

Red Action

ISSUE NO. 37 DECEMBER 1987 20p

Enniskillen. A Tragedy. But There's Only One Solution

BRITAIN OUT OF IRELAND



What the I.R.A. said

The following statement was issued by the I.R.A. the day after the bomb exploded.

"The Irish Republican Army admits responsibility for planting the bomb in Enniskillen yesterday, which exploded with such catastrophic consequences. We deeply regret what occurred. General Headquarters has now established that one of our units placed a remote-controlled bomb in St. Michael's aimed at catching Crown forces personnel on patrol in connection with the Remembrance Day service but not during it. The bomb blew up without being triggered by our radio signal.

There has been an ongoing battle for supremacy between the I.R.A. and British army electronic engineers over the use of remote-control bombs. In the past, some of our landmines have been triggered by the British army scanning high frequencies and other devices have been jammed and neutralised. On each occasion we overcame the problem and recently believed that we were in advance of British counter measures.

In the present climate, nothing we can say in explanation can be given the attention which the truth deserves, nor will it compensate the feelings of the injured or bereaved.

In this Issue:

THE NOT SO FREE WEST

plus

ALTON'S BILL The threat to women's rights

Red Action article

The recent death of 11 civilians after the explosion of an I.R.A. bomb in Enniskillen, understandably horrified many people. As an organisation which has never been slow to show its support for the armed struggle in Ireland, it is right that we should clearly state our position on such an incident.

Firstly what actually happened. There seems no reason to doubt the I.R.A.'s version that the explosion was not actually set off by them. They have always in the past been consistently truthful, never denying responsibility for actions, even those that could be damaging to their cause. They are aware that this is necessary if they are to retain the trust and the support of the community on which their struggle is based. If they had wanted to lie about Enniskillen, they could just as easily have denied all responsibility.

And so it is highly probable at least, that the explosion was accidental. This of course does not make it any less of a catastrophe, but when we come to evaluate the incident we have to view it in the context of the situation which exists today in N. Ireland.

The simple fact is that there is a war going on in Ireland, and in this war, as in all wars, innocent people are getting hurt all the time. It is a war which has been waged intermittently ever since Britain first occupied

Ireland EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS AGO, and it will go on for as long as they continue to occupy it.

In this time, countless numbers of innocent people have been killed by British occupation forces, even in the present phase of the struggle, which has been going on since 1969, literally hundreds of innocent civilians have been killed by the forces of the British state or its supporters

The 13 civilians gunned down by the paras on Bloody Sunday, the children killed by plastic bullets, the victims of the loyalist murder gangs the list is endless. Why were those who today cry out in uproar about the innocent victims of Enniskillen so quiet about the fate of these innocents.

There silence then, shows that there concern today is nothing more than the basest hypocrisy. They care nothing for the innocent victims. All they care about is exploiting an opportunity to seize a political advantage.

END THE WAR

Ultimately, the only way to stop tragedies such as Enniskillen, Bloody Sunday and so many others occurring, is to end the war in Ireland. And the only way in which that will ever be achieved is by removing the cause of it, which is British presence in Ireland. There is absolutely no other solution at all. Those who try to exploit events such as Enniskillen, and use them to call for more repression and the destruction of the Republican Movement offer no hope for the future whatsoever.

Even if they were able to achieve the impossible and

destroy the I.R.A. completely, eventually at some future date, a new generation would emerge to take up the struggle, just as has always happened for the last 800 years. There can be no peace through victory over the Republican Movement, because there can be no victory over the Republican Movement. There can only be peace through British withdrawal.

And as the whole history of British involvement in countries which it has occupied in the past - Aden Cyprus, Kenya etc - proves, the only time when they will withdraw, is when they are forced to by the armed struggle of the native people. And that is exactly and precisely the reason why the I.R.A. continue to wage their struggle. It isn't because they enjoy the pain and suffering caused by the war, they and the people from which they spring suffer that pain just as much as anyone else. But they know that only by waging their struggle all the way to a successful conclusion, can they ever end British presence in Ireland, and create the basis for a peaceful society.

As long as that struggle does continue, disasters such as Enniskillen will continue to occur. But we cannot let that deflect us from continuing to state quite clearly our support for a struggle that is justified, correct and offers the only hope of eventual peace in Ireland.

In the last issue of Red Action, there was a feature entitled, "Why we say up the I.R.A. The words were not written in any romantic spirit. We are fully aware of what the consequences of war can sometimes be. We see



Two pictures which you won't have seen in the "popular" press. At the top of the page the grave of 12 year old Carol Anne Kelly, and above 8 year old Stephen Mc Conery, both killed by plastic bullets fired by British soldiers. Just two of many. Strange how the British establishment doesn't seem to experience the same sense of outrage about these innocent victims of the war in Ireland, as it did about those at Enniskillen.

THE 'FREE' WEST

"The working class, the most cynical audience of socialist ideas." Well working in a factory as I do, I could never argue with that statement. Any mention of even the mildest aspects of socialist politics, is usually enough to provoke shouts of "loony leftie" "Commie Tommy" and renditions of the "Red Flag"

One of the blokes I work with happens to be a Pole who came to Britain after the Second World War. Because of the language difficulties which he still experiences, he doesn't always pick up on all of the finer points of the arguments that go on between myself and the other lads. But that doesn't stop him coming to the same conclusion as the rest of them, namely that anyone with views to the left of the Labour Party is automatically pro-Russian.

HYPOCRITICAL

He tells me that if I had lived under the Russians as he has, then I would not speak the way that I do, and that I should thank myself lucky to live in a place as free as Britain. He tells me about things such as the lack of free speech in the Eastern Bloc, about how if his sister, who is a schoolteacher in the Ukraine was to receive letters from England then she might lose her job, and he talks about the restrictions that exist on freedom of movement in these countries.

Now don't get me wrong, I'm no lover of the system of oppression that exists in the Soviet Union. I despise it as much as the next person but to me, my friend's statements about it appear hypocritical when he tries to imply that there is nothing like that in this country.

FREEDOM ?

For a start what he says about freedom of the press and free speech. How can anyone claim that the national daily newspapers in Britain constitute a free press, when they are all entirely owned by a handful of millionaires? Obviously they are going to use the control this allows them, to promote the ideology which supports them and their friends possessing such power and wealth, and to suppress the expression of radical ideas which may threat-

en it. So how can it be claimed that they represent the views of ordinary people, anymore than T.A.S.S. or Pravda do in Russia.

T.V. gives us another example of the lack of free expression in this country. Any programme made about Northern Ireland which allows pro-Republicans to air their views, is nearly always censored if not banned altogether. The government justify this by arguing that allowing such people to express their views (even though they may enjoy the support of large sections of the community, as with Gerry Adams elected M.P. for West Belfast and several times banned from speaking on the Telly) constitutes a threat to the stability of the state, and therefore cannot be allowed. Is this not exactly the same argument the Russian state uses to justify it's actions when it bans films, books, plays etc? Yet our government calls that a denial of freedom.

BIAS

It is not only groups in Northern Ireland who suffer from media bias in this way, as trade unionists, and the miners in particular, quickly realised when they saw the level of distortion and lies told about them during their dispute. Many of them were to ruefully admit that they would never before the strike have dreamed that such a level of media manipulation by the state could happen in this country.

As for what our Polish friend was telling us about the possibility of his sister losing her job if she was suspected of having close links with people in the west, well there are plenty of people in this country who lose their jobs or cannot find work for political reasons. Victims of the blacklist for example, which is a list compiled by groups such as the Economic

By Andy Jones

League, of militant trade unionists and politically minded people, and is aimed stopping them getting jobs when they apply for them. These groups are also able to get hold of information from the police about people's criminal records, even though this is illegal. As for talk about the suppression of free trade unions. What about G.C.H.Q. ?

COMPARISONS

More comparisons arise when you start to talk about the lack of freedom of movement. Many Russian citizens might not have the freedom to live wherever they want, but doesn't exactly the same situation exist, in a more subtle way, in this country, in the way in which house prices and lack of council housing in certain areas, ensures that there are areas in which the rich live apart from the poor. As for the more direct approach of physically preventing people from moving about the country, what about during the miners strike, when tens of thousands of people were regularly physically stopped from entering or leaving certain counties, simply because they were suspected of being pickets or of bringing aid to the miners.

But undoubtedly the clearest example of the British state restricting the freedom of movement of it's citizens, is seen by looking again at Northern Ireland. Despite the government's insistence that this is also part of Britain, this doesn't stop them from operating a piece of legislation known as an Exclusion order, which allows them to ban someone from there from entering the "mainland" or to deport someone from there back, under threat of immediate imprisonment if they return. The Home Secretary, who signs the order, does not have to give any specific reason for it, nor prove any possible allegations against the victim, who does not have to be charged with any criminal offence, and has no right of appeal against the order. Many of those to suf-



Two pictures which show quite clearly, the stark differences between the way in which people are treated East and West. The top picture shows the state militia attacking demonstrators in Gdansk Poland. Below it, the good old British Bobby at Orgreave during the miner's strike, sorts it all out with a quiet word.

fer under these orders have had no links at all with any para-military organisation.

Again when people talk about people being locked up without fair trial or even shot because of their political views, we only have to look as far as Ireland to see how the British state operates in exactly the same fashion. In 1972, hundreds of men, most of whom had no connection with any para-military organisation were arrested and interned without any charges being brought against them or trial, merely because they were "suspected" of being terrorists. Some were held for up to three years.

SHOOT TO KILL

The British state has also operated at various times in Ireland, a shoot to kill policy, when some people suspected of belonging to para-military organisations have been am-

bushed and shot dead, without any attempt to capture them or bring them to trial. A clear case of a state authorising the summary execution of someone whom it considers to be a threat.

As I have said before, I am not trying to justify the brutal actions of the governments of the Eastern Bloc Countries, or the lack of freedoms which exist there. I am merely trying to point out how our own governments have done, and will continue to use the same sort of tac-

tics against you and me, as soon as they consider us to be a threat to their rule.

To finish on a more lighthearted note, I leave you with a quote from the film "Letter to Brezhnev" The story is about a Liverpool girl who meets a Russian sailor on leave, for whom she eventually leaves Liverpool to marry. Talking about their two countries, the Russian lad says "In Russia if you don't work you don't eat" "yea" the scouse girl sighs "it's much the same over here".

Conference Time

After more than a decade of what Tony Benn described as "12 wasted years of monetarism and militarism", sections of the hard left of the labour movement gathered in his Chesham constituency over the weekend of the 24th/25th of October, with the expressed aim of putting radical socialism back on the agenda of British politics.

The conference, jointly organised by the Campaign group of Labour M.P.s, the Independent Socialist Society and the Society of Socialist Economists attracted over 2,000 delegates from both inside and outside the Labour Party, as well as foreign observers from Nicaragua, Germany, South Africa and the Soviet Union.

Arthur Scargill, who rightly called for mass industrial action and general extra-parliamentary activity, was critical of several of his associates, saying that he could hear similar viewpoints "anytime from the Labour Party right wing leadership". He called for regional Parliament with devolved power, totally accountable to their local electorate, retirement on full pay at 50, sweeping import controls, withdrawal from the E.E.C., the abolition of private schools and medicine, and the outlawing of the sale of council houses.

Jeremy Corbyn M.P. expressed dissatisfaction, widely shared by many delegates, of the "pastel shaded electioneering" of the Labour Party's Brighton Conference. He said that he hoped that the left would play a full role in the forthcoming review of Labour's policies, so as to include British withdrawal from both Northern Ireland and N.A.T.O. In fact a non-aligned Britain was demanded by many conference speakers.

Tony Benn suggested that a Labour government could legislate revolutionary change with the backing of powerful working class action outside of Parliament.

Everyone expressed excitement at the collapse of the Stock Market the preceding week. Paul Foot, journalist and Central Committee member of the Socialist Workers Party, hoped that Bryan Gould had brought "millions of shares".

Basically the inaugural Socialist Conference was a very necessary event to rejuvenate the radical left. However there were certain arguments and factional fighting to marr it, such as Bernie Grant and Ted Knight (the surcharged former leader of Lambeth Council) engaging in a slanging match over whether Grant had voted for cuts in services during his time in local government, and a Russian speaker bringing a message of peace being booed by sections of the Trotskyist groups.

The conference was an obvious success, and another one is planned for May, but in my view the initiative will have failed if it does not lead to

1) A single new grouping of socialists outside Parliament, using friends such as Heffer and Benn inside, as a medium of revolutionary propaganda. Benn and Heffer rejected this idea. But the aim of the conference "re-establishing the left as a powerful force" as Benn put it, is pointless without the commitment and solidarity of a single revolutionary force. Particularly in Britain where the left is so small. Obviously Benn and Heffer have their M.P.s salaries to lose.

2) A newspaper to report international news from a socialist viewpoint, and to explain to the British working class - the soldiers of any transition to socialism, why socialism is vital to save the world from mass exploitation of it's resources and people, and how it can make people's lives better the world over.

By Jeremy Lane

A LIFE SENTENCE

As we enter the eighth year of Thatcher's government, we have seen more retractions of basic rights than at any other time in the last thirty years. The latest threat to those rights comes, ironically, from a member of the Liberal Party, in the shape of David Aiton. He is proposing a bill to radically change the abortion laws.

At present, the legal limit in which an abortion can be performed is 28 weeks. Alton wants this reduced to 18 weeks. Also at present, it is the case that if your G.P. is satisfied that your decision to have an abortion is one that has been reached without unnecessary pressure and for practical reasons, he can then authorise the operation there and then. Alton wants this changed as well.

EXPLANATION

One of the explanations given for the proposed reduction in time limit, is that it would be beneficial to women's health, it is less dangerous and the chance of complications is reduced if abortions are performed within the proposed new time span. On the issue of the freedom to choose abortion on demand Alton maintains that life is life, and that it is morally wrong to take the life of an unborn child, unless it is unable to survive in the womb, or has serious handicaps which show up while a scan is taking place. That is why his bill also includes a clause making it necessary to have a medical reason to support a claim for abortion, or at least some mitigating circum-



Not doctor's choice, nor politicians choice either.

stances.

If this Bill is accepted by the Commons and the Lords, then the N.H.S. will obviously have to adhere to it, and the implications are grim. We are all aware that the earlier an abortion is performed, the better it is for women's

By Tracy Green

health and well being. But with hospitals closing down casualty departments, and in some cases closing down altogether because of spending cuts, nurses leaving the service because of appalling wages and conditions, and day care abortion services such as the one at St. Mary's in Mile End London closing down it seems unrealistic to expect that the majority of women seeking abortions will be able to have them within the legal time limit. With the best will in the world, the N.H.S. cannot function properly unless it has adequate staff and funding. Alton is being dishonest to suggest that he has women's welfare at heart.

KICK IN THE TEETH

His brilliant idea of there needing to be exceptional circumstances before an abortion can be granted is a kick in the teeth for the rights of women to make their own decisions about what they should or shouldn't do with their own bodies. Having, or indeed not having a baby, has got to be a women's choice, nobody else's

It is naive to think that such a Bill, if passed, will stop women from having abortions. Certain sections of society, where money is no problem, such as middle class women, will still be able to book into private clinics

abroad. To them, the Bill would be just an annoyance, an inconvenience. To working class women of course, it would be catastrophic, forcing them back to back-street abortionists, with all the risks attached.

SUPPORT

Alton seems to have gained the support of many back bench Tory M.P.s. The Prime Minister herself harbours the idea that women should be returned to the home, to look after their children and the home. This idea is being helped along by the closure of day care centres and by child minders becoming more and more scarce, and of course this eases the dole figures somewhat.

Make no mistake, Alton is an anti-abortionist. If he could push through a Bill to outlaw abortion altogether he would do so. The last time this was attempted by John Corrie in 1979 such a backlash followed that the attempt was crushed. So this time, Alton is taking it a bit easier, attacking just some aspects of abortion rights. But the eventual aim is exactly the same as it was with Corrie. If they succeed with this they will soon be back for more.

CHOICE

As socialists, we should not let this infringement of women's rights go unnoticed. This Bill must not succeed. Women must have the choice to determine their own lives as they see fit.

Republican Socialist Prisoners

Red Action article

Regular readers of this paper will be aware that over the past couple of issues, we have been publicising an initiative to support Republican Socialist prisoners in Ireland. There are at present in Ireland, some 800 Republican political prisoners. Of these, the vast majority are members of the IRA/Sinn Fein. The Welfare of these prisoners is cared for by a scheme set up and run by Sinn Fein known as the Green Cross. This pays a sum of money to each prisoner or their families - £8 a week to a married man, £7 a week single, which is aimed at covering the extra expenses which are incurred through someone being in prison - travelling expenses for visits, cost of things like radios, newspapers etc.

ANOTHER GROUP

Apart from this group of prisoners however, there is also another much smaller group of about 4 dozen prisoners who are not members of the IRA, but are members of the INLA, which is associated with the Irish Republican Socialist Party. Because these prisoners are not members of the IRA, they do not qualify for aid from the Green Cross, and formerly, their welfare was looked after by the IRSP. However, due to the tremendous disarray which was caused within this organisation, by the well publicised "feud" which it suffered earlier this year, and due to political implications arising out of this, which mean that for the time being, at least, the organisation does not wish to undertake some of the more direct methods of fund raising, traditional to revolutionary movements, the IRSP is not at present in the position to give its prisoners the level of support which they deserve.

They have therefore decided to offer the revolutionary movement in this country a chance to show some solidarity with them by assisting with the support of these prisoners. The idea is for groups in this country to undertake to "sponsor" a prisoner or prisoners, to firstly raise the £7 or £8 a week, and also to write to him/her and establish and maintain a relationship with them.

We in Red Action strongly support this move as being totally justifiable and politically correct, and believe it offers the chance to achieve a number of aims. Firstly and most obviously and importantly, it provides the aid for the prisoners, but as well as this, it also offers the chance for those in this country who claim to be supporters of the Irish struggle, to actually do something positive to show that support instead of just talk about it. It is also in a small way, a step towards the building of real links between the revolutionary movements in Ireland and Britain, something which we have always maintained is crucial for the development of the movement here.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Red Action members have already been instrumental in the setting up of a small number of Republican Socialist Prisoners Support Groups, which are all sponsoring a prisoner each. In the new year, we will be contacting other groups in this country who we think may be interested in this scheme, with a view to establishing a national co-ordinated network. If you are interested in becoming involved in anyway, then please get in touch with us. Whether you think you may be in a position to perhaps help set up a Support Group, or whether you want to become involved as an in-



We may not be in a position to smash the H. Blocks, but we certainly are in a position to do something to ease the plight of those inside them.

dividual, whatever support you are able to offer, will be most welcome and put to good use.

The following is a copy of the first letter to be received by one of the recently set up support groups, from the prisoner who they have sponsored.

Dear Alan

I received your letter today. It is good to know that you and your comrades care enough to set up your support group. You say in your letter that you received a briefing on the IRSP situation while in Belfast for the march. Unfortunately I do not know anything about Red Action as the censors here in the jail have sent your publication to the Northern Ireland Office, for a decision on whether it should be allowed in. Maybe they think Red Action would be "Detrimental to the good order of the prison" especially when we prisoners read about the state of the left in Britain, and what Red Action thinks about it.

Well Alan, let me tell you a bit about myself. I'm 25, in jail since I was 19. I am from a town called Strabane which no doubt you will have heard of, it having the unenviable distinction of being Europe's unemployment black-spot. When one looks at the sorry history of the Six County Statelet, the reason for this becomes clear. It is so easy for one to see the conflict here as being sectarian, Catholic Protestant. That is how the British state would like it to be seen, and at times it would be easy to be caught in sectarian strife, which is why our party remains forever vigilant, and

guards against such things. Instead we strive to show the class nature of the struggle in Ireland as a whole. We always as a party condemn sectarian murder, from whatever source. The town I come from Strabane, suffered a disaster in the floods last week, as did your place I believe. It's the people's homes being wrecked I would feel for. The sorry thing was there was years and years notice of it happening. All it needed to be prevented was a few quid spent by the government to fix the wall retaining the river. It's indicative of the contempt with which the people are held by the government.

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

I get copies of the "Leninist" Do you read it? It is very informative. I will give you my opinion of Red Action if the N.I.O. decide that it is safe for me to read it. I don't know where I would be without them. They keep me well sheltered from this nasty world.

Will you or any Red Action comrades be attending the Manchester Martyrs Commemoration this month? I believe that it is a big thing over there. We have sent a letter to be read at it, which will give you an indication of our politics. I'm sure you do have an indication anyway.

Alan if you ever have any books, pamphlets etc laying about doing nothing, don't be afraid to send them to me and my comrades. I'm glad that you and your comrades have taken an interest in Ireland. I hope that you are prepared to take the stick for it. Sorry, that's a silly question, as you wouldn't

AND OTHERS

At this time of the year in particular, we remember all those in prison, particularly those Irish men and women in British jails, who suffer particularly bad treatment from the British state. A full list of these is given below. Why not try to drop a few of them a card for Christmas, or arrange with others to send them all one. We remember also Russell Shankland and Dean Hancock, the two Welsh miners given 8 years during the miner's strike, who are in HMP Gartree, Market Harborough, Leicester LE16 7RP. To them and all socialist prisoners everywhere, Christmas and New Year's greeting, and cheers for better days to come.

REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

LONG LARTIN	ALBANY	MULL
HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 6TZ	HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS	HM Prison Hedon Rd, Hull, Humberside
LIAM EAKER: 20-year sentence, 464984. JAMES BENNETT: 20-year sentence, 464989. EDDIE BUTLER: Life sentence, 338637. ROBERT CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 131877. GERRY CUNNINGHAM: 20-year sentence, 132016. JOHN MCCOMB: 17-year sentence, 851715. ANDY MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461576. PATRICK MULRYAN: 20-year sentence, 461575.	VINCE DONNELLY: Life sentence, 274054. HARRY DUGGAN: Life sentence, 338638. BILLY GRIMES: SEAN HAYES: 20-year sentence, 341418. STEPHEN NORDONE: Life sentence, 758663.	ROY WALSH: Life sentence, 119083.
PARKHURST	GARTREE	DURHAM
HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX	HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP	HM Prison Durham, Old Evert Street, Durham.
NOEL GIBSON: Life sentence, 879225. PATRICK HACKETT: 20-year sentence, 342603. TOMMY QUIGLEY: Life sentence, 69204. PETER SHERRY: Life sentence, 875880.	ROBERT CAMPBELL: 10-year sentence, 832954. RONNIE MCCARTNEY: Life sentence, 463799. JOE O'CONNELL: Life sentence, 338635.	MARTINA ANDERSON: Life sentence, D25134. ELLA O'DWYER: Life sentence, D25135.
WAREFIELD	FRANKLAND	INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:
HM Prison Love Lane, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF2 9AG	HM Prison Frankland, Braxside, Durham	CAROLE RICHARDSON: 290719, HM Prison Styl, Wiltshire PATRICK ARMSTRONG: HM Prison Gartree PAUL HILL: 462778, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs GERARD CONLON: 462779, HM Prison Long Lartin JUDITH WARD, HM Prison Durham. HUGH CALLAGHAN: 509499, HM Prison Gartree JOHN WALKER: 509494, HM Prison Long Lartin. BILLY POWER: 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs. GERARD HUNTER: 509495, HM Prison Frankland. RICHARD McILKENNY, 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs PADDY HILL, 509496, HM Prison Gartree.
HUGH DOHERTY: Life sentence, 338636. SEAN KINSELLA: Life sentence, 758661. CON McFADDEN: 20-year sentence, 130662. PAUL NORREY: Life sentence, 863532. NATALINO VELLA: 15-year sentence, 871644.	WILLIAM ARMSTRONG: Life sentence, 119085. MARTIN BRADY: Life sentence, 119087. BRENDAN DOWD: Life sentence, 758662. PAUL HOLMES: Life sentence, 119034. EDDIE O'NEILL: 20-year sentence, 135722.	They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson, indefinite detention.
LEICESTER	HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ	
PAUL KAVANAGH: Life sentence, 1988. BRIAN KEENAN: 21-year sentence, 826380. GERRY McDONNELL: Life sentence, 875882. PATRICK McGEE: Life sentence, 875881.		

THROUGH THE POST

How many football fans like myself I wonder, watched Match of the Day on the 22nd of November, and were sickened by the sight of Robert Maxwell taking advantage of his newly acquired control of Derby County F.C., to treat us to one of the most sickening displays of ego mania ever seen. Football chairmen in general must I'm sure, be pretty obnoxious and arrogant creatures, but at least most of them confine their displays of it to the relative privacy of the board room.

But Maxwell, I couldn't believe it. Not only does he insist on strutting out onto the field with the players, who have his name emblazoned across their shirts. No, he also pushes himself into the centre position of the team photograph. I swear, I'm sure that if it wasn't for the fact that he probably wouldn't even be able to take the run up without collapsing, he would have himself registered as a player, so that he could come on as a substitute to take a penalty.

What a sickening indictment on the state of football, and of the society we live in, that a football club can be taken over in this way, and prostituted to the personal vanity of one man.

A football club is part of the community in which it is based. It is an expression of that community, and each club reflects the different character of the community, it represents (if you don't understand what I mean by that, go and watch Ipswich Town play at home, and follow it up by a visit to Newcastle. You will) Nearly everyone, no matter how little their interest in football, has a favourite team who's results they will look out for. How sickening that the nature of the capitalist system allows someone like him to just stroll in to any club he fancies, and totally debase it.

The likes of Robert Maxwell will never be able to understand the feelings which real fans have for their team. Derby County mean nothing to him. 3 years ago, when he was in control at Oxford, he was publicly cavorting around in the same way as if he was their greatest ever fan, when they beat Manchester United in the League Cup (Oh dear)

Remember, after the revolution, football will be given back to the people, and anyone who scores against Manchester United goes straight to a Labour Camp

Eamann Eufan

They say that a criminal always returns to the scene of the crime, and so it proves to be the case. Margaret Thatcher could not resist viewing the carnage she and her government had wreaked at King's Cross, where thirty people were immolated, and many injured in the name of profit.

NO APOLOGIES

Let us make no apologies when we point out that these tragic deaths resulted from government policy in implementing cuts in staff, which London Regional Transport readily agreed to, despite the fact that passenger revenue has increased two-fold. Yet still twelve thousand L.R.T workers are facing redundancy. This contradiction defies logic.

The National Union of Railwaymen, for their part, have repeatedly warned L.R.T of the dangers commuters face from fire, but they chose to ignore them, with ultimately, devastating consequences. This is even more surprising when you consider the lessons which should have



The pages of Red Action are open for anyone to write about anything they wish. Please keep letters as short as possible, and send to the address at the bottom of the next column.

been learnt from the Oxford Circus fire of a few years ago, in which one person was killed. In fact some railwaymen were recently threatened with disciplinary action, for handing out leaflets warning of impending disaster.

HYPOCRISY

If anything is to be learned from this disaster, it must surely be the rank hypocrisy of the Conservative government, and Prime Minister Thatcher in particular. On one hand they condemn the bomb at Enniskillen, and cry crocodile tears, and on the other, will not accept that the Kings Cross disaster was nothing short of murder, for which she and her ilk must be held responsible.

Phyll Jenkins Harrogate

SUPPORT RED ACTION



Red Action is an organisation founded by working class people to work for the furthering of the cause of Socialism. Membership is open to all who accept our political principles and pay a weekly subscription. Every member has an equal vote on all Red Action policy and decisions.

If you support our aims but do not wish to become a member, you can become a supporting member. This does not entitle you to vote, but you will receive:

1. A free subscription to the newspaper.
2. A regular internal newsletter that will keep you informed of what is going on in the organisation.
3. Notification of any Red Action activities in your area.

The cost for this is £10 for one year.

Subscriptions to the paper are still available separately. The cost is £3 pounds for ten issues. Please remember that producing a paper is a very uneconomic business and we are always very grateful for any donations, and especially grateful to anyone who can take extra copies to sell.

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"What do you say to a docker earning £400 a week, owning a house, car, video, micro-wave, and a small place near Marbella. You do not say let me take you out of your misery brother" inquired Neil Kinnock at this year's Labour Party Conference, talking about his imaginary "Captain Howdy" type docker friend. He could perhaps have answered his own question with something along these lines.

"Don't be deceived when they tell you things are better now. Even if there's no poverty to be seen, it is because the poverty has been hidden. Even if you got ever more wages and could afford to buy more of these new and useless goods which industries foist on you, and even if it seems to you that you never had so much, that is only the slogan of those who still have much more than you. Don't be taken in when they pat you paternally on the shoulder and say there's no inequality worth speaking of and no more reason to fight, because if you believe them they will be completely in charge in their marble homes and granite banks, from which they rob the peoples of the world under the pretence of bringing them culture. Watch out, for as soon as it pleases them, they will send you out to protect their gold, in wars whose weapons rapidly developed by servile scientists will become more and more deadly, until they can, with a flick of a finger, tear a million of you to pieces."

The words of Jean Paul Marat, an 18th century French visionary.

"There are no political prisoners in South Africa"
P.W. Botha.

"I think that life has worth as long as you have a cause to believe in. That's what I admired so much about the guys I met in Northern Ireland while filming Prayer for the Dying" Actor Micky Rourke, who spent some time meeting I.R.A. members before filming started.

"On the face of it, it does seem worrying"

A spokesman for the Sellafield Nuclear Plant, confronted with the news that children from the Sellafield area are ten times more likely to develop cancer than the national average

"Every politician should be beaten up by the police at some stage of their careers" claims Tory M.P. William Waldergrave I couldn't agree more.

"What is the difference between the Contras and the P.L.O.?" a reporter asked C.I.A. director Bill Casey. "The Contras have a country and are trying to get it back, the P.L.O. doesn't have one" was the reply.

If the Contras have a country, then why are they trying to get it back? and what happened to the country which the P.L.O. had before they hadn't? if you see what I mean. If this is any example of the way in which Mr. Casey, who is one of President Reagan's chief advisors explains Foreign policy to him, then I don't think that it's any wonder that the old bastards confused.

"They are bureaucrats at ease with evil. They have turned it into routine."

E.B.C. reporter Michael Burke's description of South African government officials.

"The last time that I weighed myself, I found that I had lost a stone. I haven't done a lot of exercise because access to the gym is limited by the numbers of prisoners wanting to use it. I hate to sound pompous, but common thieves seem to have priority."

Drug smuggler and mercenary, S.A.S. Captain Simon "Who dares whines" Hayward.

"Every civilised nation honours and respects it's dead" said Margaret Thatcher after the Enniskillen explosion. The photograph below, taken from "Republican News" shows the scenes one week earlier, when those representatives of the British nation, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, attacked the funeral procession of two I.R.A. volunteers in Derry.

"The I.R.A.'s campaign of violence will eventually win. I don't think anyone seriously believes that they won't get their own way. As with all the other colonial situations we have been involved in, Britain will eventually go."

"Ken Livingstone's attempt to introduce a little realism into the discussions after Enniskillen, drew the retort from Neil Kinnock that people who equate the British presence in Ireland with colonialism, "show a fundamental permafrost ignorance about the nature of colonialism, and about the nature or Northern Ireland."

The Oxford Dictionary defines a colony as "A body of settlers forming a community politically connected with their parent state, the community so formed as long as the connection lasts" a description which fits perfectly the situation which exists in the north east corner of Ireland. But then again, what can you expect from a man who congratulated the S.A.S. on their victory over the "men of violence" after their action at Loughhall, which left nine men, including a totally innocent passerby dead and another critically injured. He certainly showed a permafrost (whatever that may mean) ignorance about the nature of violence and the nature of the S.A.S.

"I don't think that there is a case for doing something for all pensioners. Not all pensioners are poor by any means."

Cancellor Nigel Lawson. Whilst the last part of his statement may well be true, the policies pursued by Lawson and his colleagues seem to suggest that they have taken this as an excuse to do as little as possible for ALL pensioners.

"Mc Namee was responsible for between 60 and 80 deaths, 16 of them in Britain."

Alistair Burnett on the News at Ten after the conviction of alleged I.R.A. bombmaker Gilbert Mc Namee. "16 of them in Britain" eh. A Freudian slip perhaps, or is Burnett a closet Irish Republican? Think about it.

"What have the Tories got against the B.B.C., and why is it that when we enjoy the best broadcasting in the world, and suffer the worst newspapers, members of our great party complain so often about the one, and so rarely about the other" Could it be because most Tory M.P.s are right wing, and most newspapers are right wing also.

Tory M.P. Julian Critchley

An editorial in the London Standard discussed "The renaissance" in the nanny market, and the rise of domestic service generally after a post-war decline and concludes "For some of course, the employment of nannies and cleaners is a status symbol. This is largely illusory. Children are usually better cared for by their parents, and houses by those who live in them. However a society which can happily support such a system, seems on balance to be a happy and relaxed one."

Happy and relaxed? What about the chronic unemployment, the rising crime rate, the overcrowded prisons, the collapsing N.H.S., the mounting racial attacks, etc.

When Marie Antoinette, the 18th century French Queen, asked one of her domestic servants why the mob was angry, she was told "They have no bread" "No bread" she replied "well let them eat cake" You are left with the impression that maybe she relied on the 18th century French equivalent of the Standard for her information on current affairs. Anyway, they cut her head off.

Britain now spends a lower percentage of it's national income on housing, than any other state in Europe. However according to M.P. Ian Gow, the real problems in housing are "the twin evils of rent control and security of tenure" No prizes for guessing his political party.

"Imagine what it's like to feel an alien in your own city. Imagine what it's like to sit at home conscious that a brick might come flying through the window. Imagine what it's like to be spat at abused and kicked while you are walking around the streets."

A picture of what life was like for Jewish people in Berlin in the mid-thirties perhaps? No. This is how the Coventry Evening Telegraph describes life for Asians in Coventry today. According to research conducted by Euro M.P. Glyn Ford, there are 70,000 racial attacks in Britain every year. One every 7½ minutes.

A recent report in the Daily Mirror, revealed some interesting facts about health care for the young, under the caring government of Margaret "the N.H.S. is safe with us" Thatcher. It revealed amongst other things that

Harefield Hospital in Middlesex has four intensive care beds for children, but only enough staff for two of them.

Birmingham Children's Hospital has 34 children who's vital heart surgery has been put off in the last two months because of a shortage of specialist nurses. One boys parents had to take court action before he got his hole in the heart operation.

The Hospital for Sick Children in Bristol, has only half of it's baby cots available.

King's College Hospital in London turns away 15 premature babies every month because it can't cope.

Brompton Hospital in West London, the largest specialist children's heart unit in the country, has only half of it's 12 intensive care beds available because of cash cuts and a shortage of nurses.

Guy's Hospital in London has a premature baby ward which should have 30 nurses it's got only 18. The intensive care heart ward where children recover from major surgery is 10 nurses short.

The Tories are usually great ones for going on about religion. There's one famous line from the bible which they seem to be taking quite literally.

"Suffer the little children"

WE ARE RED ACTION

RED ACTION IS AN ORGANISATION FOUNDED TO WORK TOWARDS THE ENDING OF THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM OF PRODUCTION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SOCIALIST ONE

CAPITALISM The need of capital and labour cannot ever be reconciled. In other words the quest by the employing classes for greater profit, is in eternal conflict with the demands of the working class for higher wages, shorter hours etc. It is in the obvious interest of the employer to keep wages down as low as possible while it is equally obvious that this does not serve the interests of the majority. The two systems capitalism and socialism cannot co-exist, as they are in constant struggle pulling in opposite directions, each in pursuit of its own goals. A victory for one is necessarily a defeat for the other. This is the major source of conflict in the world today. Capitalism is a system which is based on the private ownership of the means of production. This means that the factories, workplaces, natural resources etc, on which we all depend to produce the necessities of life are the private property of a few individuals, who use them to produce not what is most socially necessary, but whatever will make them the most profit. When it suits them, they are able to close down those productive resources, even though there may be great social need for what could be produced on them. Regardless of how rich a country may be in natural resources, capitalism can never provide equality of wealth due to its own inherent limitations. It is obviously impossible for everybody to become a capitalist (employer) and so to function, the system demands the creation and maintenance of an employing class and a working class, or if you like an upper class and lower class. Propping up this system, are the forces of social control—army, police force, civil service etc—all controlled by totally unelected and un-accountable representatives of the capitalist class.

SOCIALISM It is impossible for us today to say exactly what a socialist system will be like, as when it happens there will be millions of others involved in shaping it. However there are some features that would have to be present in any society, before we would be willing to consider it as socialist.

PUBLIC OWNERSHIP Only when all of the major productive resources and industry are taken into public ownership, will it be possible for the democratic will of the majority to ensure that they are at all times employed in the most socially useful manner. This will result in a massive increase in production and wealth.

CONTROL OF SOCIETY All those who occupy positions of power and authority will be elected by those they represent and subject to recall.

FREEDOM AND EQUALITY All will be expected to contribute to production and all will receive equal reward and have equal rights, irrespective of sex, race or creed. The state will provide adequate facilities to cater for the needs of the elderly, sick, handicapped, nursing mothers etc, who will all receive a full wage. All questions or personal morality will be free from state interference. Abortion and contraception will be legal and provided by the state. There will be freedom of worship for all religion, but no church will be allowed to interfere in state matters.

INTERNATIONALISM The capitalist economic system is linked up internationally, therefore the struggle to overthrow it is a worldwide one. All workers everywhere have the same interests. It is impossible for socialism to exist in isolation in one country, as the power of international capitalism would crush it.

NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD TO SOCIALISM Socialism cannot be achieved through the parliamentary system, because the real power in society lays not with elected MPs but with rich industrialists and the leaders of the armed forces, police judiciary etc. The present structures cannot be reformed they must be overthrown. The Labour Party does not try to end capitalism, but merely give the workers a better deal within it.

UNION STRENGTH. WE SUPPORT ANY PICKET LINE IN DEFENCE OF WORKERS LIVING STANDARDS. We support a strong organised rank and file movement within the unions. Union officials should be supported as long as they represent their members correctly. But rank and file unionists must reserve the right to take action independent of the officials when necessary.

TOTAL OPPOSITION TO RACISM AND FASCISM We opposed any movement or ideology which attempts to divide the working class on grounds of race, sex, or creed. We recognise the need to oppose fascist organisations, both ideologically and physically on the streets.

THE IRISH NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE AGAINST OUR OWN RULING CLASS We support the right of oppressed people the world over to fight back. We unconditionally support the right of the revolutionary armies The Irish Republican Army, and the Irish National Liberation Army, to engage in armed struggle to free their country from British rule. We draw great inspiration from the principled and courageous manner in which they conduct their struggle, and from the way in which they have integrated cultural and class expression into their political movement.

THE "COMMUNIST" STATES The regimes in countries such as Russia, China, Cuba etc, are used as examples to try and prove socialism undesirable. In our view, although these countries have planned economies, they cannot be described as socialist. We contend that socialism cannot be implemented from above by an unaccountable ruling elite. Public ownership, freedom and democracy are all essential features of socialism and in their absence it cannot exist. We support the right of the people in these states to overthrow the leadership and implement socialist policies. At the same time however, we recognise the difficulties that states such as Nicaragua—and others past and present—face, from capitalist backed mercenary armies, military intervention, and economic sabotage, which make immediate transition to a socialist system impossible. While these states remain progressive, we will continue to support them.

THE ORGANISATION Traditionally, the structure of revolutionary socialist groups in this country, has been one where the leadership is made up of a small group of self selected academics and intellectual, who wield absolute authority over the membership. Such a structure fails, firstly because there can be no true democracy in such a set up, and corruption soon sets in, and secondly because those leading the organisation are so far removed from the realities of working class life, it cannot relate properly to that class. A revolutionary socialist organisation must be composed of and led by working class people. It must recognise that no leadership is immune from corruption and be truly democratic in its internal structures. It must be ready to work in a non sectarian manner with other socialist and progressive groups. It must present socialist politics in a manner in which working class people can identify with in their life and their work and their leisure. It must be consistent, principled and above all honest in its politics. Only then will it begin to be able to relate to the working class, most of whom today are cynical if not hostile towards the revolutionary left. We recognise that a revolutionary working class party is necessary if capitalism is to be overthrown. We are not that party, neither are those groups which claim to be it. We will work to keep alive a tradition of working class militancy, until such time as enough militants can be brought together to form that party.



One of the coffins falls to the ground as the RUC extract a brutal revenge on the families and friends of the dead Volunteers