mind's wildest beasts and set them roaming far and wide; to permit the innermost dawn to embrace and conquer the outermost obscurity. The ordinarily indistinct murmur of self-revelation is amplified and recorded with all its anticipatory echoes of surprise, crystallising in language the yearnings usually hidden beneath the comings and goings of everyday compromises. . . ." He also quotes Louis Aragon, "If by following a surrealist method you write wretched stupidities, they remain wretched stupidities. And inexcusable." Rosemont argues that true automatism requires a 'discipline' "greater than that of any literary craftsman", a "disinterestedness, a total honesty, a willingness to take risks, a disdain for easy literary byways and sly aesthetic solicitations."

automatic writing

The experiments in automatic writing had begun in 1919, in 1922 the surrealists began experimenting with dreams and hypnosis. In October 1924 Breton's *Surrealist Manifesto* was published. This synthesised poetic discoveries with the findings of psycho-analysis and defined surrealism thus: "Pure psychic automatism, by which it is intended to express. . . the real functioning of thought. . ." In December 1924 *La Révolution Surréaliste* appeared edited by Pierre Naville and Benjamin Péret.

It was by no means only psycho-analysis that the surrealists drew on. Unlike the Dadaists and various other trends which simply rejected the past, the surrealists were constantly discovering and re-discovering the marvellous elements of surrealism in a tremendous range of past literary and artistic products. Here as elsewhere their approach was revolutionary and iconoclastic. They cast down idols, especially the most banal of the 'classics' while exalting the previously despised, neglected and overlooked of artists and art forms, of writers and works of literature. They thus, consciously or unconsciously, subversively redefined existing artistic values and traditions. Among the influences of the early period were the French Romantics and "philosophy and poetry in the German language". In particular, Breton and the other surrealists were drawn to Hegel's writings. It was not by accident that the surrealists turned to the same source which had provided such an impetus to the founding of Marxist thought and had assisted Lenin's recovery of Marxism's revolutionary essence after the capitulation of Social Democracy in 1914. It was to be the surrealists who in 1933 were the first to translate Lenin's wartime notes on Hegel's *Logic* into French.

relationship

As we have said, the relationship between the surrealists and the Communist Party was not an easy one. Breton, Péret, Éluard, Aragon and Unik announced their CP membership in 1927 when the French Party was under the workerist leadership of the Barbé-Celor faction. From 1925-28 the Comintern had pursued a right-wing opportunist policy. In 1928 it swung round 180 degrees to the ultra-left madness of the so-called 'Third period' policy. The first cost the defeat of the Chinese revolution the second the victory of Hitler. The 'artistic' corollary of these policies was the reactionary theory of 'Socialist Realism' with its cosmetic glorification of existing reality at its most superficial level. It was not surprising that in order to remain both communists and surrealists the surrealists gravitated towards the position of the Left Opposition.

But if the entry of the Surrealists into the ranks of the Third International at a time when it was already on the road to Stalinist degeneration caused turmoil in the ranks of the CP, the surrealist group itself was also to split on the issues of art and politics. In 1929 a grand meeting was called to resolve the issues in dispute. One wing of the surrealists took a much more reserved position than had Breton, Peret et al. towards political questions, while on the other hand, Pierre Naville argued for a dropping of the specifically surrealist project in favour of a fulltime political commitment. The crisis was resolved by the expulsion of the rightwing and a rejection of Naville's undialectical position and an endorsement of both a full-time revolutionary commitment and, within that, the necessary autonomy of surrealist work for the revolution. A second surrealist manifesto was produced in December 1929 which affirmed the surrealists' commitment to historical materialism, their critical development of Freudianism, their common roots with Marxism in 'the colossal miscarriage' of the Hegelian system. It refuted the idealist tag, and made short work of the Stalinist fiction of 'proletarian literature' while finding new sources of inspiration in an historic parallel between surrealism and the medieval alchemists.

The thirties were a grim decade for the world revolutionary movement, with triumphant Fascism and Stalinism rearing their heads. Yet in country after country, in Japan, in Latin America, in Egypt, in Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Roumania surrealist groups appeared. Mortally hostile to bourgeois society yet unable to exist in the stifling climate of the Stalinised Communist Parties, the surrealists in country after country aligned themselves with the struggles of the Left Opposition and the movement for a Fourth International at whose head stood Leon Trotsky. In 1938 Breton visited Trotsky in Mexico and with the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera put his name to the Manifesto of the International Federation of Independent Revolutionary Art (FIARI). This, at a time when legions of intellectuals were lining up behind either fascism or Stalinism, called for "the independence of art for the revolution; the revolution for the complete independence of art."

defender

After the war, too, Breton remained a fierce defender of revolution anywhere in the world. When French imperialism sought to reassert its colonial rule in Indochina (with CP backing) the surrealists issued a statement entitled "Freedom is a Vietnamese Word". It was the surrealists who proposed and wrote the "Declaration of the 121" against France's colonial war in Algeria, the Hungarian revolution of 1956 was greeted with a surrealist tract "Hungary: Sunrise". There is no doubt that during the dark days of the Cold War the surrealist movement, like revolution, waned and was written off, but as Rosemont passionately demonstrates both in and by his book, did not die.

Those unfamiliar with the surrealist case or sceptical of it will find Rosemont's claims extravagant but there is no mistaking the passionate commitment to human liberation of unparalleled scope and unimagined depths which informs the pages of this book. One does not have to accept his thesis that surrealism constitutes not a but the school of revolutionary art, to recognise the tremendous liberating effect of the pushing back, the stretching of the boundaries of perception of internal and external reality which surrealism aspires to. Rosemont's restatement of the surrealist cause is a timely reminder of the range of problems which Marxists must address themselves to as a preparation for the leap from the realm of necessity to that of freedom which is the socialist revolution.

DÉCLARATION du 27 Janvier 1925

Eu égard à une fausse interprétation de notre tentative stupidement répandue dans le public,

Nous tenons à déclarer ce qui suit à ton dramatique, philosophique, exégétique et même d

1° Nous n'avons rien à voir avec la l Mais nous sommes très capables, au b tout le monde.

2° Le SURREALISME n'est pas ou plus facile, ni même une métaphysique de la

Il est un moyen de libération totale et de tout ce qui lui

3° Nous sommes bien décidés à faire

4° Nous avons accélé le mot de S RÉVOLUTION uniquement pour montrer et même tout-à-fait désespéré, de cette révolu

5° Nous ne prétendons rien changer ; pensons bien leur démontrer la fragilité de le mouvant, sur quelles caves, ils ont fixé leur

6° Nous lançons à la Société cet a Qu'elle fasse attention à ses écarts, à ses se la même pas.

7° A chacun des moments de sa l

8° Nous sommes des spiritualistes d

9° Nous sommes des spiritualistes d

10° Nous sommes des spiritualistes d

11° Nous sommes des spiritualistes d

12° Nous sommes des spiritualistes d

13° Nous sommes des spiritualistes d

14° Nous sommes des spiritualistes d

15° Nous sommes des spiritualistes d

16° Nous sommes des spiritualistes d

17° Nous sommes des spiritualistes d

André Breton and the First Principles of Surrealism by Franklin Rosemont, Pluto Press, Paperback £1.80, hardback £4.50. Companion volume to *What is Surrealism?* — Selected Writings of André Breton.



Left: The 1925 Surrealist Declaration. Above: Breton centre and top left and right, surrounded clockwise by Paul Éluard, Tristan Tzara, Max Ernst, Dali, Pierre Unik, Bunuel, Benjamin Péret, Rene Crevel and René Char.

Les signataires: Louis Aragon, Francis Arnal, Jacques Borel, Jean Béraud, J.-A. Bonnard, André Breton, Jean Cocteau, René Crevel, Robert Desnos, Paul Eluard, Max Ernst, T. Frenkel, Francis Gérard, Michel Lévy, Georges Lindon, Maurice Linder, Georges Malkine, André Masson, Max Moris, Pierre Naville, Marcel Noll, Raymond Queneau, Philippe Soupault, Dada Surben, Robert Tual.

ARMY ASSASSINS contd from front page

The more generalised efforts to defeat the rising radical Nationalism — the most crude example of which was 'Bloody Sunday' were counter-productive from the British point of view in that they strengthened Republican sentiment. In recent years the strategy has been more sophisticated and more specific. The intention now is to isolate and crush those Republicans best able to lead and direct radical nationalist sentiment. As we remarked in last month's *Chartist* 'the nationalist movement has still retained, in large parts, its potential for throwing all the schemes of imperialism into the melting pot again'. Just as this is the reason why the British Labour movement must be won to support Republicans against its own government, so also is it the reason why Mason and his advisers are trying to resist the growth of forces capable of crushing a movement which could "take on British imperialism in a new stage of the Irish national revolution".

An aspect of this strategy to which we can point is what has come to be called legalised internment. The case of John McAnulty — general secretary of People's Democracy — will serve as an example. McAnulty was held on remand for six months from last July, charged with possessing documents likely to have been of use to 'terrorists' at some indefinite date between February 1976 and March 1977. No documents were found on or near him, neither

were any produced in court as evidence. McAnulty has since been released but over 1000 others are still held on indefinite remand.

In the cages of Long Kesh alone, over 100 political prisoners are held — though the British state would deny them their political status. They are held not for what they have done but out of fear of what they are capable of doing as activists in the Republican movement. Not only does Britain attempt to discredit these comrades by denying that they are indeed political prisoners, it also uses crude propaganda to suggest that they are mere criminals — witness the alleged discovery of cannabis in the Republican cages of Long Kesh in January.

As one final example of the campaign to weaken and destroy the political wing of the Republican movement we can consider the raid on the Belfast offices of the Sinn Fein newspaper, "Republican News" just before Christmas. The occasion was used as an excuse to up-date and extend Army information. Names and addresses of contacts and subscribers of the newspaper were taken. We have already seen how this information is used.

All this nails once more the myth of the neutrality of the Army and the British state. It shows that Britain seeks to strengthen Loyalist reaction and destroy the only force capable of carrying forward the struggles of the Irish people against imperialist tyranny.

WITH THE CHANGE of venue to Llandudno, North Wales (after three years of Blackpool) for this year's Annual Conference of the Labour Party Young Socialists, many delegates and visitors will doubtless be hoping for fresh ideas and fresh politics for the Labour Party's youth wing.

One thing is certainly different about this year's conference: at the time of going to press, delegates and YS branches have not received any sort of perspectives document from the National Executive Committee. In the absence of political perspectives it becomes difficult to judge the relative merits of the one hundred and fifty-five resolutions placed on the agenda for debate.

Are the main campaigns of the YS for the next twelve months to centre around the fight against unemployment, or for labour movement democracy, or for civil and democratic rights, for women's rights, against racialism, wage controls, or what?

The purpose of political perspectives is precisely to enable the membership of the LPYS to determine its *priorities* for political campaigns: the passing of resolutions without any overall idea of how they are to be fought for becomes an exercise in back-slapping. But, more sinisterly, it means that calls to pass or reject each particular resolution are more and more based on loyalty to the "leadership". For the membership to abrogate its participation in decision-making because, 'the leaders know best', is extremely unhealthy and should be the cause of the greatest concern to all LPYS members.

The resolutions themselves are generally fairly unexceptional, the sort one would

expect to find on any left-wing conference agenda anywhere. There are no less than twenty-three resolutions under the heading "Racialism and Fascism", reflecting the great concern of the entire left with the growth of these trends in Britain over the last two years. These resolutions include some excellent ideas for campaigns. For example, the strengthening of links with the Jamaican People's National Party which has recently established an emigré section and youth movement in the UK; the LPYS to sponsor the Anti-Nazi League; to work with the National Union of School Students against racialism in the schools etc. Linking these important areas of *activity* with the political programme exemplified by the *Brent East* LPYS resolution (opposition to all immigration controls; full support for immigrant workers in struggle, ie the Grunwick struggle; the right of blacks to organise separately; no free speech for Fascists etc) then the LPYS could undoubtedly begin to command real respect from the immigrant community and the anti-racist movement.

The section headed "Women's Rights" promises delegates a full debate around eight resolutions. Most of these resolutions make similar points, raising quite correct demands for abortion and contraception on demand and affiliation to the campaigns in the forefront of struggles for these demands; for the communalisation of domestic chores such as laundry, cooking, child-minding etc. and the abolition of all forms of discrimination against women in employment and in the labour movement. One would hope that no member of the YS would fail to support such demands. However, one thing is missing from the resolutions on women's rights: most of the resolutions take as their main point the need to integrate women into the trade union and labour movement.

French Communists in focus

FOR THE LAST several months the French workers' movement and the general public have been bemused by the cynically calculated zig-zags of the French Communist Party (Parti Communiste Français, PCF). Under its general secretary Georges Marchais, it has first seemed to be aiming for a break with its former Socialist Party (PS) allies in the 'Union of the Left', but is now going for a reconciliation it appears. The issues in dispute often appear fairly trivial—e.g. whether the subsidiaries of the handful of big firms due to be nationalised under the left's Common Programme should also be taken over. However, in a long-term perspective of the balance of forces between Communists and Socialists in French politics it may make more sense.

The PCF originated in the split after the December 1920 Tours Congress of the old French Socialist Party, when the proponents of affiliation to the Third (Communist) International won out by 3,247 to 1,308. The hardline rightwingers went their own way to form the new Socialist Party, while the majority became the PCF. However, the lines of demarcation were confused. On the one hand the revolutionary credentials of many of the new party's leaders were less than impressive—several being practising Freemasons! On the other, the PCF was dominated by ultra-left and anarcho-syndicalist tendencies, which rejected the policy of the 'united front'.

PROMISING

Despite its promising beginnings, the French Communist Party remained very much in the minority compared to the Socialists in terms of MASS SUPPORT—until the mid-1930s. This was particularly linked to the new policy of the 'Popular Front' against fascism inaugurated by the totally Stalinized and Moscow-run Comintern after the disaster of Hitler's victory in 1933. At the same time Stalin concluded a defence pact with 'democratic' France against the new German threat: the PCF now ceased its policy of opposing 'national defence'. A major economic crisis brought about not only a French fascist threat but an unprecedented upsurge in working-class militancy.

At the height of this, in May 1936, general elections gave victory to the Popular Front. The Communist Party was the biggest party—increasing the number of MPs from 10 to 72. It is from this period that the mass electoral support of the PCF dates. The latter supported the new Socialist-Radical government, without actually participating. At the same time, a colossal general strike broke out—workers occupied their factories, demanding nationalisation. The Stalinised Communist Party response, far from encouraging the movement, was to pour cold water on it and advocate reliance on the new government. "It is

by MARTIN COOK



Georges Marchais,

necessary to know how to end a strike", PCF leader Maurice Thorez put it. The Popular Front regime of Blum did pass certain reforms, but once the revolutionary wave had passed it was brought down and demoralisation ensued.

Since then, the PCF's role as a 'respectable' and conservative force has been a consistent one—despite occasional radical verbiage. After 'Liberation' in 1944, the Resistance movement—mainly in working-class and PCF hands—controlled in practice vast areas of France. However, Stalin was still in alliance with the 'West' and had allocated France to their sphere of influence. So Thorez and Co. played a leading role in ensuring the suppression of this 'dual power' of resistance committees, popular militias, etc.—'One state, one police force, one army' was the slogan. Not content with this the Communists entered the Government, denouncing all strikes as provocations and calling for a 'battle of production' (as if France was already socialist!). Worse still they effectively supported French oppression and massacres of colonial uprisings in Algeria, Madagascar and Vietnam. All in aid of 'the greatness of France'.

It is of course true that the restoration of capitalist power in post-war France also depended to a great extent on mass popular support for and illusions in parliamentary democracy and reformism after years of fascism. The point is that the PCF, far from combatting such notions from a revolutionary socialist (and internationalist) perspective, exerted its vast power and influence precisely in order to strengthen respect for capitalist institutions and throttle the independent

movement of the masses. Despite this, the PCF never succeeded in winning mass support as a respectable institution like the British Labour Party: its share of the vote has remained consistently at or below 20%.

The main reason for this seems to be the slavish adherence of the party leadership to Moscow dictates—until recent years, that is. Unlike their sister party in Italy, who long ago developed an ultra-gradualist 'Italian road' including support for the Common Market and compromise with the Christian Democrats. The first tentative sign of change was the party's opposition to the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Meanwhile, Francois Mitterrand was able to piece together the tattered elements of the old Socialist Party and give it a more 'dynamic' image. The PCF's stronghold has always been the 'big battalions' of the organised industrial proletariat—engineering etc.—through its union federation the CGT. Its half a million-odd members are grouped in 23,000 cells—much more of a grass roots mass movement than the PS, despite the latter's links with the CFTD union.

(WE WILL CONCLUDE THIS ARTICLE NEXT MONTH IN THE LIGHT OF THE ELECTION RESULTS)



Jan/Feb issue of Campaign Against Racism and Fascism—CARF—now out. Price 10p. Available from most progressive bookshops or the Anti-Racist, Anti-Fascist Co-ordinating Committee (ARAFCC), Box 35, 182 Upper St. London N1. Individual copies 20p (inc. p+p), sub: £1.20. Bulk orders: send cash (including postage) with orders.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Only the *Leeds S.E.* motion makes any specific reference to the existence of an autonomous women's liberation movement which is today growing stronger and winning more and more women to its cause and the vigour of its politics. Alongside the discussion about strengthening the cause of women in the labour movement it is important to raise the question of strengthening the independent feminist movement. This is a challenge the LPYS has so far failed to address itself towards. Similarly the *Leeds S.E.* motion raises vital issues of sexual oppression, and the rights of homosexuals and lesbians.

Only three resolutions appear under the heading of "leisure" on the agenda. This is a real mark of the failure of the LPYS to relate to the oppression of youth as experienced by young people themselves. Two of these resolutions call for "leisure facilities . . . at all times outside (? sic) school hours . . ." Any notion that education itself could be a 'leisure' activity is absent from these resolutions and instead we are given a glimpse of something akin to socialist Boy Scouts complete with trips to swimming baths and art galleries.

What about facilities for music, dancing and general riotous assembly? Where do the kids go when they want privacy? Answer these questions and the LPYS will have a programme for "leisure" facilities to offer youth.

Regular readers of *Chartist* will know the importance this paper attaches to the question of the struggle in Ireland. There are ten resolutions under this heading. Five of these resolutions raise the principled demands of Troops Out Now and self-determination for the Irish people while the rest deal with various formulations of the *Militant* tendency's evasion of support for the liberation struggle. Needless to say, this particular debate will be as hotly contested as ever.

One final item demanding special mention is Grunwicks. There is an excellent resolution from *Hendon South* LPYS on the subject and it seems probable that *Brent East* LPYS, who have been deeply involved in the struggle, will be organising a meeting with a speaker from the strike committee. Such a resolution, and an event, demands the maximum of support from all conference delegates and visitors.

Subscribe!

12 COPIES Only £2.00
from: CHARTIST PUBLICATIONS
(address below)