

Red Action



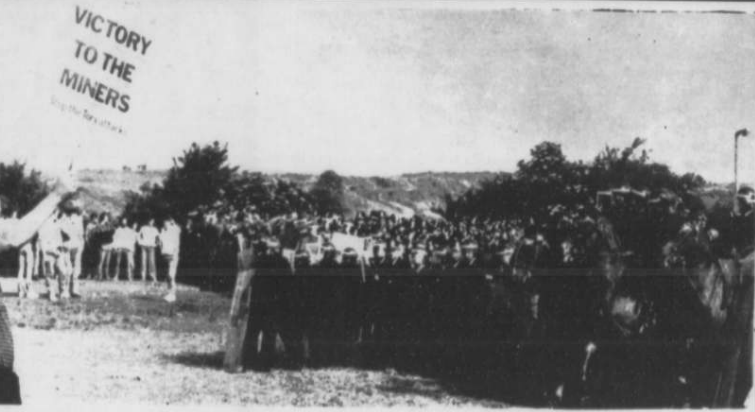
FATAL attraction

Plans are afoot for the creation of an alternative national organisation to the TUC based around the electricians union, the EETPU. The central rallying point appears at this to be a lemming-like commitment to no-strike declarations and agreements which will do much to serve the interests of the bosses and allow union bureaucrats a free hand to sit in cosy 'consultations' with management to shit on their members.

The National Association of Teachers (43,000 members) have drafted a document calling for a federation of independent Trade Unions. Whilst not at this stage jumping to respond to NAT approaches, the EETPU General Secretary clearly sees it as a available option. In a pamphlet issued to EETPU shop stewards he tells them "We have no plans to set up a rival TUC, though some alternative grouping could well emerge especially if other unions followed us into TUC exile".

No doubt the NAT and the EETPU will be looking at the no-strike Royal College of Nursing and the scab breaking Union of Democratic Mineworkers. The electricians will be further encouraged by the current split within the National Union of Miners executive over an attempt by the 'right' and 'moderate' executive members to open joint negotiations with the UDM. For the past three years wage rises negotiated by the UDM have been imposed on NUM members. No doubt the existence of an alternative TUC or 'grouping' will be used in much the same way. Agreements made with non-TUC Unions will increasingly be imposed on respective industries, easily achieved by using an increasing number of one union deals.

Many people might consider the creation of such a national organisation as getting rid of the bad apples and sending them off into some 'wilderness'. The point is that they are not off into the dark, they have chosen to join Thatchers fold and they



THE MINERS STRIKE 1984.

will be welcomed with open arms. It is the deliberate strategy of the Tory Government to push the Trade Union Congress into the political wilderness. By the TUC's historic lack of desire to fight back and by its current preoccupation with 'new realism', the Tory Government and the bosses are laughing all the way to the bank.

The developing 'split' within the trade union movement combined with trade union laws which the TUC is unprepared to take on means that no-strike one union and temporary employment agreements will spread throughout sectors of the economy. Under the one-union deals struck by the electricians, the worker cannot choose his union, it will come with the job. Not only that he won't be able to express any dissatisfaction with wage settlements agreed by union leaders because the very same union leaders have already negotiated away their right to strike action. The union will become more than ever an arm of the bosses management team.

In the public sector, jobs in catering, sports halls refuse collection and parks and maintenance will soon be up for grabs in the scramble of private contractors. In this arena the survival of any trade union organisation will be not short of a miracle. Wages again will be set and im-

The Miners Strike of 1984 exemplified some of the best traditions of the organised working class. Elements within the miners and their communities learnt very quickly that acting within a law made by the bosses was not on.

posed by the bosses. In the main the current trade union bureaucracies have bowed to the 'law' and justified their inaction by attempting to compete with external contractors able to undercut wages and deliberately run at an initial loss to secure tenders. The prospect of winning the these contracts 'in house' is minimal.

Margaret Thatcher and her economic theoreticians have made much of the return to classical economics, the simple capitalist mechanisms of supply and demand. It is about time that the trade union movement looked back to its own 'classical' roots. At times in our history anti-trade union laws such as the combination laws in the 18th Century, the Taff Vale Judgement of the late 19th Century and the use of police and black-leg labour to break strikes, it was at all times the prospect of a physical force revolutionary working class movement, which caused 'reformers' of Liberal, Tory and 'labour' Governments to step back and choose to incorporate 'respectable' trade unionism.

Many chose to fight fire with fire, harrasing and attacking scab labour, defending themselves against the massive police assaults and launching attacks on Coal Board properties and transport. This was not a 'new' violence it was the long established class action of the working class.

The 'respectable' trade union bureaucracies, distanced over the years from their memberships are bankrupt. Thatcher and her allies have made a similar judgement and are driving back Trade Union Organisations and achievements. Ordinary working class people unionised and unionised stand alone looking at a castrated leadership. Real leadership and real working class action must now arise from within the class itself.



SHARPEVILLE SIX



OUPA MOSES DINTSO, 30.



THERESA RAMASHAMOLA, 24.

The 'Sharpeville Six' are five men and one woman who are due to be executed this month on alleged charges of murder, and subversion against the South African State. It is a case that has raised again two important points. Firstly it brings into question the legitimacy and 'independence' of the South African Judiciary. Secondly it points to the telling attitudes of the West, in particular the UK, over the imminent 'State Murder' of the six.

On the first point it should be obvious to those who have read the case that the prosecution evidence was riddled with conflicting and contradictory statements throughout. Indeed the state chose to base most of its entire case on two unnamed 'witnesses', whose stories constantly altered throughout the proceedings. The defence produced a dozen eyewitnesses to counter the prosecution claims, all however in vain.

Even in the Appeal Court where a re-trial was being sought the Judge decided that the fact that evidence had been obtained after police assaults was insufficient grounds for a retrial. In his summing up he even cited Lord Denning (who else) and English legal precedent for decision.

In short the whole trial was a political sham. If there is anything to be said it that it was not personal. For this was not merely about the six. It is the South African states way of teaching a lesson to the black people. They are on trial.

The response of the rest of the world has not been entirely surprising. There has of course been the 'radical' cry for sanctions within the EEC and talk of 'strongly worded' statements (tremble, tremble Mr Botha) Even these were blocked by (guess who?) the British Government. The reason was that strong words would put unnecessary pressure on Botha. Well there'll be some relief on death row knowing that the likes of Maggie are so concerned for their welfare.

South Africa is an important economic and political ally of the West, an ally that like a child has some irritating habits. It will be told off but tolerated, and it will be protected. It is not in the interest of these governments that justice is done for the black South African nor that they should determine their own future. It is because of this that the Sharpeville six are likely to hang.

WOMEN AND IRELAND

R. A. WOMENS TRIP

International Womens Day is held every year. The traditional date is March 9th, but it is celebrated around that week. It is held in solidarity with women around the world who are trying to attain liberation, be it from repressive regimes, repressive husbands or repressive cultures. It is all encompassing.

Red Action agreed to send a delegation to Ireland to attend activities centred around the republican struggle against the British Armed Forces occupying the North. The war in Ireland has long been a subject embraced by Red Action, so it seemed only natural that the part women play in that struggle should be recognised and supported by our own women members and supporters. Ten of us travelled to Belfast on March 4th, however we did not travel or affiliate ourselves with the Official Delegation from England, instead we contacted the Irish Republican Socialist Party in Belfast who has accommodated Red Action members at various times over the past few years. There were a few reasons for this decision.

Firstly, although Red Action Women members recognise the support given to such issues as strip searches and the repatriation of Republican Women POWs by the 'womens movement', we do not see the war in Ireland as a 'feminist' issue. It is a revolutionary struggle that needs a class based solution. The logical step for us was to take the opportunity to extend our solidarity to the I.R.S.P., our hosts, a revolutionary organisation such as ourselves. Secondly, we feel we simply have nothing in common with the feminist movement as it stands, certainly women involved in Red Action have on occasion met with a lot of hostility from our 'sisters in struggle' and we wanted our trip to be enjoyable as well as educational, if we had travelled with the official delegation it would have been neither.

On the Saturday the delegation attended a meeting organised by the I.R.S.P. which lasted for about three hours. The speaker explained the history of the I.R.S.P. from their formation up to the events surrounding the attacks on their movement by ex members which the British media called the feud within the Irish National Liberation Army (the I.R.S.P. armed wing).

There was a question and answer session after which the prisoners support group co-ordinator told us of the need to set up such a group because Sinn Fein withdrew support for INLA prisoners from their own support organisation 'Green Cross'. All in all, it was very educational. After the meeting we were all very thirsty and at the insistence of our hosts we retired to a bar for liquid refreshment.

The main political event of the trip came on Sunday 6th March when we attended a picket of Maghera Jail about fifteen miles or so out of Belfast, where some of the women republican POWs are held. We took along the Red Action banner which brought some bewildered glances from our

English 'comrades'. There were a number of speakers the most memorable for me being Liz French from Women Against Pit Closures. She was the only woman of the official delegation to have been involved on the ground in working class struggle. We respected her for the foresight in seeing that the NUM were not only fighting the Coal Board but the whole state machine. She voiced our sentiments exactly when she yelled 'keep fighting don't let the Bastards grind you down'. We noted the sectarian treatment of INLA prisoners from Sinn Fein, who voiced support women engaged in liberation struggles in South Africa and in Palestine, but did not mention the sacrifices made by Republican Socialist women, who weren't even named.

It was on the Sunday that Mairead Farrell, Sean Savage and Dan McCann were gunned down by the SAS men in Gibraltar. When the 'strays' from the delegation returned to their billets we were well impressed with the speed in which the Republican Community had risen to protest at this atrocity to coin a phrase. Black flags hung from lamp posts, burning cars and lorries blocked roads, and forts were being petrol bombed. Even a JCB from a timber yard had been highjacked and driven through a security wall.

It was great to see the numbers of people involved in the protest and it hits home to you just how much the British Media distort what is happening in the North. Just about every day we are told that a small bunch of terrorists are spoiling an otherwise peaceful community. They then go on to tell us that these terrorists are 'psychopathic animals' with nothing in their minds except to kill and maim. After visiting Belfast it is plain to see that nothing could be further from the truth. You have only to see the thousands who march in Republican Funeral Processions and demonstrations.

As for the 'mad dog' image, the people are just like us, they take their kids to school they watch football on the box, they drink, take the piss out of each other and have a good crack. The difference is they are fighting a war. They are reacting no differently than English people would react if a foreign army occupied their country.

The trip was very educational and a great crack. Many thanks to the I.R.S.P. for their hospitality. The delegation was very successful and we will definitely be back for next years International Womens Day, if not sooner.



Former comrades of Volunteer Mairead Farrell in Armagh and Maghera carry her coffin

book review

Only the Rivers Run Free. Northern Ireland. The Womens War.

Fairweather, McDonough and McPayden.

Fairweather and friends book is a documentary type account of womens lives in the six counties making up 'Northern Ireland'. It covers everything from family life, love, sex, men, the church to their experiences of fifteen years of war, some of them as active members of the IRA. The section on Protestant women is interesting and provides a good introduction to general protestant and unionist minds.

The stories of many women reflect the concerns common to all women. There are harrowing stories of domestic violence and rape in the 'home'. The powerful role of the Catholic Church in holding up the permanence of marriage ties many women down to a life of constant pregnancy and continued beatings. The problems of unemployment, bad housing and poor medical and child care provisions are at a level far higher than that experienced by people over here. More than that the people have to adjust and readjust on a day to day basis to the war outside their door.

For many within the Catholic and Nationalist population life becomes a daily struggle in which they try to make the best of things and see that the kids get something on the table. Others undoubtedly leave the country. Some however, remain and it would seem to be an increase in number who choose to stay and get stuck into fighting for change as women.

The chapter on women in the paramilitaries shows the advancing role of women in the Republican Movement. The women not only join a battle against the British State but also a battle for womens rights and recognition within the Movement. One woman volunteer explained 'You are constantly fighting a battle for equal status... particularly with the newer members....if a guy makes a mistake its different, but if a woman does, it just reinforces their prejudices that you aren't competent in the first place. I think this has deterred a lot of women and put them back into accepting more minor roles. Some women did not have minor roles. One Volunteer admits, 'I work with explosives'. Her friend interjects 'She's just being modest when she says that. She is one of our top explosives experts. The expert recounts with humour 'It's been embarrassing for me at times walking into a room full of men to teach them about explosives. You can hear a pin drop when they see it's a woman. But once you have put them at ease and make them feel equal it is OK'.

Active Republican women see that 'there is no contradiction between fighting for the liberation of our country and fighting for the liberation of women'. Other women remain cynical, Cathy Harkin of Women Aid says 'Printing articles in Republican News about women doesn't necessarily imply a commitment to their liberation'. Indeed, as the pages of this book demonstrate and others on Ireland the Sinn Fein has not 'taken on' the Goliath of the Church and come out in favour of abortion rights men. Nor does it push with the vigour many women see as essential, on the general question of Womens Liberation. From the views expressed by the Republican Women and others there is a lot of sound ideas and understanding. They are slowly burying the old view of Republican Women sitting at home loyally awaiting the return of the 'boys'.

Only Our Rivers Run Free is a book that should be read by all. The writers give the women they interviewed plenty of space for their description of their lives and their opinions. What it showed for me was that against all odds women in Ireland are moving forward in their political consciousness and that is encouraging.



AN ILLEGAL MARCH. BELFAST 1984



THE RED ACTION DELEGATION TO BELFAST 1984.

RED ACTION TRIP TO BELFAST AUGUST 1988.

RED ACTION will be sending its annual delegation to Belfast in early August to participate in the commemoration of the introduction of internment.

For new and supporting members it would be an invaluable experience. There will debates and discussions with our hosts the IRSP.

Any persons interested should contact Red Action by PO Box No as soon as possible.

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.

**PO box 158
Hatfield
Herts**

summit for nothing

In what must rank as the biggest public relations exercise ever, the leaders of the Super-Powers managed between them to make talks on arms control look like a soap opera. In between Reagan shouting 'human rights' and Gorbachov answering 'Perestroika' the two leaders managed only minimal progress towards a Strategic Arms Treaty but found time to star in numerous photo opportunities. Ronnie also found time to meet some 'disagreeable' Soviet dissidents but somehow managed to avoid an equally 'disagreeable' group of American Indians who were in 'The Evil Empire' protesting about U.S hypocrisy over human rights. Now surely someone as obviously senile as Ronald Reagan shouldn't be allowed within a million miles of such important and complex negotiations, let alone play a leading role in them. Obviously, the only reason Reagan was in Moscow was for the benefit of the Mass Media, which was also the only reason for the London stop-over, where his speech at the Guildhall was virtually a party political broadcast for the Tory Party. It was so awful that several people burst into tears.



Outside the Guildhall a small crowd protesting over U.S involvement in Nicaragua were kept well away from the Reagans, presumably in an attempt to protect the odd couple from the 'disagreeable' sight of Alexei Sayle. Afterwards, the Reagans flew back to the States and left a world reflecting on missed opportunities. Mainly the reduction by half of strategic nuclear weapons, which looks even further off now, than before the Moscow Summit. This can only be due to Reagans insistence on scoring political points over his Soviet counter-part. Also, the U.S insistence on leaving loopholes in the treaty, so that arms reduction in one field can be turned into arms development in other fields, bodes ill for the future. Perhaps Mikhail Gorbachov should get himself a good astrologer.

Football fighting fascism

Now that the hysteria generated by the "Invasion of Germany" has abated and the facts are examined there can be little doubt that the whole event was orchestrated, manipulated and exploited by a very sinister firm indeed who call themselves "The Media". Along with a even more powerful and vicious mob known as "The Tories" they organise and co-ordinate vicious attacks on their opponents. Well before the "Kick Off" in a literal sense they had threatened the public with this type of gratuitous coverage of violence, drunkenness and hooliganism, and they duly delivered.

The 'military', strength, calibre and moral of the opposing armies of the English, German and Dutch was weighed and assessed after every "clash". It was more than a "blow by blow" account, every "burp" and "fart" was reported as well. Interviews were conducted with the "Generals" or any dickhead stupid enough to talk to them. He could then confirm the following day, by reading the newspaper how "vile", "moronic" and "notorious" he had become. One of them quoted in the Mirror promised the usual mayhem and actually said, "We will fight them on the beaches" reciting Churchill, which was solemnly recorded. He may of course have actually been "taking the piss" or he might not even exist, but in any case it is a fitting example of "media hype".

By and large it was all a hype. On the Wednesday night in Dusseldorf the "greatest night of violence" there were 371 arrests, only 18 were English as against 353 Germans. A police spokesman, Wolfgang Rodax, admitted "neither before or after the game were the English the ones who started the street battles, fights and brawls." Of the hundreds of English fans that were arrested during the championship, all but 20 were released without charge. So what then was all the fuss about?



In 1985 Thatcher "declared war on the hooligans". They were presented as a threat to civilisation, Public Enemy No 1, etc. Three years on, despite a number of well publicised but inoperable schemes, she was no nearer success. Her "invincibility" was in question. Something must be done. It also provided an opportunity to test public reaction to a number of right-wing solutions to the "problem" (withdrawal of passports, ID cards etc.) which if aimed at any other section of the population would be regarded as a threat to civil liberties. They were confident nobody would defend the rights of football supporters / thugs; they were right. Nobody did. That apart the purpose of the propaganda campaign mounted by the media was simply to recover the "high moral ground" by the media was simply to recover the "high moral ground" on which to relaunch Thatcher's crusade against the Hooligans. The original offensive had floundered only weeks earlier when a trial involving the Chelsea "Head-hunters" had collapsed due to the police tampering with the evidence.

At the time all the papers carried photos of the youthful members of the jury coveting with the defendants, celebrating their acquittal Under headlines like "WE SAVED YOUR BACON". The effect was to deflect the questions about to be asked about the integrity of the police by suggesting questions ought to be asked about the integrity of the Jury. The Jury role was of course purely academic as the judge had ordered them to acquit. Four other separate trials subsequently collapsed after the discovery of fabricated evidence. Things looked very bleak for the authorities.

However after the propagander "win" in Germany, confidence had been restored and within a week not only had the Operation Own Goal been clawed back, but they had gone one up. Four Millwall fans were given a total of 29 years in what was a clear example of Judicial revenge for the previous humiliations suffered at the hands of the "louts". In passing sentence the Judgr admitted that while no individual acts of violence could be attributed to them, he was satisfied they were all involved. Shades of the Sharpeville six. Easy to see where the Boers got their bad habits from.

IN NEXT MONTHS EDITION 'RED ACTION' EXPLORES THE FASCIST CONNECTION.

mandela 70 Years in Struggle

Well, according to the image portrayed by papers such as the Daily Mirror, Nelson Mandela is the rightful leader of the Black South Africans, a warm hearted humanitarian, respected, almost statesman like, the world over.

That's why people like the right wing tory MP John Carlisle are not just being petty or small minded when they say that the BBC 'are giving air time to organisations that will maim and kill innocent people in South Africa'.

But this makes it all a little bit confusing he is surely, after all, nothing more than a terrorist, that is the usual description used by the media, to describe anyone who uses violence in pursuit of their political objectives and that was the very point that was irritating me as I sat and watched the seventieth birthday celebrations being held at Wembley in his honour.

They realise, as Mandela is a member of one of these organisations and still gives them his backing, it's important to keep the 'political' out of 'political prisoner' when referring to his organisation.

The politics were played down, there were no political speakers, the USA was taking six hours of recorded coverage which they could then edit any political content out of it. As I watched a well known, over paid DJ, crowing on about how wonderful it was that the politics had not encroached on the fun, I wondered what they actually thought he was in prison for in the first place.

For if one beleives that the use of physical force against an oppressive state is political rather than a criminal act, the perhaps more questions would be raised about certain persons a little nearer home.

When they announced that the event had raised approximately two million pounds, I found myself shouting at the TV, "and I hope it all goes to buy guns". 'Why have you got to say that?' said my old lady, in one of those voices that despairs at the lunatic fringe which always has to spoil the fun for no reason other than to promote violence.

For instance, in the Jails in Britain and the Irish six counties alone there are six hundred and seventy eight prisoners from the republican movement alone (excluding socialists and loyalists), doing time for politically motivated 'crimes' and that in 1981, one of them who was elected as an MP to British Parliament died on hunger strike fighting for the right to be recognised as a political prisoner of war. That man was Bobby Sands and the British Government refused to recognise him as anything other than a terrorist much in the same way the South African government refuse to recognise Mandela as anything other than a terrorist.

'Because' I replied 'that this is the reason he's still in jail because he will not renounce the right of his people to partake in the armed struggle to free their country'.

It is for these reasons that we should support the likes of Mandela, Sands, etc. for their determination not to be criminalised. For their belief that the fight against an oppressive regime cannot be compromised for by the use of armed struggle.

Despite all of the publicity, that is the point most people missed, that if Mandela and his comrades renounced the use of violence and armed struggle, they could walk free tomorrow.

music



talkin' bout a revolution

Tracy Chapman was one of the more credible performers to take the stage at Wembley to honour Nelson Mandela. At a time when the music scene is awash with the sameness of the 'tits and bums' promotional video and ever so 'naughty and nasty' metal posers, Chapman comes as a welcomed break.

'Little black gets assaulted
Ain't no reason why
Newspapers print the story
And racist tempers fly
Next day it starts a riot
Knives and guns are drawn
Two black boys get killed
One white boy goes Blind
Across the lines.

The contrast between Chapman and the likes of Whitney Houston is stark. Chapman uses her powerful and emotive to provoke and invite change.

to provoke and invite change. Her blackness is one hundred per cent. Whitney Houston embraces the bland pop mould of the marketing men and follows Micheal Jackson in the pursuit of whiteness.

The Unaccompanied 'Behind the Wall' is a Haunting testimony to the powerless isolation of battered women. The propaganda of 'his house, his money, his wife' and the makes victims. Make sure you are listening.

'Sweet lazy
Sweet lazy life
Champagne and caviar
I hope you'll come and find me
Cause you know who we are
Those who deserve the best in life
And know what moneys worth
And those whose sole misfortune
Was having mountains of nothing at birth.'
Mountains of Things.

As a black female protest singer, Chapman would seem more appropriate to the late sixties rather than the current era of yuppie-dom and reaction. She sings uplifting verses with soul and political clarity. It's surprising that she has got substantial backing for the release of this album. I recall a line from a Clash song 'Turning rebellion into money'. This may prove to be the case but lets hope Chapman gets to write her own story.

Although dealing with hard realities Chapman doesn't just sing the blues. She observes the truths and returns with passionate optimism. If you won't go into something with a bit of depth and no nonsense, two fingers to those with 'mountains of things'.

'Poor people gonna rise up
And take whats theirs
Finally the tables are starting to turn
Talkin 'bout a revolution'.
Talkin 'bout a revolution.



tracy chapman~debut lp.



Ann Englishman Vic Adams a colliery engineer from South Yorkshire was wounded during the SAS executions of IRA Volunteers Mairead Farrell, Danny McCann and Sean Savage. Adams was on holiday with his wife in Gibraltar when he felt a burning sensation and found later that a ricocheting bullet had passed through his shirt grazing his chest.

There has been media speculation that Adams will not be a key witness at the inquest in September. The Ministry of Defence has confirmed that Adams has been paid compensation for his injuries but refused to disclose the amount. A family friend was quoted as saying, 'Vic is deeply worried about the consequences of witnessing the shooting. They have been visited by representatives of various government departments and 'others' in the last three weeks. I can't say who the 'others' are who have visited'

Before an already controversial inquest with national and international implications, agents of the government belatedly discover a 'key witness'. He is then 'visited' (bribe?), regularly at home by mysterious gentlemen (MI6?) and when challenged MOD do not deny that he has already been paid an undisclosed sum of money in compensation (bribe?). It may turn out that Mr Adams is pure as the driven snow and when he gets in the witness box 'he will tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but.....'. However given the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the case this seems like a very blatant case of - We'll pay half now and half later.

Special arrangements to save the 4,400 residents of the City of London from paying a poll tax of some £9000 a head after 1990 were agreed last March by MPs. Instead the residents of Britain's smallest but richest city will be faced with annual charges of about £235 a head excluding the cost of Education Services. In future when you hear the rich exclaim that "Charity begins at home", You'll know its their own homes their referring to.

Forty-Five French Generals and Admirals have been given a spectacular public reprimand by France's Minister of Defence for questioning the authority of President Francois Mitterrand, Commander in Chief of the country's armed forces during the recent Presidential election. The Officers Declared in a communique that Mr Mitterrand's rival Mr Jacques Chirac was the only one of the two candidates in whom they had confidence.

The group includes a former Chief of Defence Staff, former heads of individual armed services and a former Chief of Military Staff at the Presidential Palace. A very British Coup with French subtitles?



Players in a dangerous game: Mitterrand (left) and Le Pen

"Where in the whole wide world can you find a more just society than South Africa." P.W. Botha.

"Piet Botha is still a liberal." An Afrikaner farmer who has defected to the ultra-right Conservative party.

"They put a baby's dummy in my mouth..covered my head with a wet sack, then connected electric wires to my toes. My whole body was filled with the most serious pain." William who was never charged with any crime was just 11.



The cartoon on the right appeared in the London Evening Standard the day after "our allies" the US shot an Iranian passenger plane out of the sky killing 190 men women and children. The cartoon on the left was in the same paper on Friday March 17th. During that week the working class nationalist of West Belfast had cause to bury no less than eight members of their community. The British Army and the loyalists claimed four each.

On Monday 20th March there were no "humorous" cartoons. In complete contrast the editorial spoke of "feelings of lasting indignation", "Infamy", and "Outrage". This was in reference to the capture, by unarmed stewards of two armed undercover soldiers who had driven at high speed into a IRA funeral procession. They were subsequently shot by the IRA. It really doesn't it, as if they actually believe that in dealing with pain and death, that they and theirs have a monopoly on suffering. Through these cartoons it is possible to see the real face of the ruling class, the arrogance, vindictiveness and inhumanity. But perhaps in the end, it is their utter hypocrisy which is the most striking, the most dishonest and so the most unforgivable.

Tax fraud has soared since the Tories came to power in 1979, but more staff are still employed tracking down the suspect claimants than the tax dodgers.

There were 53 cases of Tax Evasion involving more than £100,000 in 1979. By last year that had risen to 248 cases of which six involved more than £1,000,000 in Tax.

Tax recovered from fraud cases rose from £122,000,000 in 1979 to £741,000,000 recovered last year reckoned by experts to be the tip of the iceberg. There are only 2,600 officials employed on Tax Fraud cases while there are 2,724 employed on benefit fraud cases who recovered only £55,000,000 in 6,603 prosecutions reckoned to be the bulk of it. This is contrast to the 326 Tax Fraud prosecutions yielding over thirteen times as much. There is nothing like having your priorities right, but this is simply the result of having right priorities.

NIGHT THOUGHTS

"All the Government wanted were hand-picked images of the conflict and this country has still refused to acknowledge the cost of it. I think that what we were supposed to have fought for was worth defending but it turned out that the people who sent me there didn't believe in those things themselves." Robert Lawrence. Ex-Guards officer and 'hero' of Tumble-down.

"I often here that when people go into police stations they get treated roughly. Perhaps half of the problem is they just don't...Perhaps we are not as condemnatory as we should be. Perhaps we have gone too soft on them."

Peter Imbert. Commissioner Metropolitan Police.

"Detective Sergeant Laurie Cork told us that fabricating verbal confessions was just away of life at the Yard."

Time Out's John McVicar after he secretly taped a conversation with the former police officer.

"Mikhail Gorbachev is by far the ablest Soviet leader since Stalin." Former US President Richard Nixon.

"We are like the British S.A.S except we try to catch our victims without killing them."

Chief Inspector Dieter Scherer, head of the German S.E.K.

"If someone cried havoc and set loose the Dogs of War, I think it is a perfectly legitimate line of inquiry... To ask who that was."

Mr Patrick McGrory lawyer for the families of the three IRA members executed in Gibraltar.

"The general belief expressed even by protestant paramilitaries and politicians is that the IRA is definitely the superior force, - Better trained, better disciplined, braver because more committed, more efficient because more intelligent."

The right wing Economist conclusion after comparing Loyalist paramilitaries and the IRA.

"For seven and a half years I've worked along side him and I'm proud to be his partner. We've had triumphs, we've made mistakes, we've had sex...er Set-backs."

George Rush on Ronald Reagan.

"Touts are a blessing, they get tickets to the people who value them most. All this criticism is silly hysteria. They are buying and selling and taking a commission, its no different than what happens on the stockmarket."

Theresa Gorman. Tory MP for Billericay.

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 unselected and unaccountable 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.