

Socialist Challenge

BUILD A SOCIALIST OPPOSITION FOR A UNIFIED REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION

12p

30 June 1977 No. 4



GRUNWICK: **GOVERNMENT** **SPECIAL PATROL** **GROUP STEPS IN**

INSIDE: Split in Swedish CP.....IMG reply to SWP on unity.....Soweto leader interviewed.....

The day they got Arthur



George Ward likes to present himself as the protector of individual rights. Let him know what you think. Socialist Challenge knows that most of its readers don't keep Telex input machines in their homes. Nevertheless, opportunities do arise, so send George a message now. Telex number for the Chapter Road factory is 922886 and for Cobbold Road 925745. Socialist Challenge looks forward to hearing what you tell him.

Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

A voice can be faintly heard: This is now a struggle between the State and the whole trade union movement. If necessary we will build another Saltley Gate to win it.

The words are those of Yorkshire miners' leader Arthur Scargill — well pretty nearly. The two thousand and more pickets packed armpit to armpit outside the front gates of Grunwick don't allow you to move your hands, let alone a pen.

It's the ninth day of mass picketing and they have finally arrived. We'd been told for days they were coming. The miners were coming... We are jubilant, the 1,000 police are white — bar the token black cop that's put on display every morning.

Scargill makes the shortest speech of his life. Two minutes. The cheering lasts longer. As the Yorkshire miners march off to the back gate, the crowds on the pavements raise clenched fists in the air. The miners respond in kind. A huge red banner from the South Wales miners is left straddling the road near the front gate.

Everybody waits: police and pickets. This, we know, could be the turning point in the dispute.

For 44 weeks the Grunwick strikers have taken it all: beatings up by police and management; intimidation and arrests. And now for the first time in nine days of mass picketing, one of the major sections of the trade union movement has turned out in force.

that stupid. Arresting MP Audrey Wise was dumb enough.

Pickets start forcing their way through the police ranks in Chapter Road and walk, run, towards Coopers Road. A line of Special Patrol Group block it. The Welsh miners have already broken through to join their Yorkshire colleagues. Momentarily it's broken again, pickets are thrown against walls. Down at the back gates, it's pandemonium.

The SPG were having a field day. The miners had barely arrived at the Cooper Road gate when this 'thug force' — as one MP has called it — started laying in. As the scab bus drives towards the gate they lead the charge into the picket.

SPG

One SPG officer bangs a woman's head against a wall. Another tries to do the same with a miner; so four miners proceed to dent a car with his head (which proves what they say about the police). A line of shameful scabs, heads down, file through a crack in the back gate. Half of George Ward's dwindling workforce has arrived. Scargill is led, red-faced, fit to explode, to a police bus.

At 10am the scene is repeated as another bus load of scabs is brought in. A few seconds later an SPG van drives through a throng of pickets, who bang on the sides and jeer. An SPG officer leaps out, grabs at a girl, stumbles. A bottle whistles through the air into a crowd of pickets and hits him. He falls in a pool of blood.

For ten or more minutes he is left lying there while the police call over the BBC camera crew and all the press to get the most photographic shots of the blood. The local hospital is just up the road. The SPG officer kneeling next

to the wounded man can hardly keep the smile from his face. Ten stitches are needed. The press report him fighting for his life. Pickets with broken limbs are ignored.

PROTEST

11.30am. Press conference, Brent Trades Hall. Jack Dromey, Secretary of the local trades council and of the South East Region of the TUC, is speaking: 'We protest in the strongest possible terms at the use of the SPG at Cooper Road. There are numerous instances of police beating up pickets.'

'The use of the SPG is an outrageous provocation which has led to the worse scenes of violence at Cooper Road. For 44 weeks APEX and the trade union movement played cricket. We went through all the procedures and it has been demonstrated by this dispute that they are not worth the paper they're written on... The pickets will continue and they will be stepped up.'

MINERS

1pm Crown Pub. The miners won't move till Arthur is out. Furious discussions are going on all round the pub as to what to do. 'Strike action', 'Send 20,000 pickets.' ITN News comes on. Thunderous roars greet every surge from the pickets, boos the police. One copper slumps down holding his balls. More applause. We've had enough, we're fighting back. The spirit of the 1972 miners' strike has returned.

by MICK GOSLING



FLASHBACK to 1973: three months strike failed then

1973: the first shots

GEORGE WARD has spent a lot of time in the past few weeks telling the national press that he is not anti-union. The Grunwick workers who went on strike for union recognition from January to March 1973 — and lost their jobs as a result — are highly impressed at Ward's protesting.

Raj Patel was a qualified photographer at Grunwick in 1973. He told Socialist Challenge there were no fixed hours, and for being prepared to work from 9am to 9pm during the summer season he earned the princely sum of £18 plus overtime. Overtime was paid at flat rate for the first eight hours, and time and a quarter thereafter.

Discontent was fuelled by instances such as a beat-man being threatened with the sack if he took

Saturday off to attend his friend's wedding. It was the same workers who eventually began organising others into the Transport and General Workers' Union. Another was given his cards for sitting on a table when George Ward told him to sit on a chair. Then, as now, half the workforce was Asian.

Says Raj: 'Ward's attitude was do as you're told or get out'. He sacked the two main union organisers on the spot, and about a third of the workforce came out in sympathy. But we were let down by our own unions. Under no circumstances would Ward recognise the union — he'd prefer to shut down.'

Raj's views are backed up by a letter from the then Tory Minister

at the Department of Employment, Robin Chichester-Clark, to Laurie Pavitt, MP for Brent South. Dated 15 March, 1973, it read: 'A number of approaches have been made to the company to discuss the situation and to find out how far the services of the Department of Manpower advisor could be of assistance in helping to resolve any difficulties.'

'The employer, however, has not felt he has any real problem and does not consider that any useful purpose would be served in meeting union representatives'. The Grunwick bosses have maintained the same position to this day. As Raj Patel says there is only one way to deal with Ward: 'Put him down'.

WHISPER

We don't have long to wait. A whisper starts along the ranks in Chapter Road. Scargill has been arrested. We think it's a joke, or the work of a provocateur. Scargill? Not even the police are

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

If you agree with these principles and want to be involved in activities by Socialist Challenge supporters in your area, fill in the form below and send it to us:

I am interested in more information about activities in my area.

I would like additional literature and enclose 50p to cover costs.

[Delete if not applicable]

NAME

ADDRESS

Send to Socialist Challenge, 328/329 Upper Street, London N1.

OUR POLICIES

Capitalism is in crisis. The leaders of the Labour Party and the trades unions offer solutions that are in the interests, not of the workers, but of the capitalist class.

Socialist Challenge believes that the two vital tasks confronting revolutionary socialists are:

* To build broad-based class struggle tendencies in opposition to class collaborationism in the labour movement. These should be non-exclusive in character grouping together militants holding a wide range of political views.

* To begin to fight for the creation of a unified and democratic revolutionary socialist organisation which can, through an application of united front tactics, begin to be seen as an alternative by thousands of workers engaged in struggles.

Such an organisation should be based on the understanding that:

1 The struggle for socialism seeks to unite the fight of the workers against the bosses with that of other oppressed layers of society — women, black people, gays — struggling for their liberation. This socialism can only be achieved by creating new organs of power and defeating with all necessary means the power of the capitalist state.

2 Our socialism will be infinitely more democratic than what exists in Britain today, with full rights for all political parties and currents that do not take up arms against the socialist state. The Stalinist models of 'socialism' in the USSR and Eastern Europe have discredited socialism in the eyes of millions of workers throughout the world. We are opposed to them and will offer full support to all those fighting for socialist democracy.

3 The interests of workers and capitalists are irreconcilable on a world scale. Capitalism has not only created a world market, it has created world politics. Thus we fight for working class unity on an international scale. This unity will in the long run be decisive in defeating both the imperialist regimes in the West and the brutal dictatorships they sustain in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

In Britain it implies demanding the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and letting the Irish people determine their own future.

4 The Communist Parties in Europe are in crisis. Neither the 'Euro-communist' nor the pro-Moscow wings have any meaningful strategy for the overthrow of the capitalist state. New revolutionary socialist parties are more necessary than ever before. Conditions today are more favourable than over the preceding three decades. But such parties can only be built by rejecting sectarianism and seeing external democracy not as a luxury but as a vital necessity. This means the right to organise factions and tendencies.

On the trail of the bus of shame The scab carrier

It is just after 9 am last Friday. The blue scab-carrying double decker leaves Grunwick to a chorus of abuse from the pickets and protection from the 'George Ward rent-a-mob' police. They have just let off their first load of scabs.

The bus drives off up Willesden High Road, past Willesden tube station and up to the roundabout at Cricklewood Broadway. It takes a side turning into Temple Avenue.

For the next 20 minutes the bus is driven round in circles, up and down side streets. At the wheel is a dark-haired driver. Inside, an unshaven sandy-haired passenger. They finally realise they are being followed.

Story by Geoff Bell and Jonathan Silberman
Photos by Ezra Nathan

Sandy-haired comes to the back of the bus and takes down our car number. Their number is 5006 CD. He moves back to the front of the bus, raises the aerial of the two-way radio and speaks into it.

The vehicle continues trying to dodge us, then gives up and comes to a halt in Park Avenue North, NW10. We go up to the bus and show our press cards. We ask the driver and his guard who they are. They don't answer.

With one exception they avoid or refuse to answer every question. The exception comes when the camera appears. 'We want a fee for those photos', they say.

They finally give up hoping they will be left alone, and drive off. This time the route is more direct and in 15 minutes they have arrived at their destination, St.

Andrews Road. The bus stops at the top of the road and the dark-haired driver gets out. He walks down to the end of the street where another bus and a couple of van loads of cops are waiting. The dark-haired one goes over to one of the police vans and starts a long conversation with a senior cop.

The door of the second bus is open and standing there are members of Grunwick management and their helpers. In the bus no more than fifteen scabs sit.

The bus driver finishes his conversation with the police. We ask a cop who he is.

'Just a passer-by expressing his feeling.' 'But he was driving the bus.' No comment.

In fact the driver is named Pearson and he is the son of a director of Grunwick.

We go to the second bus and ask the whites by the platform who they are.

'We all work for Grunwick.' 'Who is the sandy-haired bloke in the other bus?'

'Who?'

'The one with the two-way radio.'

'What radio?'

They contradict themselves and each other. They insist that nobody ever comes on to the bus who doesn't work for Grunwick or the press. But they don't know who the sandy-haired guard is.

The guard himself says he doesn't work for Grunwick. 'Who do you work for?'



Complete with what he later admitted was a walkie-talkie, the guard on the Grunwick bus — he claimed he was 'free-lance'

'Nobody.' 'Are you self-employed?' 'You could say that,' he says with a grin. 'How much are you being paid?'

'That would be telling.'

At the second bus the management team are talking to a reporter from the American TV network, CBS. 'We have had no trouble from the press,' they tell him.

Directing the show is grey-haired, dark-suited Grunwick security officer Woollett. He is a former member of the infamous Willesden Green police force, and as he chats to, almost directs the police, the 'special relationship' Grunwick have with the cops is self-evident.

Eventually the consultations, back-slapping and shared jokes between the Grunwick management and the cops ends. They are getting ready to move off. A cop comes over to us and says: 'You

shouldn't take photographs'.

But when the press cards are shown he breathes a sigh of relief. He too knows they 'have had no trouble with the press'.

The doors of the second bus close. The police get back into their van. They prepare to move off. A sergeant in the van opens his window and says 'Don't follow this convoy.'

Again the press cards are shown. 'Who are you from?' the sergeant asks.

'Socialist Challenge'.

'If you follow this bus we will arrest you.'

'What for?'

'Obstruction.'

'We ask for his name and number.'

'Piss off.'

The tin pot army of management, scabs and police drive off together, one for all and all for one.



A touch of rank

TOP POLICE officers are not only class conscious, they are also incredibly rank conscious. On the Grunwick picket line last week the following conversation was overheard by a reader in the middle of a mass scuffle with the police:

A PICKET: 'Push that inspector through the gates.'

A POLICE OFFICER (squashed up against the Grunwick gates): 'I'm not an inspector. I'm a chief superintendent.'

PICKET: 'You'll do.'

Coppers v The People

OVERHEARD ON another morning of mass picketing at Grunwick:

A POLICEMAN: 'How many were here yesterday?'

ANOTHER POLICEMAN: 'What do you mean, coppers or people?'

Strathclyde adventurers

THE REGIONAL Council in Strathclyde has once again demonstrated its humanitarian approach and solicitude as far as small children are concerned. Leading councillors visited adventure playgrounds in Easterhouse and Gorbals, two of the most deprived areas in the whole of Scotland.

Their verdict: the playgrounds were a danger to children who played in them. Their solution: to withhold £10,000 earmarked for staff wages at the playgrounds.

The result: after October the playground will cease to exist. Remember the American commander in Vietnam who claimed that the only way they could 'save' a particular village was to destroy it? Well, he obviously has his admirers on the Strathclyde Regional Council.

The real scroungers

READERS WILL recall the fuss which is generally made in the unfree press about social security officers 'overpaying' claimants and the like. It is not mentioned that the DHSS annually saves £598 million (or nearly 60 times what is 'overpaid') in unclaimed benefits.

More interesting is the lack of coverage given to the fact that civil servants — normally most judicious in collecting taxes, rents, rates and the rest — are a bit slipshod

when it comes to collecting huge sums of money owed to the State by private industry.

Westland Helicopters, for instance, currently owes the Government £700,000. Civil servants have only managed to collect £53,000. In another instance military equipment was sold by the Government at less than cost price.

Is it purely accidental that the majority of oversights occur in relation to firms engaged in manufacturing arms and defence equipment? Remember the story of the Asian family and the five-star hotel...

Worm eats worm

THE FOLLOWING was proudly reported by the Daily Telegraph on 16 June:

'One of 800 pupils at Loughborough Grammar School, Leicestershire, given 25p by the headmaster, Mr John Millward to turn into a profit for the Prince of Wales' Appeal, made £31 by eating worms.'

'Sam Andrews, 14, explained: "I got people to sponsor me for eating 10 worms. I felt a bit sick afterwards but it was all worth it. The school raised £1,117 for the appeal.'

Wild Bill Montgomery

LAST FRIDAY, as the Tories were ranting on about 'law and order' and their words were being headlined in the ruling class press, the following news item was on a small paragraph in the Guardian:

'Tory MP William Montgomery, former Parliamentary Secretary to Opposition leader Mrs Margaret Thatcher, was yesterday further remanded on £50 bail to Horseferry Road Magistrates' Court, London, accused of stealing two books from a London store.'

The Times apologises

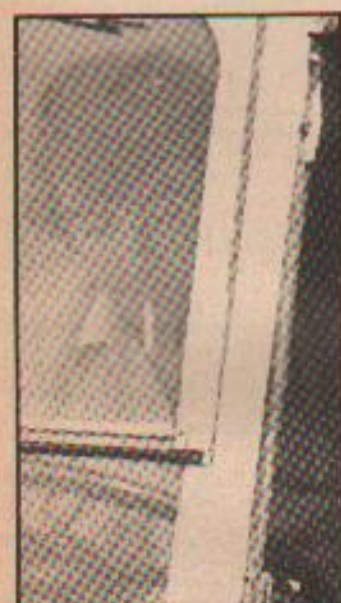
THE POLICE attacks on the Yorkshire miners last Thursday followed a recent humiliation of the police's main backers — the National Association for Freedom — at the hands of the NUM.

John Gouriet, NAFF's leader in an interview last January with The Times alleged that the NUM faced allegations of ballot-rigging in the courts and another 'highly important and relevant case concerning picketing.'

Like many of Gouriet's remarks that one was a lie, and The Times has now been forced to print a groveling apology to the NUM.



Surrounded by Securicor and a police van the bus waits in St. Andrews Road to carry its second load of scabs to Grunwick.



The driver of the bus — son of Grunwick director Pearson



Security Officer Woollett gets on the bus as the cop walks away satisfied



Miners name 11 July The all-out need to slam the gates

by MICK GOSLING

'We as a union have never refused to accept the findings of any mediator' — Duncan Lapish, Executive Secretary of the clerical union, APEX.

'I have no faith in the legal position. I only believe in the power of the trade union movement' — Jayaben Desai, Treasurer of the Grunwick Strike Committee.

The battle lines have been drawn at Grunwick. The State has ranged its police force against the trade union movement in an attempt to smash a 46-week strike for union recognition. In a series of bruising confrontations, over 250 pickets have been arrested in the past fortnight.

And now other lines are being drawn — inside the labour movement. The leadership of APEX is desperately back-peddalling, clenching at any straw in an effort to end the mass picketing which has brought the strike to national attention.

Last Monday the 'success' of their efforts was demonstrated. Several hundred pickets stood by while scab coaches entered the front and back gates of the firm. In return APEX have been granted the services of an independent mediator whose findings George Ward, the Grunwick boss, has already pledged himself to reject if they include union recognition or reinstatement for the strikers.

What sort of 'mediation' is it where one side makes all the concessions? Says Mrs. Desai: 'I think it's rubbish. All the pressure is going on the strikers

and no conditions are being placed on management. Management are making the conditions on the mediators and they are making the conditions on us.'

By contrast the APEX executive is falling over itself to hail as a victory any indication from Ward that he will accept mediation — which is rather like recognising rigor mortis in a corpse as life itself.

Unlike the trade union bureaucrats, the ruling class knows just what is at stake. The National Association for Freedom is about to welcome George Ward through their hallowed portals. Tory MP 'You're all a bunch of shits' Gorsi, has forsaken the rigours of parliamentary life to become personal adviser to George Ward.

Against the violence and intimidation of the ruling class and their lackeys in the labour movement, the strikers at Grunwick and their supporters throughout the country have only one answer — the strength of their numbers.

'We want the mass pickets to continue', says Mahmood Ahmed, Secretary of the Strike Committee. '11 July — that's what I mean by mass picket', he adds.

This is a call which must be taken up throughout the labour movement. Roger Griffiths, who was part of a delegation from East Birmingham engineers on the Grunwick picket on Monday, puts it like this: 'A lot of people don't know what is happening about the picketing — when to come down, whether to come down. This is why we should organise for one big day. We should mobilise around Scargill's call for 11 July.'

Griffiths attended the famous mass picket which closed the Salsley coke depot in 1972, and adds: 'For the first few days the coppers were kicking shit out of us at Salsley, but then we all came out together, chose a day to close the gates and it was a different kettle of fish.'

Let the last word go to Mrs. Desai: 'I have no faith in the legal position. I only believe in the power of the trade union movement. Nothing happened for 44 weeks. We played cricket. The mass picket brought the issue to a head, and the mass picket will win it.'

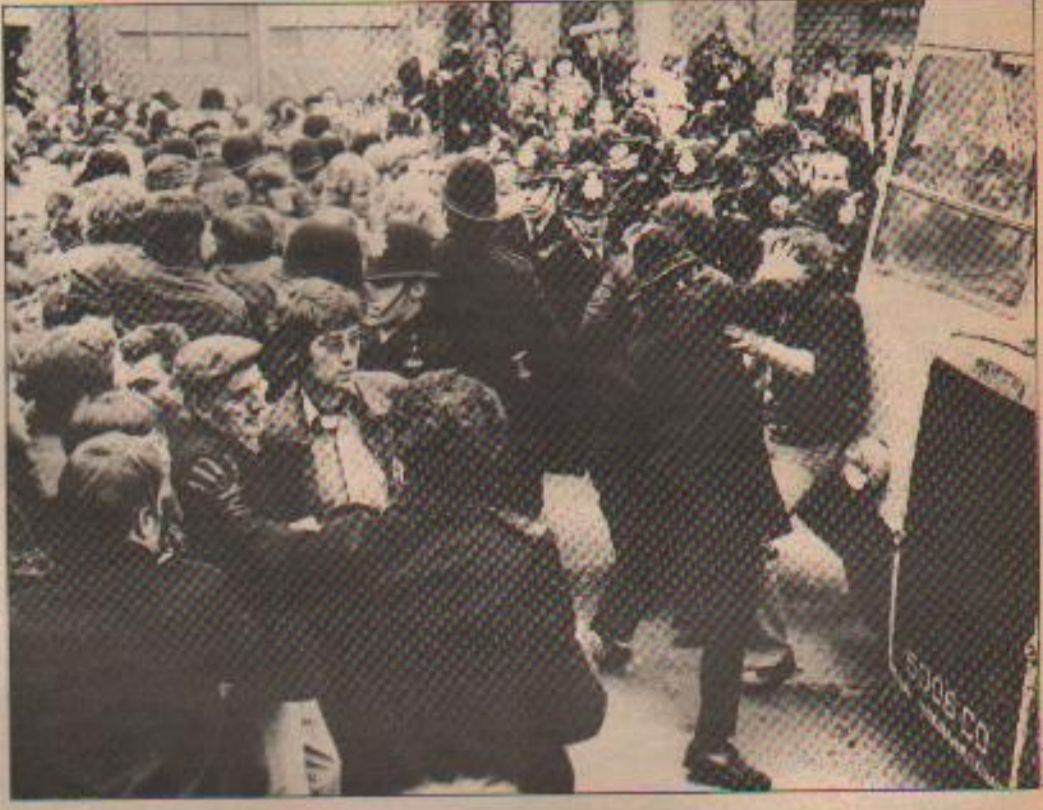


Photo: LAURENCE SPARHAM (IFL)

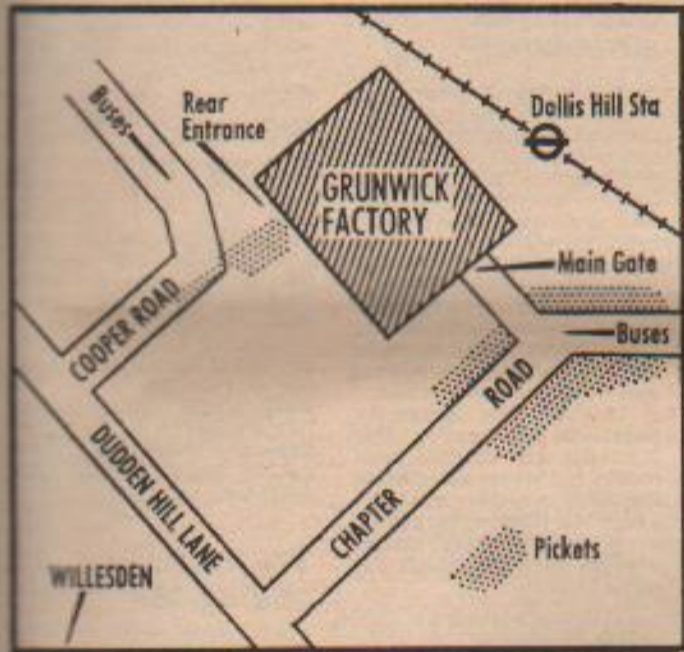


Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

There are other ways of helping the Grunwick strikers besides turning up on the mass picket. The most obvious is not to use any of the films processed by Grunwick.

As well as Grunwick itself, these films go under the trade names of Bonuspool, Tricolour, Monokolor and Cooper and Pearson.

Most of Grunwick's business is

done through direct mail order, but some chemists and other shops which offer film processing may be sending stuff to Grunwick.

The Grunwick Strike Committee have asked trade unionists to approach chemists shops, see if they are dealing with Grunwick, and if they are ask them to stop.

Many chemists have responded favourably to such a request.

And in a number of cases where the chemists have refused to boycott Grunwick, local trade unionists have picketed the shop concerned.

On Saturday, for example, Camden Trades Council picketed Engel Pharmacy, beside Mornington Crescent tube station in Camden. The owner of the chemist had refused to stop dealing with Grunwick.

The police, Scargill, and I

by Steve Faulkner

IT'S NOT EVERY DAY you get roughed up by the police and chat to Arthur Scargill as well. But last Thursday this happened on the Grunwick picket line to Steve Faulkner, TGWU shop steward from the 1/524 branch. Steve explains:

'I was standing on the pavement with other pickets after the scabs had gone in. Everyone was preparing to move away when the Special Patrol Group arrived and wanted pushing us. Three of us were pushed over a garden wall and luckily missed being crushed.

The pickets responded by linking arms to allow the injured to be lifted up and helped. The SPG then began snatching people from the picket and dragging them into the street. One minute I was linked up; the next four SPG officers had dragged me out of line by my hair and clothes.

Punching and butting me they forced me down the street. I fell to the ground and they started kicking me — they kicked my arms so I couldn't roll into a ball to

protect myself.

I was loaded into a van and taken to Wembley police station. Surprise, surprise, I was charged with assaulting a police officer.

I met Arthur Scargill who had just been arrested in the police van. He was obviously very shaken and angry, although he gave us a boost when one of the first things he said was that what was needed was another Salsley. He said he would do his best to organise it.

At the police station some of the police were openly hostile to Scargill, especially the younger ones. Although it was the top brass who interviewed him — and they, in the words of another miner, 'were buzzing around him like shit'.

Other police weren't sure what they had done. Sitting next to Scargill on the bus I asked a policeman how many arrests there had been. 'About fifty,' he replied, 'and we got that bloody Scargill bloke as well'. We nearly fell off our seats laughing as Scargill butted in: 'Aye, you've got to watch that bugger.'

MARXIST SYMPOSIUM

THE EUROPEAN REVOLUTION

sessions on
 'eurocommunism'
 gramsci, spain
 poulantzas
 women's struggles
 eastern europe
 revolutionary strategy

speakers include
 ernest mandel
 quintin hoare
 denise avenas
 robin blackburn
 norman geras
 michael lowy

at the LSE Houghton St, London WC1
 sept 9, 10, 11th

DETAILS, REGISTRATION: 338, 3 Upper Street, London N1

Socialist Challenge

Class struggle v class collaboration

The views of Roy Grantham, APEX General Secretary, on limiting the pickets: 'We want to reduce the temperature so no one else gets hurt... We don't want a thousand Yorkshire miners here because they will not assist in the resolution of this dispute... For the sake of peace stay away.'

The Grunwick Strike Committee's reply last Thursday: 'We were not consulted about the statement and we totally reject Roy Grantham's view about the picketing.'

'Today's violence was caused by the Special Patrol Group. They will still be there "in reserve" tomorrow and the coach will still pass through the picket without us being able to speak to those inside. The proposed tactics will lead to the victimisation of trade unionists on the picket line.'

on the picket line.

'We congratulate our friends the miners and other trade unionists who have given us such excellent support, and we call for them to come in ever greater numbers tomorrow and next week. They will be more than welcome in this critical fight for basic trade union rights.'

'George Ward has today once again snubbed Albert Booth and confirmed his intention not to reinstate us. Unless we escalate the picketing and the blocking of vital services to the company, we will still be outside the gates, trapped in a legal wilderness for another 10 months.'

'This is a fight now for the whole trade union movement and we will not tolerate any betrayal of the goals that we and our supporters have fought for so hard and so long.'

Journalists battle for closed shop Police bring out coshes for press freedom

A POLICE attack on the weekly mass picket at North of England newspapers in Darlington on Friday night led to 15 arrests. The police were determined to prevent the success of the previous week's picket when NUJ members, on strike for a closed shop agreement had prevented most copies of the Northern Echo from leaving the building by occupying the loading bay.

Journalists have shown a ready response to mobilise for the mass pickets, with contingents coming from London, Glasgow, Sheffield, Kettering, Middlesbrough and Newcastle. Among those arrested were NUJ regional organiser John Hodgman, NUJ national broadcasting organiser Tim Fell, and Ewan Campbell, the deputy father of the chapel at Darlington.

working in Darlington. It merely 'requested' a meeting with Lord Gibson, the head of Westminster Press, who last month stated in the House of Lords that he would never allow a closed shop agreement in any of his newspapers.

because of his anti-Common Market views. And when the editor included printworkers' earnings but deleted those of journalists from a report issued by the Royal Commission on the press last year National Graphical Association members stopped work for the night.

It is vital that all trade unionists in the North rally to support the Darlington journalists. All are welcome from 6pm each Friday. For details of next mass picket: NUJ Strike Committee, 9 Victoria Road, Darlington. Phone 0325-50282

DAVE CARTER and GEOFFREY SHERIDAN



Building Worker

LAST SEPTEMBER, as a result of disagreements over several issues with Communist Party members on the London Joint Sites, which is also the London Building Workers Charter group, a number of building workers decided to set up a London Building Workers Rank and File Committee and to produce a bulletin.

Initially four duplicated pages priced 2p, we progressed to a four-page printed paper coming out regularly once a month, and the latest issue (no. 7) has increased to eight pages at 5p.

looking to the Tory-controlled councils to take work away from direct labour departments and hand it over to private contractors.

Already Birmingham has announced that their direct works will be shut and this will be followed by other Tory councils eager to hand out contracts in the name of Masonic solidarity.

BLACKLISTING

NOW THERE is no longer a labour shortage, employers can take more time on the hiring of workers and the blacklist can be more effectively applied. Birmingham council was able to sack Phil Beyer — an active member of UCATT and the CP — after just two hours employment. After going through the industrial tribunals machinery, Mr Justice Kilner-Brown upheld the right to victimise trade unionists for being active, and described the blacklist as 'a justifiable embargo against his (Beyer's) employment resulting from his (union) activities'. Only a decasualisation scheme controlled by the unions will eliminate the blacklisting of active trade unionists.

THE LUMP

WITH THE introduction of tighter tax regulations this year, the Lump is on the decline, although the increasing unemployment in the industry has played a part also. Certainly little or no credit can be claimed by the trade union leadership.

The employers however have still retained the system of subcontracting with only a handful of men employed by the main contractor. On a number of sites it has become extremely difficult to organise workers split up among half a dozen subbies, so that a demand for direct employment with the main contractor must be made before starting on the basic things such as wages and conditions.

For the price of 30p you can be the proud owner of all the issues of Building Worker up till now, plus a policy statement and a brief account as to why we left the London Joint Sites and the Building Workers Charter. Orders, articles, and donations to: Building Worker, 19 Red Post Hill, London, SE24.

* London UCATT shop stewards met on 21 June and put out the call to local authority building workers to down tools on Tuesday 19 July in protest against Tory cuts in direct labour departments.

A similar decision has been taken by workers employed by Midland local authorities. It is expected that 20,000 will strike on 5 July. Manchester council building workers are assembling at the Mancunian Way, Oxford Road, at 12.30pm the same day. They will be marching in solidarity with Birmingham builders.

WILLIAM TYNDALE TEACHERS NO SACKINGS

IN APRIL 1977, THE AUA SAY
Paragraph 23 of AUA Document 1 stated

IN JULY 1976, THE AUA REPORT SAID
Paragraph 21 of AUA Report 1

AFTER THE AUA REPORT WAS PUBLISHED

WE AS TEACHERS, PARENTS AND STUDENTS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE COST OF THIS ADVERTISEMENT ARE NOT BELIEVING THAT THE AUA IS ACTING JUSTLY IN PURSUING TO SACK THE TEACHERS FROM THE AUA.

Telephone 01-263-2536



Support for Oxford teachers' 10-day strike: from parents and children

Teachers move to blunt the axe

On Saturday, 2 July an open conference takes place in Birmingham for members of the National Union of Teachers. Its purpose is to develop the fight-back against education cuts.

As it meets, the resistance to the cuts by members of the NUT is growing. Betty Hunter, President of Wandsworth NUT, traces this resistance.

writes on teachers who refuse to take classes over 35. But the extent of the NUT 'victory' is that instead of cutting £3 million from education the council will only cut £2.9 million!

It has thus been left to the teachers on the ground in London to organise their own action. Seven schools in London are committed to strike action in their area on 5 July over cuts and compulsory transfers and a meeting planned for 30 June hopes to extend this support.

But the overriding need is for a national campaign and the open conference on 2 July provides the opportunity for launching it. The type of class size action taking place in Oxfordshire needs to be extended nationally if unemployed teachers are to be given jobs, and education facilities maintained.

In short it means opposing the cuts locally and nationally, and building for national strike action.

* The planning meeting for London strike action on 5 July takes place at the Earl Russell pub, St. Pancras Rd, NW1 at 5.15pm on 30 June.
* London NUT members going to the 2 July open conference can travel by the coach leaving from Kings Cross at 7.30am. £2.50 return.

Defend Tyndale teachers

The campaign to defend the six William Tyndale teachers, sacked by the Inner London Education Authority for going on strike, is gathering strength. Last week an advertisement appeared in the Islington Gazette listing 200 names of those prepared to support the reinstatement of the teachers. A similar advertisement due to be published soon in the Times Educational Supplement has so far collected £600 and the names of many well known educationalists.

The teachers' appeal against their sackings is scheduled for a week's time, but it has all the makings of a farce. The three Labour councillors hearing the appeal are those who brought the initial charges against the teachers and who voted at a Labour group meeting to sack them. To contribute to the TES advertisement, or the campaign generally, phone 01-263-2536.

Only one lobby needed!

CALLS TO LOBBY the Trades Union Congress have been issued by the Right to Work Campaign and the Number 20 District Committee of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions. The Manchester CESU call for a lobby of Congress on Monday, 5 September, has been backed by the Number 10 Division of AUEW(TASS), which has called on the North-west Region of the TUC to organise the event. A mass lobby which fights for the reversal of the TUC's collaboration in the Government's attacks on living standards is a

pressing need. This is why it is highly regrettable that the Communist Party-initiated call for the Monday lobby by the Manchester CSEU follows the Tuesday call originally put out by the Socialist Workers Party-inspired Right to Work Campaign. Readers of Socialist Challenge are urged to combine their campaign in support of a lobby with calls on the officers of the Right to Work Campaign and the officials of the Number 29 District Committee to meet together to organise a united lobby around fighting policies.

In next week's paper: —

- * Santiago Carrillo: On the Soviet Union.
- * Surplus Value: On the Roman Catholic Church.
- * Open Forum: Big Flame critique of Trotskyism.
- * Reports on TGWU and NUM Conferences

Our extended Grunwick coverage this week meant that some features were held over.

How the abortion campaign can do much better

Socialist Challenge EVENTS NORTH WEST

For details of activities in the NW write or ring the Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre, Third Floor, 14 Piccadilly, Manchester 1. 061-236-3292.
Open Tuesday 6-8pm, Thursday 8-9pm, Saturday 10-1pm. Room available for meetings. Duplicating services.

MANCHESTER. Series of educational for readers.
Thursday 7 July. 'Labour Movement under Attack. The Lessons of Grunwick.'
Thursday 21 July. 'Which Road to Socialism - The Debate in the CP.'
Thursday 4 August. 'The Crisis in the Family.'
Thursday 18 August. 'Racism.'
Thursday 1 September. 'Need for a Revolutionary Party.'
All at the Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre at 7.30pm.
BOLTON. 'Why Revolutionary socialism?' Sunday 17 July, Bolton Institute of Technology, Deane Rd., Bolton. 2pm. Creche. Raffle winners: Pete Sweet, Anthony Whiteside, Rita Timkin, 706, June Wilkes.
WIGAN. Readers Meeting. Friday 1 July. 6.30pm, Old Pear Tree Pub, Wigan.
WARRINGTON. Supporters meeting. Tuesday 5 July. 7.00pm Bowling Green Pub, Liverpool Road, Warrington.
PRESTON. Supporters meeting. Thursday 30 June. 7.30pm. Windsor Centre Pub, Preston.
BIRKENHEAD. Supporters meeting. 'Eurocommunism'. Thursday 30 June Ring Chris 061-652 8879 for details.

NORTH EAST
DARLINGTON. Socialist Challenge Forum. 'Socialists and Elections'. Speakers: Mike Holbrook (IMG), Des Wright (Communist Party). Tuesday 5 July. 7.30pm, Darlington Library.

MIDLANDS
For details of activities of local supporters contact Socialist Challenge Centre, 76b Digbeth High Street, Birmingham. (021-643 9206)
BIRMINGHAM. Social. Saturday 2 July. 8pm. Old Mossley Arms, Tinsal Street, Birmingham.
BIRMINGHAM. Forum on Rape. Wednesday 6 July. For details phone Birmingham SC Centre.
WOLVERHAMPTON. Discussion group. Tuesday 11 July. 7.30pm. Vine Hotel, Broad Street, Wolverhampton.

HOME COUNTIES
BRIGHTON. Forum. 'Fighting the Transport Cuts'. Thursday 7 July. 8pm. Springfield pub.

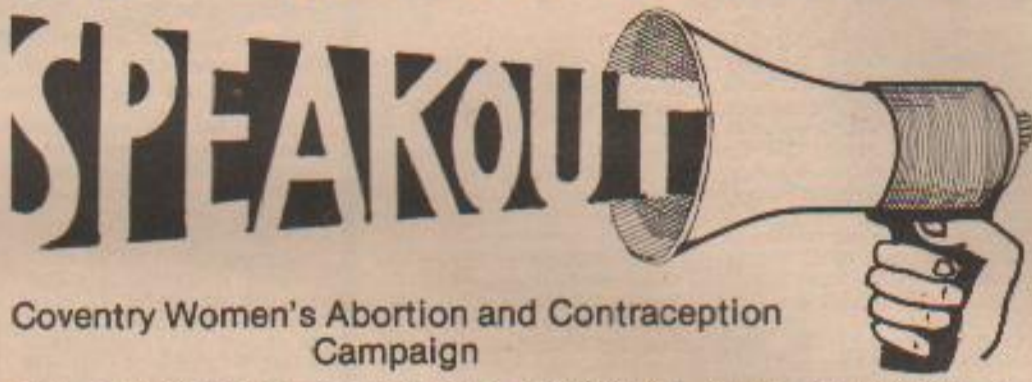
WEST & WALES
BRISTOL. Socialist Challenge Benefit. Friday 1 July. 8 till late. Bamboo Club, Portland Square, St Pauls. Disco, Late Bar, Socialist and anti-racist bands including 'All taste, no talent'. 60p on door.
BRISTOL. Supporters meeting. 'Treason and the Labour Party'. Friday 8 July. 7.30pm. The Swan, Stokes Croft, Bristol.

LONDON
For details of activities ring 01-263 3061. 10-5pm.

SOUTH WEST London Socialist Challenge Rally. Thursday 30 June. 7.30pm. Clapham Manor Baths, Clapham Manor St, SW4. Speakers to include Dodo Weppler (Socialist Challenge), Brian Higgs (President, Lambeth Trades Council, in a personal capacity), Big Flame, Simon White, Chairperson ALARM (personal capacity), and speakers from Lavender Hill School. All welcome.
SOUTH EAST London Forum. 'Tasks for Socialist Challenge'. Thursday 30 June. 7.30pm. Lee Centre, Lewisham. All welcome.

SCOTLAND
For information on Socialist Challenge write c/o Scottish Socialist League, 64 Queen Street, Glasgow. 041-221 7481.

YORKSHIRE
SHEFFIELD. Readers Group. Thursday 14 July. 7.30pm. The Lion Hotel, 3 Nursery Street (off the Wicker), Sheffield. Further details 0742-63156.



Coventry Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign

THE CLACKING of the back-street abortionists' knitting needles are an ever-present reality for working class women in Coventry. The huge West Midlands region is the worst for obtaining NHS abortions, with liberal doctors being policed by rabid SPUC supporters like Scarisbrick. Abortions have to be paid for by 87 per cent of women.

In response to this the Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign has recently been formed. While we wholeheartedly support the demands of the National Abortion Campaign, we see these demands as being of limited value and in need of extending.

The WAACC is demanding more finances from area health authorities to be put into the contraception clinics. This is a particularly important local demand, as a clinic appointment can take several weeks and the figures for those women who need abortions are higher than the national average.

Another demand of the WAACC on a more general level is for compulsory sex education from primary school up, thus hopefully raising in a wider context the question of who controls education and the curriculum, and for what purpose.

The major thrust of the campaign, however, is for a local NHS day-care abortion clinic. We feel it is basically better to have a concrete aim to focus around rather than the demands of NAC which are abstractions,

tending only to have relevance in times of acute crisis in response to restrictive legislation. We have found local response to a petition on the abortion clinic very encouraging, and feel that some general lessons could well be taken from this.

NAC, in Coventry at least, has always been regarded as a defensive body, with the result that there has been no on-going campaign, although Coventry has always sent several coaches down to NAC demos. We would be interested to know whether other NAC groups have had this problem, since this would indicate that a far better response to a stronger campaign could be built, were NAC to go on to the offensive, pushing for an extension of the 1967 Abortion Act among other things.

The WAACC also believes that the National Abortion Campaign's demands do not really pose in concrete ways fighting the cuts in the NHS. The closure of hospitals such as the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson; cuts in maternity beds; lengthening of queues at contraception clinics; black paperites in education against

so-called 'permissiveness' all contribute very sharply to the question of abortion.

We would suggest that the demands which the Coventry Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign is putting forward are a partial step towards combatting this. Were it happening on a national scale it would be considerably more effective!

William Benyon — the anti-abortion MP — is fighting hard to push his restrictive Bill through the Standing Committee stage. Then it can reach the floor of the House of Commons for its final vote. At the committee's first meeting on 27 June, Benyon proposed that the 17 MPs involved should meet 63 hours a week. Normal procedure is that Standing Committees meet one morning a week.

The National Abortion Campaign met Benyon's manoeuvres with a nationally-coordinated Day of Action last Saturday. Pickets, motorcades, public meetings and marches were organised in many towns and cities up and down the country. Many local actions were linked into campaigns for day-care facilities and against closures of existing facilities — thanks to the cuts in the NHS.

Send in details of your local activity on abortion. National round-up next week.

The racist way to strike break

BERT BENSON is a typical right-wing bureaucrat. A consistent supporter of the Social Contract, an opponent of the Shrewsbury pickets, a supporter of the right-wing organisations such as Truamid, Saturn Line and Midland Worker. His connections ensured his victory as the Birmingham West District Secretary for the Engineering Union.

Despite his reputation, the manner in which Benson has operated over recent months has astounded everyone. The victimisation of shop stewards at Albion Bottle in Smethwick is Benson's latest triumph.

Albion Bottle is one of three factories in the Black Country which backed the 20 April one-day strike against wage restraint. The decision was taken by a mass meeting attended by the entire workforce of 250, who are predominantly Asians and West Indians.

At the instigation of management, Benson arrived and tried to persuade the stewards to call off the strike. They argued that they could not overturn a decision taken by the mass meeting. So the management, aided and abetted by Benson and right-wing AUEW leaders Bill Jordan and John Boyd, then set about a long struggle to remove the leading stewards, particularly the AUEW convenor, Dan Dona.

When the Albion workers returned on 21 April, a notice posted on the factory gate informed them that the shop stewards had been sacked. A mass meeting voted to stay out until they were reinstated, infuriating Benson who handed the bosses' leaflets to distribute to the pickets. These were signed by AUEW General Secretary John Boyd, and insinuated that the pickets were employing violence to prevent a return to work; the AUEW District Committee would discipline the stewards; and that the strike was led by the Indian Workers Association.

The latter point was used time and again in attempts to divide the workforce. Benson backed it up by telling AUEW members that the strike was led by 'wogs'. He instructed the T&GWU to cross

Hotel siege

ANTI-FASCIST militants picketed a meeting of the National Front at the Mitre Hotel in Manchester last Friday evening. The picket was also concerned about the continued use of the Hotel by the labour movement as long as it is letting its rooms to fascists.

The initial picket of 40 was reinforced by a coach of militants returning from the Grun-

wick mass picket and by supporters in the National Abortion Campaign who had been picketing the surgery of Labour MP Frank Harton. Two anti-fascists (as well as a local NF candidate) were arrested.

Comrades able to act as a witness for those arrested or to give financial assistance contact: Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre, 061-236-3292.

the picket line, and said the company would close unless there was an immediate return to work. The leading stewards are still not back at work, and the Birmingham AUEW West District Committee has refused to make the strike official on the grounds that the stewards are 'no longer employed by the company'. (Who else is talking like that these days? Why George Ward, the Grunwick boss?)

Unless support comes from the Engineering Union rank and file, the management and Benson will have won and the militant union organisation in the plant will have been smashed. Benson's blatant racism is yet another indication of why the trade union bureaucracy cannot fight against it: it would necessitate a purge inside its own ranks.

Gay News under axe

by Jamie Gough
MARY WHITEHOUSE is privately prosecuting Gay News with charges of 'blasphemous libel' for carrying a poem which portrayed Jesus as gay. The trial started last Monday at the Old Bailey.

The charge itself is farcical. The intention behind it is quite a different matter. It is an attempt to close down the only mass circulation gay newspaper in the country. Gay News — whatever its faults — is an important means of communication for the

gay movement and for gay people socially.

Whitehouse's campaign is part of a wider campaign to strengthen family morality and the family itself as a vital element of capitalist rule. The American singer Anita Bryant is part of the same league as Mary Whitehouse. She led the campaign earlier this month in Florida to have a gay anti-discrimination law repealed. Although the fight against Bryant brought thousands of gay movement activists to Florida to organise to defend the law, they were unsuccessful.

Rough time for Powell

When Enoch Powell tried to sneak through a back entrance of the plush Red Lion pub in Hounslow to speak to the Chamber of Commerce on 22 June, a hundred pickets charged down the alley after him. Comrades from the Southall Youth Movement grabbed the hated racist and dragged him down the steps. The police rushed to Powell's rescue and managed to handle him into the building.

The picket was called by Hounslow Trades Council, and supported by the Labour and Communist Parties, representatives of the Hounslow Hospital work-in, and the far left. While the fascists had blustered away in the letters column of the local press, they didn't dare to interfere on the day.

At a short rally, Gerry Hedley - Socialist IMG candidate in the recent G.L.C. elections - warned

racists: 'The labour movement will not tolerate people like Powell having a public platform anywhere in the area.'

West London IMG was in a good position to mobilise for the picket, thanks to their election campaign. They fly-posted, leafleted from door-to-door, and held a public meeting at Southall Town Hall the evening before. Gerry Hedley, John Bangs of the Workers League, and Linda Pari - a well known local militant - stressed the need for united action against the racists.

Hedley put out a strong call to the 45 militants at the meeting to mount a national demonstration against racism at the Labour Party Conference this October.

Although the Socialist Workers Party was approached to sponsor the meeting, it decided to hold its own. Twenty people attended to hear Nigel Harris on the situation in India.



Enoch 'Rivers of Blood' Powell: rescued by cops

Lewisham 24 march

KIM GORDON called on passers-by in Lewisham's busy shopping centre last Saturday to join the 2 July march in defence of 24 local black youth facing serious charges as a result of a continuing campaign of harassment launched by the police in the area. Fifty militants, representing all the far-left groups gathered around the banner of the Defence Committee to distribute a common leaflet and sell their own newspapers.

The National Party and the National Front did not let the occasion go by unnoticed. Marching through the Lewisham streets in support of police action against

blacks, the National Party heavies converged on one side of the defence meeting. Fifty NF members needed no excuse to arrive on the other side to sell their racist rag.

The attention given to the case of the 24 young blacks by the fascists makes it even more urgent that a strong show of force is evident at the march this Saturday. The demonstration is calling for: all charges to be dropped against the black youth; for black self-defence; and an end to police brutality.

Saturday, 2 July. 2pm, Clifton Rise, New Cross, London SE 14.

Last week Socialist Challenge published an article by Duncan Hallas, a leading member of the Socialist Workers Party, on left unity. I will try and answer his points systematically.

What is the purpose of a joint electoral slate?

We agree with Duncan Hallas that the success of revolutionaries in elections cannot be gauged simply by the number of votes won. However, to say that our success or failures can be judged simply by 'members recruited, contacts made, SW readers gained and so on', is quite upside-down way to see things.

The starting point in elections, as in any policy, is not whether the organisation grows from it but whether it takes forward the class struggle. For example the German Communist Party reached its height of membership in the 1930s as Hitler came to power and when the ultra-leftism of the Third Period prevailed. Furthermore, as is discussed in the excellent book *Inside German Communism*, (published by Pluto), morale in the German CP was very high because of that growth. Would Hallas therefore conclude that the tactics of the German CP of the Third Period were correct because of its recruitment rate?

Of course, if the needs of the class struggle are correctly understood then an organisation does grow—and indeed this is the only long term basis for growth. But the starting point is the needs of the class, not the organisational growth.

If we turn to electoral tactics, did the electoral division of revolutionaries in Stechford take forward the class struggle? Put in those correct terms the answer is obvious. It would have been far better for a single revolutionary candidate in the election. The effects of such a division will be worse in a general election. It is from this starting point, the needs of the class struggle, that the IMG calls for electoral agreement amongst the revolutionary left.

Of course it doesn't follow from this that the International Marxist Group is any less interested in building its own organisation than is the SWP. The difference is that we know that organisations cannot be built on a long-term basis in contradiction with the needs of the class struggle. The SWP, by rejecting those needs, on this issue, hinders building a revolutionary party.

Firstly it delays the mobilisation of thousands of people who won't join any revolutionary organisation in the present state of division of the left, but would rally to united action—and would join revolutionary groups in the process.

Secondly the SWP, by its sectarian line, totally miseducates its own membership for dealing with internal differences and those with other forces. What we criticise the SWP for is not 'party patriotism' but for attempting to build an organisation against the interests of the working class on this issue. That, we believe, is deeply sectarian and therefore impractical.

Socialist Challenge is a paper open to all those aiming for revolutionary unity. Our pages are open to contributions from other organisations and individuals on this debate.

'We see increased joint activity in elections and on other issues as a way of testing the ability to collaborate in the class struggle — testing out the ground for a united revolutionary organisation...'

Rich Palser, a member of the IMG Political Committee, replies to Duncan Hallas.

Does the IMG merely want united action and not the building of a unified revolutionary organisation?

In dealing with why the SWP should reject an electoral agreement with the IMG comrade Hallas presents the proposal as one of simply a manoeuvre. He says, 'the basic difficulty... is that most of them do not want unity at all but only "unity manoeuvres" to try and strengthen themselves at our (the SWP's) expense'.

Unfortunately here comrade Hallas' sectarian starting point shows itself in his entire argument. He apparently doesn't consider that the IMG may stand for unity because it takes forward the class struggle. We see increased joint activity in elections and on other issues as a way of testing the ability of revolutionary organisations to collaborate in the class struggle—testing out the ground for a united revolutionary organisation.

This is not to say of course that our ability to reach agreement over a joint slate in elections, to offer a socialist alternative to Labour, would automatically lead to fusion of these organisations—elections are only one aspect of the class struggle, and as Duncan Hallas quite rightly says, by no means the most important. We think more is required to see if a unified organisation is possible.

Comrade Hallas questions the IMG's 'seriousness' in campaigning for a unified organisation, which is placed in question by our decision not to discuss unity with the International Socialists in 1968/9. We have now changed our position as a result of debates and wish to have serious discussions to find out whether such unity is indeed

possible. Whilst comrades of the SWP may feel that this is because of the failure of the IMG to 'overtake' the SWP in numerical growth, we can only ask the comrades to test our seriousness by opening up discussions with us. We will be very happy to explain in full detail the reasons we favour revolutionary unification—we explained it many times in the *Red Weekly*.

Another difficulty which Duncan Hallas raises is that of internal democracy in any revolutionary organisations. We do not glorify factions and tendencies when they exist, but we are proud of the right of these factions and tendencies to exist where different groups of comrades feel the need to organise for their politics inside our organisation.

Such rights are essential in our view for maintaining the unity of any socialist organisation—as the CP are now finding to their cost. We would therefore agree with Duncan Hallas that internal democracy would be a major item on the agenda of any talks to establish the possibility of unity of the two organisations.

Duncan Hallas also points to another area which he regards as a difficulty: 'The differences on Russia etc. are, in principle, containable within a single democratic centralist organisation provided there is an agreed approach to building the party in the working class'.

Here he has in mind not simply electoral work, but primarily work in the trade unions and the mass struggles of the working class. Here again we agree with Duncan Hallas that there is a 'difficulty' to unity—and it is on this that we now want to concentrate.

What do we see as the tasks of revolutionaries in the labour

movement today?

The labour and trade union bureaucracy has tied workers, through the Social Contract, to collaborating with the capitalist class in solving the crisis at the expense of the working class. Thus an organised left wing or opposition must be built, uniting all those wishing to fight that class collaboration by fighting for policies which can solve the crisis at the capitalists' expense. This opposition must base itself upon mass extra-parliamentary struggle to win these goals.

We realise that building such an organised left wing is necessary because there are wide layers of workers, who whilst wishing to fight class collaboration, have not yet broken with all their past illusions in the labour and trade union bureaucracy. We wish to unite with these workers, including those who are still reformist, to wage that fight. We think the best analogy is that of the Minority Movement in the '20s, which the early Communist Party fought to build.

Like the Minority Movement, we must build in every union an organised tendency which groups all those prepared to fight the policies of class collaboration and seek to replace the leaders who follow such policies. These tendencies will achieve this goal by campaigning and organising to extend their self-organisation of the rank and file in the unions to carry forward their struggles, in the same way the Minority Movement fought to do this by campaigning for factory committees and, in any run up to a general strike, councils of action in every area.

As workers begin to organise in their unions and mount struggles against the policies of the Labour Government, some of the labour and trade union bureaucrats will attempt to place themselves at the head of that rising opposition, to prevent the leadership of it passing to the revolutionaries.

This again is what happened when left bureaucrats like Purcell and Hicks associated themselves with the Minority Movement.

Does this mean that we think that the party can be substituted for by a bloc, whether with 'independents who have official positions' which Hallas talks of, or even involving left bureaucrats?

Of course not. On the contrary, any united action with reformists reinforces the need for the party always to retain its right to independent action and propaganda, its right to criticise these left leaders, and to break with them the moment they become an obstacle to continuing the struggle.

It was for failing to do this that Trotsky criticised the early CP when it dissolved its independent face into the Minority Movement. To engage in such united fronts and coalitions, even with left bureaucrats, flows from the need for united action to advance the class struggle—but it is not a 'non-aggression' pact.

It is precisely in the course of united action that revolutionaries can best challenge the leadership of the reformist leaders—by showing in practice that the left reformists fail to wage a consistent fight for the interests of the working class.

What then is our attitude to SWP sponsored rank and file groups?

Duncan Hallas argues that such united fronts are only possible around single issues. We think he would be unlikely to

argue that the Minority Movement was an incorrect venture of this reason, yet this was built on many of the key issues of the day.

However this also has implications for the SWP rank and file groups, which are built around more than one issue. For in practice, and despite occasional words to the contrary, the SWP see 'rank and file organisations' steadily growing to the point at which they involve the mass of workers, under the leadership of the SWP, without having to engage either other forces of the left or the reformist leaders in united fronts and organisations for common action.

This is the perspective of 'the united front from below', which attempts to involve the rank and file reformist workers without having to confront the reformist leaders other than by denouncing them. This is the real balance sheet of the decline of the rank and file groups—not that it is necessary to 'work harder, build better in the workplaces', and all the other solutions put forward by the SWP leadership.

So too they must become democratic. Like the unions, organised oppositions in the unions cannot be 'neutral' between political parties. However, revolutionary socialists have to attempt to win these groups to voluntarily submitting themselves to the party's leadership—and that can only be done through democratic debate and political struggle.

The IMG will continue to work in the rank and file groups and fight to orientate them towards intervening in the broader layers inside the union through a struggle to impose united fronts on the left reformist leaders. We are currently fighting in *Redder Tape* in the Civil and Public Services Association for just such an orientation towards the Broad Left. However where it proves impossible because of the undemocratic character of these groups, as in the National Union of Teachers, we will join with other militants in forming groups such as the Socialist Teachers' Alliance which can aid in stimulating the development of broader class struggle tendencies.

In Conclusion

It is not 'party egoism' which makes the SWP sectarian, but their idea that their size makes them qualitatively different from the rest of the far-left, for educating their militants in the spirit of the SWP being the sole nucleus of the party. This leads to an inbuilt sectarianism because that is not the real situation today.

We believe that a party can best be built through a struggle for united action, by utilising the tactics of the united front, because it is only in this way that the mass of workers can be won from reformism. For a party to exist it has to be recognised as such by a significant section of the working class.

The number of 'attacks' the SWP makes on the IMG in *Socialist Worker* is besides the point. Sectarianism is not only manifested by big attacks, but also by ignoring the activity of 'rival groups'. The *Morning Star* specialises in this. One example is its failure to mention Riley's or Thornett's vote in the T&GWU elections or the IMG local election results. *Socialist Worker* tends to do the same!

We in no way see why our consistent campaign against the 'united front from below' tactics of the SWP invalidates our fight for a united revolutionary organisation. We are sure Duncan Hallas agrees unity is not achieved through obscuring political differences. On the contrary, we should begin a serious discussion to ascertain the full breadth of these differences and whether they are an obstacle to a principled fusion of our organisations.

Liverpool sees

Socialist Unity in action

by JACK BEAUMONT

THE NOMINATION of a Socialist Unity candidate will be discussed at a public meeting called by the Merseyside Socialist Unity Election Campaign on 3 July. Edge Hill is the constituency of Labour MP Sir Arthur Irvine, who is threatening to resign after being rejected by the local Labour Party for his total inactivity.

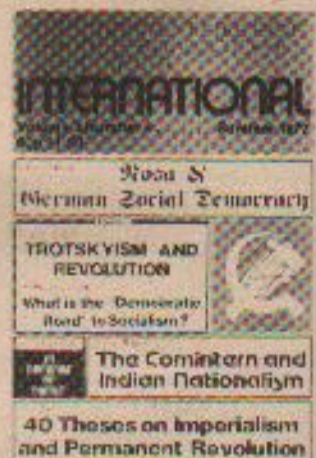
The Socialist Unity Campaign's initial meeting earlier this month was supported by Liverpool Big Flame, Merseyside International Marxist Group, Liverpool Revolutionary Marxist Current, and the Workers League, as well as independent militants. The Socialist Workers Party has declared its intention of fielding its own candidate and running its own campaign in the event of a by-election.

The 3 July meeting will be open to all those who agree on the need for a united campaign. It will discuss and amend the programme.

Even if Irvine does not resign before a General Election, local militants will be organising against the policies of the ever-more anti-working class Labour Government and its supporters, such as Sir Arthur Irvine. Their fight will be based on a comprehensive programme in defence of the interests of the working class, women and black people.

Planning meeting for Socialist Unity candidates in the next General Election: Saturday, 2 July, Golden Eagle, Hill Street, near new Street station, Birmingham. Begins at noon. Supported by International Marxist Group and Big Flame. Correspondence to Planning Committee, 3rd Floor, 14 Piccadilly Manchester 1.

Edgehill meeting, Sunday 3 July, 8pm. At Gregson's Well pub, Brunswick Road, Liverpool.



Geoff Roberts [CP] and Robin Blackburn [IMG] debate revolutionary strategy in latest issue of *International*, the IMG's theoretical journal. Also Mandel on Luxemburg, Carl Gardner on David Bowie. 50p + 15p postage from 328 Upper Street, London N1.

Editorial

Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.
Editorial 01-359 8189
News 01-359 8180
Distribution 01-359 8371

the social contract

LET US take a hard look at the facts and figures of the Social Contract. Denis Healey accused the two left MPs, Jeff Rooker and Audrey Wise, of delivering up the gains of the Labour Government policies to the Tories.

The only gains that have come have been for the bosses. Look at the figures.

The Government's Central Statistical Office show that in the last year living standards have declined by five percent. Prices have risen over the last nine months twice as fast as wages. Profits have soared by 26 per cent.

Dole queues this summer will number in their ranks one and a half million. Far from trade union sacrifice leading to growth, production still stagnates at one per cent growth per annum.

The electoral disasters that have beset Labour as a direct result of these policies have forced them to shore up their parliamentary position through the Liberal-Labour pact.

But the real foundations of the policy, the twin support of Scanlon and Jones are beginning to crack. Ben Rubner of the furniture workers union described their dilemma very well. Speaking to a resolution at the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Workers Unions for 'an immediate return to free collective bargaining at the end of the second stage of the Social Contract' he said that if the resolution was not passed there would be disputes which would make the toolroom and Heathrow strikes 'look like tea parties'. The resolution was passed by the three million strong body with the support of both the Transport and General Workers Union and the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers.

The top leaders of the trade unions know they cannot openly canvass for a further round of incomes policy. So they cloak their intentions with all sorts of 'free collective bargaining' formulas.

The real content of such manoeuvres lies in what the TUC is promising the Government. Murray, Scanlon and the rest have heavily emphasised that wage contracts will not be opened up for twelve months. That means for many workers there will be no increase until 1978 and for some the summer of 1978. This means enduring another year of rampant inflation with no compensation.

And when 1978 comes even the best-organised workers face a declaration of intent by the TUC to keep wage rises under 10 per cent when inflation is running at 17.5 per cent.

But this 'generosity' will not extend to the low paid and public sector workers. Faced with wage controls, Tory councils, cuts and rail-roading trade union leaders these workers will face savage attacks this winter.

The big-business magazine, *The Economist*, calls for the next step in the attack on the working class to be the taking on of the public sector and crushing them.

The massive deployment of police at Grunwicks shows what sort of treatment any prolonged struggle by such workers against the pay policy could expect.

The ruling class aim to divide and rule, by smashing up the low paid, giving concessions to the strongest of the strong and isolating the rest. By putting forward policies which further divide the working class through their agreement with a Phase 3 'by the back door' the Scanlons and Murrays are aiding Callaghan, the Tories and the employers in this attack. Faced with the manoeuvres of the TUC the reply has to be clear and to the point:

- ★ an immediate return to free collective bargaining;
- ★ across the board claims for full compensation for the drop in real wages under Phases 1 and 2, and for a substantial increase in living standards;
- ★ for a £50 minimum wage;
- ★ for equal pay for women with no strings attached;
- ★ for inflation proofing of all wage deals to maintain real income.

Solidarity with all those going into struggle combined with these demands should be the basis of organisation for class struggle militants in the fight against wage controls.

The Left in Britain's Largest Union NO PHASE THREE

AT THE VILLA MARINA, Douglas, Isle of Man on 4 July delegates assembled for the Biennial delegate conference of the Transport and General Workers Union. It seems that the leader of Britain's largest union is concerned enough about the possible mass lobbying of the conference to spend several thousand pounds shifting his delegates across the Irish Sea.

Jack Jones, architect of the Social Contract, will have a bit of explaining to do. He sold the Social Contract to the last conference in 1975 on tight conditions including: 'lower unemployment', 'massive public spending increases', and 'strict price controls'. None of these conditions have been fulfilled, and yet Jones used that motion as his 'authority' to put the TGWU's 1.9 million votes at the TUC behind the 5 per cent pay limit.

One brief and terse motion at this year's conference from the powerful London Region Car Trade Group committee sums up the membership's sense of betrayal at Jones' and the TGWU General Executive Committee's conduct of the last two years. The resolution proposes 'That this conference ensures that the 1977 BDC policies are upheld and pursued to the benefit of the members of the TGWU'.

RESISTANCE

Along with the miners' conference, the TGWU is one of the last major union conferences of the summer. Union conferences over the last few months — especially NUPE's — have shown a strong rank and file resistance to the Social Contract. However, in most cases the bureaucracies have conceded certain ground, but held on to the central terrain of agreeing to discuss with the Government further pay policy.

Murray and Healey are twiddling their thumbs in 'low key' discussions at present, while they await the conference decisions. Exactly how far they can push a third year of wage restraint will depend very much on whether the executive of the TGWU can carry their principal motion labelling the third phase of the Social Contract as 'the orderly return to free collective bargaining. As can be seen from this motion, the orderly return makes a few concessions such as those on differentials, but in reality it is little different from the 1975 catalogue of unkept promises.

Jack Jones' argument for his policy will not be purely defensive. He will be saying, as he wrote in the February issue of the union paper, the *Record*, that: 'The Social Contract was developed... not as a pay policy but as a total social programme'.

In that article he cited pension increases, equal pay, the success of the Arbitration, Conciliation and Advisory Service, and the Employment Protection Act, as evidence that the Labour Government had kept its side of the bargain. These cynical arguments are not hard to expose — pensions have fallen by 18 per cent in real terms since the last rise. If equal pay has been won, then why was it necessary for the women at Trico to strike for 21 weeks, and the Yardley equal pay strikers to occupy Jones' own union headquarters?

The ACAS machinery rests on the illusion that a state body can 'neutrally' arbitrate between management and workers. As for the Employment Protection Act, the Grunwick strikers could explain the failure of that piece of legislation, and the long struggle of hotel workers at the Randolph and Linton Lodge for union recognition gives Jones the lie.

Jones' social programme is capped

off by the Bullock report, where under the disguise of 'industrial democracy', Jones attempts to extend the binding of the working class to capitalism through the Social Contract, by workplace-by-workplace integration into management historic power of a structure of full-timers responsible to him or her Committee welcomes the Bullock report. Unfortunately there are no motions tabled in opposition to Bullock.

To denounce Jones' programme is not enough. The call for a return to free collective bargaining by itself fails to answer the arguments that the Social Contract is a 'total social programme'. It fails to overcome the divisions between lower and higher paid sections, Jones argues in the *Record* that under the Social Contract 'millions received the highest pay award in their lives'. Many low-paid TGWU workers accept this line of argument.

That is why it is encouraging to see a number of motions from branches around the country that put forward elements of an alternative programme, a real 'social programme' in the interests of the working class.

Nine branches put down motions calling for a sliding scale of wages, including motion 25 endorsed by four branches, which instructs the GEC to break off all support of the Social Contract, to return to free collective bargaining and to give no support to incomes policy whether voluntary or statutory' and goes on to:

'Instruct the GEC to work together with the membership to fight for substantial wage increases to restore living standards and to fight for the inclusion of a sliding scale of wages clause in any wage agreement, so that real after tax wages are increased monthly by 1 per cent for every 1 per cent rise in the cost of living as assessed by elected committees of trade union members'.

Several motions also call for a national minimum wage.

Since the last TGWU conference, a number of isolated struggles have been fought by TGWU members. Many militants in the union have registered their disgust at the union's policing of their struggles on behalf

of capitalism's 'Social Contract'. 57,000 votes received in the recent General Secretary elections by candidates Riley, Thornett and nett signal an emerging left opposition to the leadership.

The TGWU is very easily controlled by the General Secretary through the historical power of a structure of full-timers responsible to him or her and through the divisive way in which the different trade groups played off against each other. Organised opposition will be difficult across so diverse a union.

This conference provides an opportunity to start to construct such opposition around the linked actions of union democracy and Social Contract. The delegates of those branches which have resolutions for the sliding scale need to organise together at the Villa Marina, fiercely resist being composed and offer a real way forward to the mass of TGWU members who have their votes and their motions registered in Jones' new edition of the Social Contract.

Class Betrayal

'That this conference considers... movement collectively has made a... to the fight against inflation and real... restraint shown by all workers during... the last two years... supports the view... free collective bargaining should be...'

'Conference believes that in a... free-for-all which would be injurious... the community and which could... long-term objectives, in a return... bargaining the following matters shall... (a) the recognition and payment of... to reward ability, effort, skill and... correction of other anomalies and (b)... (b) a continued and developing... in basic rates and other special... workers on low pay and implement... minimum wages policy...'

(c) measures to ensure that the... under the Social Contract are incorp... into basic rates for the purpose... payments by result, shift payment... (d) an expansion of sound multi... payment by result schemes... agreements...'

(e) measures to offset unemploy... working hours and/or earlier retirem...'

But right wing & bureaucratic

ONE BRANCH of the transport union which will be leading the fight... class struggle policies at the Isle of Man Conference will be the... 5/293 branch. And it seems that this is one reason for its threat... dismemberment by union officialdom and the right wing.

Alan Thornett, as branch delegate to the last Biennial Conference, put forward the main opposition resolution to the Social Contract policies of the Jones' leadership.

This year, as well as fighting alongside other branches proposing an anti-capitalist wage policy for the union, the branch has put down motions which include the declaration that:

'in view of the failure of the Sex Discrimination Act and Equal Pay Act to achieve equality for women workers, Conference resolves to ensure that equal pay for equal work is conceded at all times and will strive to abolish the continuing inequality in work opportunity.'

The Cowley branch also condemns apartheid, 'supports the African liberation struggles' and calls for a total black on all trade with South Africa'.

The fight for these sort of policies... presumably what David Buckle, Dis... Secretary of the TGWU in Oxford dis... so much about the branch.

According to him it is controlled by pe... of 'extreme political views'; these peop... to 'extremist' conferences and 'com... branch members to policies they don't... with; and they spend whole branch mee... talking about 'Vietnam' and 'aborc... (Socialist Press 22.6.77)

Buckle spoke these forthright words... meeting of the day-shift from a plar... which surrounded him with a high barr... to prevent access from the floor of... meeting.

The right wing in the plant had calle... meeting with the intention of railroo... through plans to set up a new branch... TGWU in the factory.

Best Union says FREE!

BY RAYBURNS

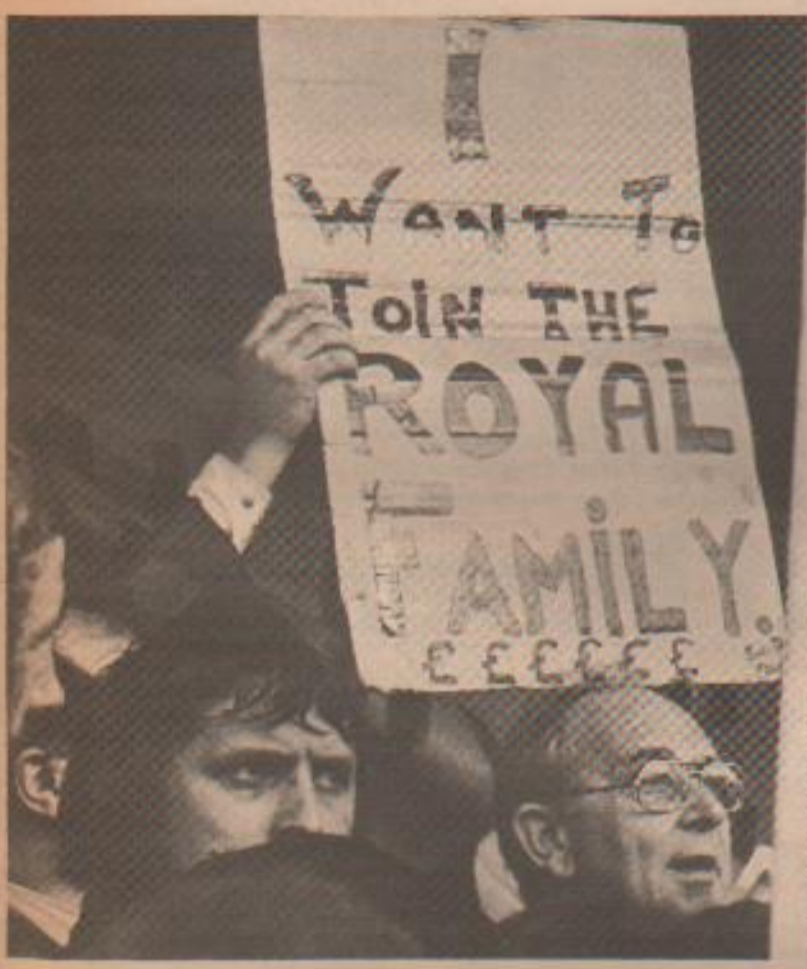


Photo: DAVE EVANS (IFL)

oyal.....or Class Struggle

the trade union... contribution... sacrifice... economic crisis... orderly return... place this year... wages... members of... jeopardise our... voluntary collective... priority... factory differentials... and the... on improvements... in order to assist... Union Congress

That this conference instructs the General Executive Council to break off all support of the Social Contract to return to free collective bargaining and to give no support to any incomes policy whether voluntary or compulsory. Considering the steady fall in our members' living standards over the past two years of incomes policy this Conference instructs the General Executive Council to work together with the membership to fight for substantial wage increases to restore living standards and to fight for the inclusion of a sliding scale of wages clause in any wage agreement so that after tax real wages are increased monthly by 1 per cent for every 1 per cent rise in the cost of living as assessed by elected committees of trade union members. Branch No. 9/236 Also labled by: Branches Nos. 1/562, 1/1900 and 5/833

The TGWU leadership faces strong opposition to their so-called 'orderly return to voluntary collective bargaining'. Over 150 bodies of the union have put down motions against the Social Contract. Only 4 branches follow the Executive line.

ts move to chop this branch

The aim was clear to many of the workers at the meeting: either to break up the 5/293 branch completely or drain away its members.

The proposals have been preceded by a steady propaganda campaign which culminated in the Regional Committee report on the case of four stewards victimised by the company last autumn. This came to the conclusion that... something was wrong with the branch!

Strong opposition was manifested to the 're-organisation' when it was put to a meeting of 150 stewards at the plant. At the day-shift meeting, Reg Parsons, right-wing convenor and Buckle's ally, put a resolution on whether or not the proposals should be put to the vote. Amidst confusion over the result, he then declared that the proposals themselves were carried. It was the same story of rail-roading at the night-shift meeting with no member of the branch's leadership being permitted to speak on the charges which were levelled against them.

Now the fight is on for members to keep out of the sledge outfit set up by Buckle and

remain in the 5/293 branch. The stakes are vitally important; whether branches are able to fight for class-struggle policies in Britain's largest union. But even more sinister clouds loom on the horizon.

Even if Buckle succeeds in his attempts to confine the left in a rump 5/293 branch, he cannot avoid a determined intervention by those forces for the leadership of the plant in the elections for senior steward in December.

There are already indications that Buckle intends to take union disciplinary action against individual militants. Furthermore there is a growing belief that Leyland have a list of militants who they will try to sack under any pretext before the end of the year.

Such a move would be a serious blow to the fight throughout the whole industry to fight back against the bosses offensive.

A broad-based united campaign that can cancel out such a threat, combat the malignant growth of bureaucratisation in the union and reinforce the growing militancy in Britain's car plants will be a number one consideration in the coming months.

The Ford workers aim: A Guaranteed 40 Hour Week

'When everything else fails, direct action is the only answer, that is what this strike proves. Had negotiators used the power of the shop floor which is now being mobilised, undoubtedly job security could have been won some years back.'

So reads a Communist Party leaflet distributed at Fords, Dagenham, last Thursday. Yet even as pickets were reading these militant words, leading CP members, Dan Connor, and Sid Harroway (respectively convenor and deputy-convenor of the body plant) were actually voting for an agreement not only falling short of the claim of 80 per cent pay for time laid-off, but also putting workers' jobs at risk by agreeing to more 'procedure'.

COOLING-OFF

Part of this 'procedure' would be to agree to take no action for one clear shift where workers are suspended and for two shifts where they are sacked. The aim is to institutionalise a cooling-off period. This is nothing short of an attempt to demoralise workers into taking no action to defend basic conditions. With the support of the CP the 'Dagenham Panel' (composed of convenors of the plants and full-time union officials) voted to put such an agreement to the workforce.

The next day, however, the real voice of the shopfloor was heard loud and clear when a mass meeting of 1,500 assembly workers overwhelmingly endorsed the recommendation of their shop stewards committee to reject the agreement and hold out for the 80 per cent lay-off pay demand.

As significant as the vote were the hundreds who put their names down on the

picketing rota. Before the meeting, Mick Firman (AUEW shop steward in the assembly plant) told Socialist Challenge:

'What we're really after is 52 weeks work and 50 weeks pay. The 80 per cent claim is only a compromise. Its aim is to prevent the company from provoking internal disputes as a way of splitting the workforce. The joint shop stewards committee voted almost unanimous support for the strike. This reflects the real unity that's grown up between different shifts and even different plants.'

'This is the first time in nine years that I've seen such solidarity. After two weeks of struggle we're in no mood to give in. The agreement that's been cooked up between management and trade union officials takes no step forward on the layoff claim, and what's more it just gives more power to the foreman.'

TREMENDOUS

Raz Razvi (T&G shop steward, assembly plant) agreed:

'In February we passed a motion on the assembly plant shop stewards committee, that in the event of a layoff, 'A' and 'B' shifts would unite to take whatever action was necessary to get 80 per cent pay. When we proposed strike action two weeks ago, every section had meetings and there was tremendous support on both shifts— my

section was unanimous.

'On the whole officials are no good at representing our interests, they are not on the factory floor, not really involved in the struggle. They get their pay wherever—we have got more at stake than they have.'

'Of course all officials should be elected, but they must also be responsible to those organising the struggle—in this case to the shop steward's committees.'

The company are attempting to use the clash between the vote of the majority of the Dagenham Panel and the decision of the assembly plant workers as evidence of divisions between different plants.

Its real significance is that shop floor hostility to both the company's actions and the trade union bureaucracy means that the union officials are having difficulty in keeping control of the rank and file. This is important not only in the present situation but also for the future.

The line of the Communist Party is to effectively counterpose a struggle on the wages question (around the September negotiations) to that of layoffs. But as Chris Topping (T&G shop steward in the body plant) explained, this would be disastrous.

'The unity that's been achieved between different sections of the workforce is only the first step. The next is to be able to organise the rank and file to resist the attempts of the management and the trade union officials to break the new momentum. If we can win the 80 per cent demand now, not only will that increase our confidence generally, but it will in effect be a massive blow against the Social Contract.'

'It will put us in the best possible position to smash any attempt by the Government to impose a third phase of wage controls.'



What do we want? 80 per cent lay-off pay! That's what the fight is all about in the PTA, the Body and the whole of Ford.

Don't believe what you read in the press — lay-off pay is the issue, not the garbage you read in the papers about one man holding the whole of Ford to ransom. People are fed up at being treated like casual labour - a guaranteed weekly wage is what we want - the right to live!

The picketing is going well. It's been organised properly. Regular shifts of pickets, equipped with home made tents, camp-fires, pots of tea, etc., have been putting in lots of hours at various key points on the Dagenham Estate. Almost all transport (lorries, buses, etc.) has respected the pickets.

OCCUPATION

The occupation in the body plant is going well too. Many people are involved; a lot of discussions on many points have taken place; and sing-songs too.

This picket and occupation is unique in the history of Ford Dagenham. After years of divisions between plants, we now see workers from the PTA, Engine, Body, Foundry, KD, etc., meeting each other on the picket lines. If we can continue to build this unity (against all attempts by Ford and Union officials, like Murphy, to keep us divided), it will give us great strength in the future.

For three years since 1974 (the October Press Shop Strike), Dagenham workers have been forced to hold their tongues and swallow

Mock graves outside Fords, 'bury' management and officials. Photo: Newsline

many insults and indignities. But now we have found new strength. In the words of one brother on the picket line:

'Ford's have been kicking us for three years, because the situation

was in their favour. But now the situation is turning, and it's our turn to do the kicking.'

The PTA workers are clear that nothing less than 80 per cent lay-off pay will get them back to work.

Women Against Rape

DODIE WEPPLER

Women need financial independence and social standing to defend themselves from their husbands or other individual men and from any judge, police officer, or doctor who is biased against them. Women have the right to defend themselves by any means at their disposal.

So reads one point in the statement of aims of the new Women Against Rape group which held its first meeting — attended by several hundred women — in Conway Hall in London last Friday.

The meeting was well-publicised in the pages of the *Guardian* and on national television news — was held in the after-



How do we begin to fight it?

math of MP Audrey Wise's excellent call to sack Judges Wein, Roskill and Slunn. These were the Appeal Court judges

who reduced the 3-year sentence for rape charges awarded to Coldstream Guardsman Tom Holdsworth, to a six-month sus-

pended sentence. The judgement was taken in the interests of saving Holdsworth's career in the army.

It was in opposition to this kind of judgement that the meeting called a picket at the High Court on Tuesday. But beside this action, little perspective emerged for taking up the plight of women who are victims of rape. The speakers at the meeting are all openly identified with Wages for Housework: Wilmette Brown of the Black Women's Wages for Housework group in New York, Giovanna Castello from the Italian women's movement, Orlagh O'Shea from Ireland and Jenny Smith from a battered women's refuge.

The statement of nine aims distributed at the meeting puts responsibility on the state to 'prevent and eliminate' rape, but concretely reduces the solution to rape to the demand for wages for women's domestic work. This mistaken belief of the Wages for Housework supporters that power in society comes from money in the pocket and not the ability to reproduce capital leads to further confusion on the rape issue.

Many of the demands raised by the speakers to deal with rape, far from being designed to weaken the state apparatus and seeing the question as a social issue, fall into a trap which has marred actions on rape in other countries. By demanding heavier

prison sentences — an idea which came up several times in the meeting — rape is reduced to an issue between individual men and women, not a vicious statement about women who are victims of a class society in deep economic and social crisis.

Wages for Housework doesn't provide an adequate basis to begin to combat even the disgusting frivolity Fleet Street displayed this week over the Coldstream Guardsman affair let alone the wide range of other issues related to rape. Take just one example from the meeting which made this clear.

If women had money, they could take taxis late at night', argued one of the campaign's supporters. But surely a campaign for local councils to provide free late night transport — backed up by the weight of the workers movement as a whole — would be a limited step in the direction of collective action, rather than individual solutions.

Nevertheless, the attendance at the meeting was a positive indication that women are less and less prepared to tolerate their role in this society. It equally expressed a determination to take rape out of the closet it used to share for too long with other issues such as abortion.

How to build a Troops Out Movement

Two Views

This weekend, 2-3 July, sees the open conference of the United Troops Out Movement, designed to re-launch and rebuild the movement in this country for self-determination for the Irish people and the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland. The conference takes place at the White Horse pub, Church Road, London NW10, starting at 10.30am. The aim of the meeting is to plan how the United TOM can be taken forward. The International Marxist Group and Big Flame put forward their views.

'There is absolutely no truth in the charges of torture, burning, electric shocks...Every case of alleged torture is investigated very thoroughly by the police and by the courts...Some cases have occurred where the police was found to have used excessive zeal in interrogation'.

This is not Roy Mason white-washing the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the British Army in Ireland. It is the Israeli Embassy in London replying to charges of torture of Arabs in the occupied territory in the Middle East.

The charges were publicised in a four page special in the *Sunday Times*. No such 'special' is likely to appear in the *Sunday Times* on torture and 'excessive zeal' in Ireland—even though Britain has been condemned at the European Court of Human Rights for such behaviour.

Labour's Northern Ireland Secretary, Roy Mason is not noted for his diplomacy in handling allegations of torture. He reacts two ways — by telling the media they should shut up, and by increasing repression. In the wake of the 'failure' of the Loyalist strike, Mason gave more and more concessions. After announcing the increase to ten years the maximum sentence for 'terrorist' offences — such as 'providing information which might be useful to a terrorist organisation'.

REPRESSION

It is because of this increase of repression that the Troops Out conference called on 2/3 July in London takes on a special importance. More than ever there is a need to build a determined, open movement on the Irish question in this country; a movement that aims above all else at activity.

If the need is greater than ever so too are the possibilities. Fortunately, the recent divisions within the movement have led not to demoralisation but to an increase of the numbers involved in rebuilding the movement.

The outstanding question now is how to consolidate and increase this enthusiasm and turn it to a positive area of activities.

The plan for a Tribunal on

Britain's Crimes Against the Irish People already supported by a number of Irish organisations and left groups is an obvious means of meeting this challenge. The United Troops Out Movement should see this tribunal as a priority. It can gather evidence for the tribunal by the different campaigns its supporters are engaged in — those on the issue of troops, on free speech on Ireland, on Irish political prisoners, on the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Such evidence can be a feature of United TOM rally

being suggested between now and the Tribunal.

But the potential of the Tribunal must be grasped. The renewed debate on human rights throughout the world gives an opportunity to internationalise the tribunal. Obviously it will be built mainly in this country, but by building it as well in Ireland itself and in other countries, it can raise the issue of British crimes against Ireland to a wider audience than has been reached for a long time.

Such exposure would open up

immense opportunities for organising activity on Ireland in the one area where all past initiatives have failed to mobilise any meaningful forces — the working class organisations in this country.

But one further condition needs to be fulfilled if such opportunities are to be grasped. The Tribunal, the United TOM and other related activities on the Irish question must do all it can to involve as many people, individuals and organisations. This implies the planning, building and attendance at such activities should be non-exclusive.

The idea of some activists in the movement that all activities should be only based on delegates from organisations and trade union branches, in theory, seems a sensible way of giving the activities some weight. But in practice it limits the number of trade unionists, Labour Party members and other militants who, while wishing to be involved, cannot win a majority in their group for action on Ireland.

The movement this weekend faces new opportunities. If the guiding principles adopted focus on activity and opening out that movement those opportunities can be grasped.

IMG Irish Secretariat



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

The history of the Troops Out Movement has not been one of total failure. Despite the chauvinism of major sections of the working class, TOM in its first year grew rapidly in size and influence. It laid down a network of over 30 active branches. Through media coverage of a series of national events, it created a national presence.

It won some support in Parliament and a toehold in a few trade unions and Labour Party branches and some trades councils. And the revolutionary left began to take TOM seriously.

But these successes have been overshadowed by the sectarian divisions which have long plagued the movement. TOM rapidly ceased to be a broad front, as each of several groupings attempted to win control in order to impose its own particular strategy.

ANTAGONISTS

It has to be said that the antagonists were all Trotskyist groupings. At least two were formal organisations — the Revolutionary Communist Group and the International Communist League — and another was an informal grouping based on the TOM national officers and led by ex-members of the International Marxist Group. It is this last, informal grouping, which 'won' the battles and became the established leadership of TOM.

Against these displays of sectarianism, Big Flame pressed the original idea of TOM as a broad front — in which all activity in support of the TOM to get the troops out of Ireland should be encouraged. Unfortunately, the history of TOM is littered with attempts by these groupings to suppress activities which for them were not a priority. The result was a paralysis of all activity; members began to leave and branches to collapse.

The policies of the 'leadership' have themselves been a major cause of decline. It has become clear that the 'leadership' rejects the original conception of TOM — to build a strong network of local branches, reinforced by national initiatives, which would begin the task of creating a presence for anti-imperialist politics in the working class.

PRESSURE GROUPS

Instead, their conception of TOM is as a small London-based pressure group inside the House of Commons and Fleet Street, which would sporadically organise national initiatives for those sections of the labour movement to which — through various revolutionary organisations — they have access.

This is at the heart of the present differences in TOM. We

believe that TOM *must* be based on a strong network of active local branches — the only way to begin creating a presence in workplaces and working class communities up and down the country.

SIMPLE SIMON

In their recent letter to *Red Weekly* the 'leadership' of TOM described these ideas as 'simple-simon' and suggested that we withhold support from their major initiatives in the labour movement. They have chosen to ignore that it was Big Flame militants who built up the original support among Labour MPs for TOM; were among the main organisers of the first and second Labour Movement Conferences on Ireland; and that we put major resources into sending six delegates on the Labour Movement Delegation to Ireland.

We are *not* against work in Parliament or in the labour movement. Work in the reformist organisations of the class will be one component of building TOM's presence in the working class. But equally important is work among the vanguard sections of the class in struggle — during strikes, occupations, rent strikes.

It is no accident that the first working class TOM branch developed on the Tower Hill estate in Kirby at the end of the longest rent strike against the Housing Finance Act.

ESSENTIAL

And it is essential that TOM should build a presence for anti-imperialist politics in the women's movement, in the student movement, and among sections of the working class. These perspectives have not been accepted by the TOM 'leadership'. In the same way, it has been wrong for TOM to ignore work in the Irish section of the working class in Britain.

So these are our conclusions: that socialists working on the Irish question must learn how to work together as a broad front — for unity in action. Secondly, the need for a strong network of branches, carrying out sustained propaganda in all sections of the working class, reinforced by a series of major national initiatives, such as the International Tribunal.

Big Flame

Interview with Barney Mokgatle

'Why should they stop now when so many have been killed?'

BARNEY MOKGATLE, the former secretary of the Soweto Students Representative Council, left Britain last week to rejoin a group of Soweto student exiles in Africa. His last days in Britain were marked by the slanderous attacks on Tsietzi Mashinini and other former leaders of the SRC by the Executive of the National Union of Students.

After the exclusion of Soweto representatives from the platform of the 18 June South Africa solidarity demonstration, Mokgatle spoke on an alternative platform which won the support of the majority of the demonstration. Before he left, Mokgatle spoke to Socialist Challenge about the present situation in Soweto and the NUS Executive's attacks on Mashinini.

Recent news from South Africa indicates that the struggle in Soweto is still going on. Can you tell us something about this?

Recently we heard about the student leaders who have been detained. The police thought that by imprisoning these people, particularly the President, Dan (Dan Sechaba Montsisi), the whole thing was going to stop. Fortunately the message of 16 June had already spread to the whole country.

Immediately after Dan's arrest a new leader came in. No matter if they are being arrested, detained or jailed, the people are prepared to go on and face the guns and the police.

The people themselves think that the situation in South Africa has come to a stage where they can't tolerate it, and they are

their liberation, and liberation is going to come.

You've recently had a chance to exchange views with students from Soweto who were forced to go into exile. Can you say something about how they see the struggle developing?

The students who we have met in exile are still militants, and we are still working with them. What they are afraid of is that they shouldn't stay out of the country for a long time, in case they might get caught in the mistake that our parents were caught in of forgetting the struggle. Their main priority is to go back to the country and help those who are still there. Because the students still in the country say that they are going to carry on the struggle until those who have left come back and reinforce them.

What are your feelings about what took place on the 18 June solidarity demonstration in London?

Firstly I would like to say that I was very disappointed because when I came I thought that I was going to speak to the whole demonstration, all the people who said they were pledging their solidarity with the people in South Africa. But it seems that some of the organisations use the South African struggle to gain their own needs, because they are not yet prepared to unite themselves with other organisations so that they can be one and fight the regime in South Africa.

What happened on Saturday was to build solidarity and show people in South Africa that there are people outside who are concerned about them. But there were organisations who were not prepared to withdraw their insults and allegations against Mashinini in order to pledge united solidarity with the Soweto students. I said, 'if these people are prepared to pledge solidarity and agree that we must unite, why can't they withdraw their allegations? Then we can discuss them afterwards'. Otherwise, if I were to speak on the platform from which Mashinini was withdrawn it would mean that they were breaking my solidarity with Mashinini and splitting us into two. He is my comrade-in-arms who I was fighting with in South Africa, how could I not stand with him when I come outside?

But most of the people became aware of what side they should follow. The other organisations thought that people were only



Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

going to follow their name, but the majority came to our side, because they were not just interested in who came from South Africa but who was determined and prepared to fight for the people of South Africa. Beforehand they were telling me that people were not going to come to my side because I was speaking on a platform that was not official. But the people were not going by what was 'official' or 'unofficial' but by the truth of the thing.

Is there any message you'd like to leave before you return to Africa?

The message I'd like to tell people is that they must never be disillusioned by other organisations that are not prepared to fight. They must be sure that something is going to happen. What we believe in is not how many people there are, but how many people are working. A majority of people can be there and doing nothing, and a minority can be there and doing something. And it is those people who we are prepared to work with. The students at home in South Africa are only prepared to work with people who are really working for the struggle. So they must keep to their course and decisions.

Those people who put those allegations about Mashinini around didn't get them from the horse's mouth; it was only information they got from people who are not in favour of us, because they are not ready to go home — and we are ready to go home. The struggle continues — as they say in Portuguese, 'A Luta Continua'.

We don't know whether we'll be coming back to Britain, since it seems now that our place is in Africa, so I'd like to say 'thank you' to the SWP and the IMG because they are the people who made an effort to support us and organise meetings for us. Most people in other organisations were not prepared to help us if we were not in the ANC, but the SWP and the IMG were prepared to assist us and organise meetings. We are what we are in Britain today because of them, and I wish to say thank you to them. And we hope that they are going to do the same for other students who come.



More Soweto murders

'IF THEY want trouble they will get it,' warned the Soweto police chief. And get it they did. A peaceful demonstration of 1,000 to the Johannesburg police building last Thursday in protest at the arrest of Soweto student leaders, was met by tear gas and baton charges. By the end of the day two blacks had been killed in Soweto itself and 146 arrested.

This supposedly marked a change from the police's 'restrained' attitude the previous Thursday... when 11 died. It seemed to have escaped the British press that the demonstrators are unarmed.

The Daily Mail carried a picture of young blacks with stones in their hands. 'Smiling faces of hate' it was captioned. More than 600 were shot down in

Soweto last year. Another 13 have died in the last week. Stones ripped up from the streets are their only defence.

What worries the apartheid regime is the growing political success of the Soweto students. Already the hared Urban Bantu Council has become a dead letter. Now the African Teachers Association of South Africa, which represents the majority of black teachers, has come out in support of the Soweto students campaign to end Bantu education - that is to end all discrimination against blacks in education.

This is particularly aimed at education spending. Each year the Government spends £400 on each white pupil and only £26 on each black.

What's Left

Rates: 3p per word. Display: £1.50 per column inch. Deadline: 3pm Saturday before publication.

BENEFIT for Rising Free and Bread and Roses with Lee Kosmin Band and Dine Tribe. Disco, Food, Books. Bar extension, 8-12pm. 50p claimants/students. £1.00 others. Ladbroke House, Highbury Grove, N5, 1 July.

MULTI-RACIAL CAST required for play on immigration. £30 per week. Write now to: Mutable Theatre, 9 Bristol Gdns, W9

FIGHT BACK - March for George Ince. Sunday 3 July. Assembles Tower Hill, 2pm. For more information: Free George Ince Campaign, 40 Thornfield House, Rosefield Gardens, London E14. Tel: 01-687 6542.

HARPENDEN Help organise a PUBLIC FORUM if you aim to defend public expenditure, the NHS, free comprehensive state education, the right to work and a decent standard of living for all, equal opportunity in education and jobs, civil rights, political and trade union rights for all, including youth, women and citizens of Asian, African, West Indian origin and any other ethnic minorities and the right of all women to control their own fertility. Contact Linda Harpenden (05827 64418).



BUY THIS BADGE 15p each plus postage. Orders of 10 or more 10p each plus postage. Cash with order only to: J. East, 66 Whitehall Road, Bristol 5.

CARIBBEAN Socialist Group Summer School 8-10 July Carlton House, St. John's Way, Holloway, London N19. Topics include development of Caribbean working class, imperialism and Stalinism, Women in the Caribbean. For details phone Sheila 01-359 8371.

WE HAVE the Power of the Winds Broadsides - Mobile Workers Theatre's play about Portugal will be staged as a special CAMDEN TENANT benefit performance on Thursday July 9 at Clarence Way Estate Tenants Hall, Hawley Road, NW1, at 7.30pm. Only 25p. Buses: 24, 27, 134, 137. Tube: Camden Town. All Camden Residents welcome.

WHAT IS a Socialist Feminist practice? Sunday 10 July, 10.00am-7.30pm. Camden Women's Centre, Rosalyn Lodge, Lyndhurst Rd., NW3. Nearest tube Belsize Park.

HULL SOCIALIST TEACHERS Conference: Saturday 16 July, noon. Venue: Students Union, Hull University. Speakers: Terry Ellis and Brian Haddow (Tyndale), Dave Picton (STAL). Conference fee: £1. Contact: G. Dennis, 41 Severy St. Hull. Tel: 0482-790184.

OUT NOW 'Revolutionary Road or Diversion'. A pamphlet containing Charlie Doyle's critique of 'British Road', Thesis on Bourgeois Democracy and Proletarian Democracy (Lenin), passed by the 1st Congress of the 3rd International. Commentary by former CP member of British Road debate. Available from Glasgow SSL, c/o 64 Queens Street, Glasgow (Tel 041-221 7481).

WHAT IS a Socialist Feminist practice? Sunday 10 July 10am-7.30pm. Camden Women's Centre, Rosalyn Lodge, Lyndhurst rd., NW3. Nearest tube Belsize Park.

TYNDALE DEFENCE Committee meets every Thursday, 7.30pm. Prince Albert pub, Wharfedale Rd, London N11.

PUBLIC DEBATE Tom Bell (Young Communist League) vs Rob Sewall (Millant). 'The Struggle for Socialism in Britain' at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Friday 1 July, 7.30pm. 25p.

BRITISH BRUTALITY in Ireland. Public meeting NUFTO Hall Jockey's Field (off Theobald Road), London WC1. (Tube: Holborn). 7.30pm 19 July. This meeting is part of a delegation visit by 3 Belfast women whose sons were killed by the British Army, who will speak at the meeting. They are campaigning for inquiries into their sons' killing and for justice for those responsible. Chaired by Pat Arrowsmith. Organized by the Committee Against British Brutality in Ireland.

WOMEN IN EASTERN EUROPE. Newsletter No 2 now available. Contains review of Literary Gazette, a weekly Soviet paper; article on Charter 77 and Women's rights; review of Hilda Scott's Women and Socialism. Order from Barbara Holland, CREES, University of Birmingham.

SUPPORT the Grunwick Strikers! Public meeting, Tuesday 5 July 7.30pm Chatham Hall, Northcote Road SW11. Speakers from the Grunwick strike committee and Battersea and Wandsworth Trades Council/personal capacity. Called by Wandsworth Anti-Racist and Anti-Fascist Committee.

INSTITUTE of Race Relations. Meeting 6.30pm Tuesday 19 July. Maurice Ludmer, Editor of Searchlight, on 'The Rise of British Fascism in the 70s'.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST No 6 Now out. Special No 37 'The Fight for Workers Power - Manifesto of the International Communist League'. Price 35p + 15p p&p. (No 5 is still available price 30p + 15p p&p).

Subscribe to International Communist! 6 issues Britain and Ireland £2.10 overseas £2.30; 12 issues Britain and Ireland £4.20 overseas £4.50. (Overseas sent by unsealed surface mail - sealed mail costs 70p per issue.) Send money to: 'Phoenix Pamphlets' 98 Gifford Street, London N1 8DF.

BELT AND BRACES require fulltime permanent political liaison person to promote advance performances throughout the country. Experience and drivers license not essential but preferable. Telephone Carole Spedding 01-485-2872.

BELT AND BRACES political theatre company require fulltime permanent administrator with experience in Theatre Administration, Arts Council Liaison, Accounts. Telephone Carol Spedding 01-485-2872.

CSE Annual Conference 1977

July 2,3,4 Bradford

Theme: The Restructuring of Capital, Class Struggle and the State

The Conference will start mid-morning on Saturday 2nd July, at Bradford University, and end on Monday evening. Apart from short opening and closing plenary sessions, discussions will be held in workshops arranged in sequence streams.

Topics include: Economic Policy, Crisis and the Crisis, Public Sector Struggles, Social Policy, Housing, Social Democracy, Trade Unions, Labour Process & Science, Changing Forms of Working Class Struggle, Ideology, Theory of the State, Law, Post-War Reconstruction, Internationalisation of Capital and the EEC, Neo-Colonial State, Regionalism, Local State, State Apparatus

Registration: To register (for accommodation, conference papers etc) contact John Humphrey, Centre for Latin American Studies, 86-8 Bedford St. South, Liverpool L69 3BX

Far left in Spanish elections

Parties of Government or parties of struggle?

'Useful voting' was the order of the day on 15 June. The bulk of the Spanish working class was convinced that after forty years in the electoral wilderness they had to make their vote count by opting for one of the mass working class parties which stood a chance of winning.

So, with one or two exceptions, the showing of the far left slates was uniformly poor. RICHARD CARVER discusses their successes and failures.

On the face of it the far left might have expected more votes, particularly in the Basque country where it had been in the leadership of important struggles, against the scabbing of the reformist parties. The latter, particularly the Socialist Party (PSOE) tried to make the struggle their own — a manoeuvre which failed at least once when leading members of a Barcelona strike committee declared their support for the Front for Workers Unity (FUT), the revolutionary slate.

Nevertheless, the idea of the 'useful' vote persisted, not to mention all the problems of illegality: no official status on the ballot paper, lack of television time and so on.

The Democratic Left Front managed to overcome these problems. The PTE (Labour Party of Spain) set up the slate out of a series of front organisations and only officially joined it after the slate had been recognised.

OBLIGING

The PTE came out of a split in the Communist Party in the late 1960s and has spent most of its life being obliging to its parent. It

was originally called the International Communist Party, but when Carrillo's gang claimed copyright on the name it politely changed it to the Labour Party.

It now claims that 'the PTE does not consider itself to the left of the PCE' and 'the PTE must be considered as a true party of government'. The self-description is quite apt. In common with the other major 'Maoist' groups it shares the PCE's 'stagist theory'.

STAGES

The ORT (Revolutionary Workers Organisation) spells it out most clearly: 'the achievement of popular democracy, socialism and communism in successive stages'. So for them, as for the PCE, the developments in workers democracy in the recent Basque strikes — developments whose implications go far beyond the mere restoration of capitalist democracy — are a dangerous challenge to their strategy of alliances with the 'democratic' capitalist parties.

Despite these pretensions to governmental position and their relatively large size (12,000 for the PTE and 10,000 for the ORT) their results must have been disappointing. The ORT claims a

membership of 100,000 in its own union confederation, but somehow it only managed to get 40,000 of them to vote for the party! But they have said in the past that 'you have to lie...to give the masses confidence'!

The PTE's results were little better, except in Catalonia. There it roped in two of the bourgeois nationalist parties and succeeded in getting one deputy from the Esquerra (Republican Left). The Esquerra was the party which had a major responsibility for putting down the 1937 May revolution in Barcelona and which now fails to call for the right of self-determination for Catalonia.

The Popular Unity slate, in which the main party was the MC (Communist Movement), had more success at the polls, with a deputy and a senator elected in the Basque country. The MC, a Maoist group of 6,000 which was a breakaway from ETA, the Basque nationalists, shares all the political assumptions of the PTE and ORT about the relegation of the socialist revolution to the distant future.

But its electoral campaign was very different. Ironically, considering its greater electoral success, it had no aspirations to government, but saw the main task as the construction of 'popular unity' — the reference to Allende's Chile is deliberate. The model for the campaign organisation was Otelo de Carvalho's dynamising groups in Portugal.

NATIONALISTS

The MC's Popular Unity included a number of social democratic and self-management groups, and, most importantly, some radical Basque nationalists. It was representatives from this latter group who were elected, on a programme which tacitly left out any demands related to the economy or government.

Instead it had one simple message to appeal to all classes: Independence for the Basque country. Strangely enough the programme for the rest of the Spanish state only called for autonomy within the present boundaries of the state!

Though its vote was no better than the rest of the far left — generally between 0.5 and 1 per cent — the FUT got nearer to achieving its aims. The slate was launched by the LCR (Revolutionary Communist League — sympathisers of the Fourth International) and the OIC (Communist Left Organisation), groups

of about 8,000 and 5,000 respectively. A third group, Communist Action, withdrew from the slate at the last minute, claiming that it had never intended to call for a vote for the FUT!

The FUT wasn't out to become a government party or to win sections of the ruling class to its programme. The twofold aim of the campaign was propaganda around the revolutionary programme and the involvement of workers in struggle. Its candidates were people like strike leaders and former political prisoners — revolutionaries with a history of leadership among the working class.

MEETINGS

The programme centred on the rejection of the 'triple pact' of the reformist and centre parties: the 'social pact' for the implementation of austerity, the 'constitutional pact' for the preservation of the structures of the dictatorship, and the 'autonomist pact' for the denial of self-determination to Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque country.

The campaign organised mass meetings all over the country, predominantly of industrial workers, including 15,000 in Madrid and 6,000 in Bilbao.

Felipe's three conditions

SANTIAGO Carrillo, the man the Soviet Union loves to hate, had little success in his chosen role as matchmaker between Adolfo Suarez' Centre and the Socialist Party (PSOE).

For Carrillo the main point is simply that neither party got enough votes to govern on its own. Indeed, Carrillo's Communist Party (PCE) would be prepared to enter the Government on condition that its programme posed 'realistic solutions to the problems of the country today'.

But Suarez is going ahead with his courtship of the Basque and Catalan nationalists and Felipe Gonzalez of the PSOE has proved a reluctant marriage partner. The PSOE's aim is indistinguishable from that of the PCE — the stabilisation of capitalist democracy in Spain — but while the PCE is striving for respectability the PSOE doesn't want to tie itself too closely to a Centre which may fall apart within a few months.



Front for Workers Unity posters demand end to collaboration in Governments policies.

The balance is not one of complete success. In Barcelona, for example, where the OIC and Communist Action are relatively stronger, the FUT rally was adorned with the flags of the bourgeois Republic of the 1930s — hardly a great victory for revolutionary propaganda. This was opposed by the LCR, which held its own rally two days later to explain clearly its policies of independent working class organisation. It also shows that the struggle for principled unity of

Spanish revolutionaries will be a difficult one.

But the campaign didn't stop on 15 June. The LCR has launched a nation-wide series of meetings to build upon the programme of the FUT and to encourage many of the workers contacted during the campaign to join the organisation.

But, unlike the others, it still doesn't expect to be offered a portfolio in the new Government.

Gonzalez has laid down conditions for entry into Government which he knows the Centre cannot meet:

1. the realisation of democratic freedoms and the legalisation of all political parties;
2. that a new constituent process is opened. We don't believe in the reform of the Constitution, because to reform something it has to exist already and here

there is nothing to reform. There is not a Constitution which is a product of the wishes of the people, but only the wishes of a dictator;

3. economic policy must be on the basis of what we put forward ourselves. We are not prepared to see an economic policy which makes the solution to the crisis fall on the shoulders of those who have always had to bear it.

London IMG

**Battle of Ideas public meeting
SPAIN AFTER THE ELECTION**
Speaker: Richard Carver
[International Editor,
Socialist Challenge]
Tues. 5 July 7.30pm
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square
London WC2

Babes and sucklings

LAST week we published leading politicians' comments on the elections. This week a more perceptive group of commentators: children aged between 9 and 12.

* 'I'm 9 and I think the elections are OK because voting never did anyone any harm.' (Maria Elena)

* 'For me it's good that you have to be 21 to vote because if youths of 18 could vote they'd all vote communist so they didn't have to work.' (Juan Javier, 10)

* 'If people of 18 are old enough to go to jail why can't they vote?' (Luis Alfonso, 10)

* 'I think that the PSOE will win because in a poll done by the newspaper they found out that 72 per cent supported Felipe Gonz-

alez, 70 per cent Carrillo and 69 per cent Fraga.' (Carlos, 9)

* 'I'm going to vote for the Communist Party and for the workers and the king.' (Conchita, 9)

* 'If I could vote I'd vote for the PSOE or the Authentic Falange.' (Miguel Angel, 10)

* 'The elections are partly a waste of time because you know the results beforehand. All the rich people vote for the Popular Alliance, all the yokels, the people who believe what they see on telly and who don't read Workers World vote for Democratic Suarez, the workers vote for the PCE and people vote for Felipe because they think he's flashy.' (Andres, 12)

Italy

Historic compromise nearer, workers poorer

THE 'historic compromise' — that great victory for the Italian working class — has come a step nearer with the formulation of a draft agreement between the Communist Party (PCI), the Christian Democrats and four other parties.

The deal includes an extension of police powers, enabling them to tap phones and question suspects without defence lawyers being present, as well as plans for the 'reduction of labour costs'.

It is just a year since the election in which the PCI made big gains, making the prospect of the historic compromise — joint government with the Christian Democrats — seem that much closer. In that year the PCI has shown its willingness to cooperate with Italy's Tories by abstaining in the Chamber of Deputies on every important

issue. That is the only reason the Government has stayed in power.

The most recent product of the historic compromise was the defeat of a Bill proposing liberalisation of the abortion laws. Although the PCI voted for the Bill, seven left senators opposed it and a large number failed to appear for the vote. It was hardly coincidental that the PCI was involved in talks with the Government at the time.

On 'law and order' the party has given its full support to police repression of left wing demonstrations. The latest deal takes that collaboration in attacks on the labour movement a step further.

But it is on economic policy that the PCI has really excelled. 'Reduction of labour costs' is polite talk for wage cuts. The PCI abstained on the Government's

austerity plan last October and later proposed a scheme whereby some items would have a reduced weighting on the cost of living index this means both a distortion of the real rate of inflation and a cut in wages linked to that index.

Luciano Lama, general secretary of the PCI's union federation, recently announced that 'austerity is not a concession made to the adversary but an indispensable instrument for changing our economic structures and for changing society profoundly'.

The point was lost on hundreds of thousands of workers who have suffered a drop in real wages and a rise in unemployment over the last year, as well as a PCI — on unofficial strikes. The present agreement will probably be signed this week, but it does not represent the historic compromise.

Given the lengths to which the PCI has gone to sell out the interests of the people who voted



LUCIANO LAMA

for them, it is ironic that the Christian Democrats have no intention of allowing them into the Government. Happy enough to reap the benefits of PCI policy, they know that behind the party are hundreds of thousands of very angry workers.

Portugal
Government threatens
refuse workers

THE Portuguese Socialist Party has threatened striking Lisbon refuse workers with the sack if they don't call off their strike over a 22 per cent pay claim. As a last resort it is even prepared to take a leaf out of Franco's book and draft the workers into the army, which would make them liable to military discipline.

These moves follow demonstrations by more than 200,000 workers, organised by the Confederation of Portuguese Workers, which last week demanded an end to the 15 per cent wage rise limit. The marches, including one of 100,000 in Lisbon, showed the increasing opposition within the workers' movement to the austerity policies which have been at the

centre of Socialist Party policy since its election.

The economic situation is continuing to worsen — prices have risen between 25 and 50 per cent since devaluation in February. The latest demonstrations represent a growing rift between the Socialist and Communist Parties in Parliament — the union confederation which organised the marches is controlled by the CP — but the CP has still shown its willingness to support the Government's housing and public sector policies.

At the moment, however, it has everything to gain by bringing workers out on the streets in defence of their living standards.

The Swedish Road to Socialism

IN BRIEF

Recent developments in the British Communist Party are not an isolated phenomenon. Scandinavia, for example, has seen similar tensions. The latest example is the small Swedish CP (VPK) where a pro-Moscow faction broke from the party in February and launched a new party called the APK [Communist Workers Party]. BO BERGMAN reports from Sweden.

Twenty per cent of its members split from the VPK. The differences are longstanding. The 'old Stalinist' faction has always had a daily paper, and they have never hesitated to make their criticisms of the leadership.

But during the last three years the differences have escalated, mainly because of the attitude of the leadership: spectacular expulsions, refusal to give the opposition an adequate representation on the national leadership and so on.

The political questions have been raised by the development of 'Eurocommunism'. The VPK leadership condemned the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, Solzhenitsyn's expulsion from the Soviet Union, and has supported the Polish revolt in 1970 and Charter 77. It doesn't want to break links with the CPs in the East, but it has expressed views which are to a certain extent opposed to those of the Eastern European bureaucracies.

ABANDONED

The political framework for this was already outlined in the mid-1960's when the VPK abandoned the conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat and aimed at becoming a 'respectable' party, propagating a 'Swedish Road to Socialism'.

Though equally committed to the 'parliamentary road', the old-style Stalinists opposed this. They argued that the leadership had adapted its policies to the needs of the youth and students and had thereby turned into an intellectual, petit-bourgeois party, unable to strengthen its influence in the working class.

INFLUENCE

The APK has a point. The VPK has steadily lost influence in the workers movement. In last year's trade union elections the only factory where the VPK made gains in comparison with the Socialist Party was the huge Volvo plant in Goteborg... and there they had a united slate with the Trotskyists!

Above all the VPK has no answer to the crucial problem of how to begin to challenge the hold of the social democrats in the workers movement. They have proved unable to take advantage of the fact that last year the Socialist Party was thrown out of government for the first time in 44 years.

The APK has a more serious attitude to this problem, though their answer is one of opportunism and tail-ending. For example, last May Day it politely refrained from raising its own slogans on the social democrat-dominated marches.

The APK has failed to understand the importance of any of the questions which have won the VPK an audience among the radicalised students and youth: women's liberation, nuclear power stations and ideological and cultural questions in general. The split reflects all this in a clear sociological way: the APK consists mainly of middle-aged and old workers, the VPK of much younger people, many with an academic background. The APK's implantation is limited to the north of Sweden.

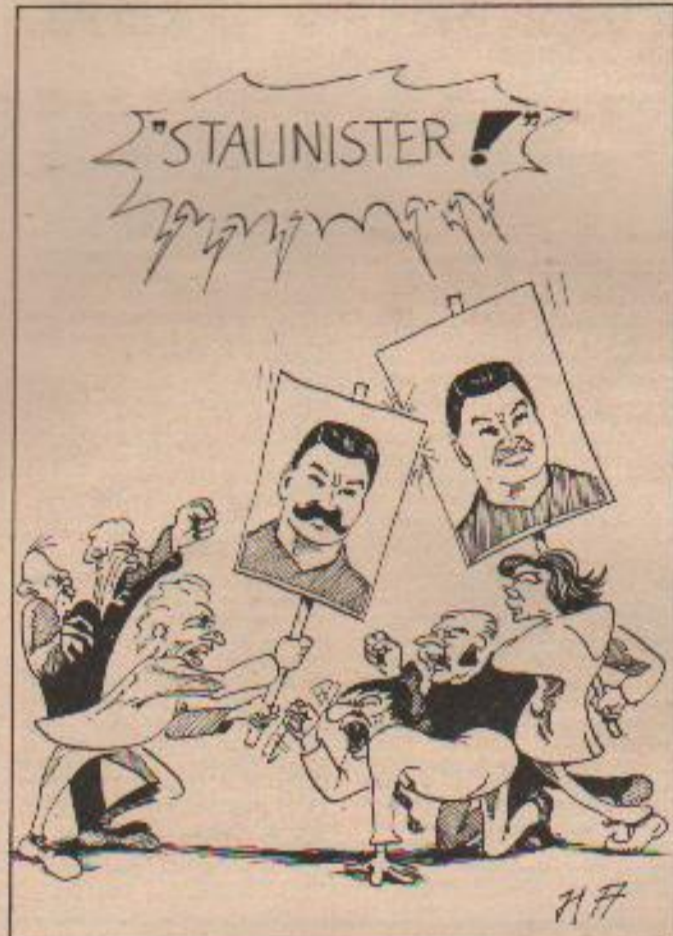
The split was marked by the absence of any democratic process within the party. Both sides used the classical Stalinist way of resolving differences and none of the crucial political questions have been discussed in an organised way inside the party — so it is no surprise that people outside the party have never received any clarification of the issues.

PREDICT

The APK's future is easy to predict. In its present form it is a party with no future. It will die with its members in a decade or two. For the VPK the perspectives are more complex. It consists of at least three vague tendencies.

One — left radicals — is very eager to come out in support of oppositionists in Eastern Europe. They received a setback when the leadership banned a branch which was running a campaign on political prisoners in alliance with the far left.

Another current is concerned above all not to let the party fall below the 4 per cent needed to win seats in the next parliamentary elections, and thereby lose a



lot of subsidies from the state. To do that it wants to cut all links with the irritating and offensive far left.

The third — which is dominant in the leadership — puts all its faith in international develop-

ments. The Eurocommunist movement is meant to link the VPK to forces for 'social change' in Europe as a whole. And this, they think, is enough to save the credibility of the Swedish Communist Party.

MOZAMBIQUE: The Governor of Tete province has said that Rhodesian troops have once again invaded the country in the Chioco area. The Rhodesian Minister of Combined Operations maintains his Government's 'right' to send troops into foreign territory. British Foreign Secretary David Owen has warned the Mozambicans not to 'rock the boat' over the invasion since it might jeopardise a settlement in Zimbabwe.

SOUTH AFRICA: Twelve blacks came up for trial last week, charged with being members of the 'main machinery' of the African National Congress. During their first appearance before the Supreme Court all but one of the 12 were wearing leg irons. Breyten Breytenbach, the writer jailed for nine years, now faces a further 17 charges.

ZAMBIA: Police used tear gas to quell a riot of 2,000 squatters in the copper belt. They were protesting at the demolition of their homes. President Kaunda has banned opposition political campaigning.

POLAND: The Workers' Defence Committee has announced that it has got hundreds of signatures on a petition demanding the release of nine WDC members and sympathisers arrested last month.

USSR: Ilya Glazunov, one of the most prominent official Soviet artists, is likely to have his exhibition banned unless he removes a surrealist painting depicting, among others, Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Leon Trotsky.

EUROCOMMUNISM: US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance has told an Italian journalist that it is possible that Communist Party electoral victories may create problems for the Soviet bloc 'that would more than outweigh the damage that Eurocommunism might bring to the NATO structure'.

LEBANON: Christian militias, backed by the Israeli army, are massing troops for an attack on Palestinian positions in Southern Lebanon. Israeli sappers have built a road into Lebanon to create better access for their forces. The Palestinian leaders are participating in round table talks with the other groups to discuss the formation of joint Palestinian-Christian militias to patrol the area!

KURDISTAN: Ten men arrested at random after an assassination attempt on the Governor of Sulamaniya have been executed by the Iraqi authorities.

PERU: Last week saw 48-hour strikes in a number of Peruvian cities against the Government's economic policies which have led to massive price rises. In Cuzco police opened fire on demonstrators, killing two, and have imposed a curfew.

GREECE: The Greek Government denies that the retirement of 126 colonels, nearly a quarter of all officers of that rank, is in any way connected with recent plots to assassinate the Prime Minister and overthrow the Government.

BRITAIN: The Foreign Office has drawn up a league table of the performance of countries on human rights. Surprisingly enough Britain comes near the top of the table, though the judgment of the Strasbourg Court on torture in Northern Ireland didn't help. One of the criteria for drawing up the table was the right to leave the country. If it had included the right to enter the country perhaps Britain wouldn't have done as well.

Not on speaking terms

DOES Leonid Brezhnev know something we don't? The 200-mile-an-hour Matra Bagheera is probably the best getaway car in the world. And at £15,000, one of the most expensive.

The first secretary of the Soviet Communist Party and newly-appointed President has a well-known penchant for fast cars and his visit to France last week has added two Matras to his collection of two Rolls Royces, a Cadillac, a Mercedes and a Citroen Maserati. Another five years in office and he could solve the Soviet transport problem single-handed.

But that was not the main point of his visit. His talks at Rambouillet produced a joint Franco-Soviet declaration which is not worth the paper it is written on. It is packed with pious phrases about human rights (which diplomatically avoids the real situation in the USSR) and non-intervention in Africa (remember the French paratroops in Zaïre?).

NEW FRIENDS

But the trip also gave Leonid the chance to make some new friends — like Gaullist leader Jacques Chirac, who gave him champagne and caviar — and to attend a dinner at the Elysee Palace, where he wore a white tie and tails and ate off gold plate.

Unfortunately this whirlwind of social engagements didn't give him time to visit Georges Marchais, the head of the French Communist Party, an omission which Marchais dismissed as unimportant, but which caused quite a stir in diplomatic circles. By an interesting coincidence Marchais is one of the chief ideologues of the dissident Western CPs. His party recently declared its support for the French nuclear deterrent. The missiles are programmed to land on Soviet cities — in fact there is

probably one pointed straight at Brezhnev's garage.

The French Government was anxious not to stir things. Paul Laurent, a member of the Communist Party secretariat, was due

to appear on a television programme interviewing East European dissidents. The state-owned television company rescheduled the programme to appear after Brezhnev's visit.



Brezhnev got a Matra Bagheera, but Foreign Minister Gromyko had to make do with a bunch of roses.

Communist Parties: At Each Other's Throats

SANTIAGO Carrillo, general secretary of the Spanish Communist Party, uses arguments that the most reactionary publicists don't often display... according to the Moscow periodical *New Times*.

The spectacular attack on Carrillo's book, *Eurocommunism and the State*, was quickly answered — not just by the Spanish party, but by the French and the Italians who said that the article could give rise to 'misunderstanding and ambiguity'.

But there was no misunderstanding and little ambiguity. *New Times* described Carrillo's 'truly staggering misanthropy' in the past year, which now places him in the camp of 'anti-Sovietism'.

The viciousness of the response is a recognition that Carrillo's book is the first codification of many of the statements of the Soviet Union made by 'Eurocommunist' leaders. It draws back from all the obvious conclusions on the need for a political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy, but it goes beyond

previous criticisms of the Kremlin's 'excuses' to a systematic view of the bureaucracy as 'irremovable'.

Even this theoretical development does not mean that either side wishes to make a complete break from the other. For the Eurocommunists, their most important distinguishing feature continues to be their relationship to the Soviet Union. And Moscow is in no position to repeat the Swedish split in the mass Western European parties. When it tried it in Spain in 1959 the result was a fiasco which only strengthened Carrillo's hand.

Moscow's role in exacerbating tensions in the smaller European CPs, like the British, is a matter for speculation, but there is no doubt that it hopes to use these tensions as a warning to the big Eurocommunist.

*Next week Socialist Challenge will print extracts from Eurocommunism and the State and the *New Times* criticisms of it.

Brass bands again

Combat the circle spirit

THE PRESENT situation in the working class movement emphasises the urgency of building a popular class struggle newspaper, anchored to our theoretical heritage. Small circle politics and talking to ourselves in a condition of developing struggle is the negation of our programme. Socialist Challenge offers the hope of addressing an ever widening section of workers on the threshold of a new advance. I am confident a paper can be produced which will be a real weapon in the battles opening for our class. Best Wishes. HARRY WICKS [Middlesex]

I HOPE NO-ONE takes seriously Peter Burton's naive, romantic view of brass bands (*Socialist Challenge*, 16 June). Please note the following points about brass bands.

They were formed by and are still tied to industrial firms. The bosses used the brass band idea to regiment their workforce outside the factory hours. The band is titled, and advertises the company which owns it.

The band movement disintegrated in the 1950s. It's been artificially revived by the instrument industry (e.g. Boosey and Hawkes) through schools brass band tuition, which yields quick results.

The middle class now holds together the band movement, from conductors like Elgar Howarth and Maurice Handford, to managers such as the directors of the Pennine Insurance Company.

They operate as a civilian, aural army. The players wear uniforms, emblems and decorations. Discipline is enforced through a strict hierarchy (rank and file, solo, bandmaster, director). John Foster's Black Dyke Mills is conducted by an army major.

Brass bands are absolutely sexist. There are no women brass players in the first division bands, and only a handful in the entire movement. The women are treated as suppliers of tea and sandwiches. And when did

you see any blacks in these bands?

As Peter Burton mentioned (and by implication endorsed), the movement lives by competitions. In the last decade there's been a campaign to 'clean up' the corruption in these contests — the same players (under assumed names) in different bands, money in the adjudicator's back pocket, telling the adjudicator the playing order, and so on.

A few professional players are Musicians Union members, but the band movement is strongly anti-union. Few players receive fees for their work. They're exploited by TV, radio, concert promoters, and their employers; they reduce the musicians' rights for a living wage.

Their basic repertoire is nostalgic, limited and reactionary. Its only relation to the working class is that it's foisted on them as 'their' music by the music industry.

In short, the brass band represents the working class only in the way that a Jaguar car does — because they supply the labour. Peter Burton's article shows that we still have to start from scratch in evaluating music's social role and its revolutionary potential. I hope you'll devote some space to this in future issues.

DICK WITTS [Manchester Musicians' Collective, 6 Kingston Road, Mor 20]



Non-aligned greetings

WE WOULD LIKE to welcome Socialist Challenge as an attempt to break out of the sectarian tradition of the British left.

Both of us were in revolutionary organisations in the late 60s and early 70s. We well remember how at that time the left endlessly discussed whether the USSR was state capitalist or a workers' state. We are glad to see that Socialist Challenge has broken out of this petty sectarian attitude and concentrates on one important fact: the USSR isn't what we want.

We are also glad to see that in 'Our Policies' Socialist Challenge has recognised that such things as the 'sliding scale of wages', 'open the books', and so on, while on occasion being useful demands should not become static and a bar to unity on the left.

It is also pleasing to see that the International Marxist Group has broken from the stance of

assuming that its complete programme is the only correct one — an attitude which excludes many socialists who have abandoned the right thinking of 1938. In this respect we feel that groups such as Big Flame and the Socialist Workers Party have much to offer Socialist Challenge. Even though both these groups reject Trotskyism in words they have in practice shows themselves to be on the side of the class struggle and thus revolutionary Marxists.

We have not been very active in the last few years on the 'organised' left, being involved in a small way in the women's movement and gay liberation. With the emergence of Socialist Challenge we feel there is more incentive for non-aligned socialists like ourselves to become more involved and committed to spreading socialist views.

HELEN REID and MIKE BAINES (Birmingham)

Non-sectarian sectarianism

TARIQ ALI invited me to write this item. I put that at the beginning of the article because I want everyone who reads it to know that I have not applied for membership of the IMG and that Tariq is back to his old, bad habits of talking to us 'social fascists' on the left of the Labour Party. He asked me if I would write about whether 'revolutionaries' should put up candidates for Parliament.

Well, as Professor Joad would have put it, it depends on what you mean by 'revolutionary'. As I understand it, to some of those who describe themselves of that ilk, Parliament is a sham and a fraud. So actually to go through the 'charade' of asking people to vote for you to go to Westminster is rather like accepting a peerage on the basis that that is the best way of abolishing the House of Lords.

Of course, as your leader in *Socialist Challenge* (9 June)

says, the purpose of 'revolutionaries' putting up a candidate is partly a propaganda exercise. Well I warn you all that every 'revolutionary' group which has started to put up candidates for Parliament has eventually got sucked into the system. Look at the poor old Communist Party of Great Britain which you so roundly abuse in your columns! Is that the way the IMG is going too?

So, with great respect, I don't think you should really ask me to join your debate. When you have split into two groups — one which is still purely 'revolutionary' and the other which deals with 'reformist' tactics like putting up Parliamentary candidates — I will be delighted to act as a neutral chairman in the argument.

RICHARD CLEMENTS [Editor, Tribune]

Physician, heal thyself — ED.

'Not an easy task'

IT'S NOT AN easy task we have set ourselves in forging some form of unity on the left. Certainly our past habits will not make it easier. In a spirit of comradeship I would like to point out what I thought was the weakness of the IMG tendency at the Socialist Challenge meeting here in Manchester the other week.

What seemed to be coming across, to me at least, was the usual one we all know so well. 'Our paper was the only one to...' and 'we were correct when...' Need I say more? We can all recognise it from ourselves.

Yet it is just this type of thinking that we must somehow get out of, however difficult. The best way to cause splits, and maintain those existing, is to always rake up as a backing for our present generalisation, how correct we were in the past. Typically the attack on the Socialist Review group in the past has caused folk to reach for their guns and close their minds to the argument.

As for me, I've been wrong, disastrously wrong in some

cases, in the past. What I needed then was not someone crowing as to how right they were, but a comradely argument that would have allowed me to quietly jettison my positions whilst I embraced the correct one. Without feeling like a clown who had to justify somehow his standing as a revolutionary.

The basis of our coming together is the understanding that we all have a lot to learn.

That there is within the working class movement always a definite tendency towards bureaucracy that must be constantly fought; believing as we do that it is the task of the working class to overthrow capitalism and not that of the revolutionary party. We are leaders, not teachers in this struggle.

Ideas spring from the workers in struggle not the party. Sealing ourselves as teachers is a part of this tendency towards bureaucracy. We are learners precisely because that is our strength.

DAVE HALLS WORTH Tameside 15 [Ashton-under-Lyne]

Disappointing

The emergence of *Socialist Challenge* is a useful and valuable step forward for the far left. Its aims, style, approach and overall coverage are unquestionably impressive and contrast with the aridity of many revolutionary papers and journals.

However, perhaps inevitably, the paper has failed so far to overcome many of the problems and weaknesses which characterised its predecessor, *Red Weekly*. A public debate on these is essential if they are to be overcome.

Firstly, and most obviously, the coverage of 'cultural' issues and questions is still very far from satisfactory. It has been almost entirely confined to revolutionary 'high culture', focusing on films, books and plays accessible to a very small proportion of the paper's readership.

Obviously this has a place, in encouraging readers to see and read politically significant films and books. Yet that place is limited. 'Cultural' coverage must concentrate primarily on television, the importance of which is often ignored. A political critique of *Crossroads* or for that matter *Kojak* would be a thousand times more useful than much of what has so far appeared in this section of the paper.

Secondly, 'Surplus Value' is rapidly becoming the 'intellectuals' page, bearing little relation to the bulk of the paper's content. An important aim of any revolutionary paper must be to relate theoretical questions and discussions to everyday experience. So far, the paper has notably failed to do this.

A further point flows from this. The uninitiated reader is still confronted by a frightening and intimidating jungle of initials and jargon. Although attempts have been clearly made to end this appalling practice, there must be a consistent attempt to break from the use of terms which may be verbal small change to the experienced political activist, but which present a serious barrier to drawing others into our activities.

No-one is asking for a red Beano — it would be patronising to the paper's readers and potential readers to do so. However, if the far left is to fully break out of its potentially self-imposed ghetto and relate to the thousands of working class militants beginning to break from traditional ideas and beliefs the paper must take further steps to make its programme accessible to wider numbers.

EDDIE ASHBEE [Southampton]

Soft core

MOTIVATED by Michael Chanon's review of Miklos Jancso's *Private Vices, Public Virtues* and three other friends went to see the film and found four others in the queue — all there as a result of the glowing review in *Socialist Challenge* (16 June). We all had a common opinion of the review after seeing the film — pretentious verbiage.

The film, it is true, is about the Austrian Crown Prince and his libertarian friends united in hatred of the Emperor's autocratic rule, 'every day doing physical and spiritual exercises' (mainly screwing) to try and forget 'the Emperor's dogmas and the stale proverb: on the State, family, religion.

But 'deeply political'? 'Designed to invoke in us... the spirit of May 1968?... suggests a class analysis of libertarian politics?'

The film is as political as *Shampoo* (both the film and the substance). A political film has a readily understood political content and leaves one in no doubt about that (Z. Blustein, *Corpus*, Lenny). At best *Private Vices, Public Virtues* hits politics

at a tangent. But at worst, and in fact, it is a film made by another good director recruited to the more profitable soft-core porn market, which is incidentally the real reason it is being shown at the Prince Charles cinema.

The reviewer distinguishes between pornography and eroticism; but the film's eroticism didn't make me 'think feelingly'. I must admit, the hermaphrodite aroused me. But in reality the never-ending shots of naked bodies (women naked first, men second) bored me stiff.

I hope that Marxist criticism begins to take a different form in the pages of SC. While trying not to be workerist about these matters, it strikes me that a healthy proletarian readership will be harder to achieve if this type of review continues.

In the spirit of Sarah Hart's letter, a review should at least contain an understanding of the political conditions and historical circumstances in which a film fails. The review is then able to situate the film in material reality and not in the director's head. JOHN BORAN [South London]

SWP and Spain

JOHN ROSS (Comment, 23 June) seems unable to distinguish between slander and fair comment on the sectarian antics of the Socialist Workers Party. *Socialist Worker* carried an article on the Spanish elections suggesting that the Trotskyist comrades of the LCR were being sectarian for not entering into a wider revolutionary slate than the one they did. Richard Carver in *Socialist Challenge* pointed out that the other three 'far left' slates in Spain objectively supported one or other of the projects of the reformist Socialist and Communist Parties. There was, therefore, no basis for unity.

It seems to me that the article in *Socialist Worker* was far less designed to clarify the issues at stake in the Spanish elections than to have a dig at the FI: 'You call for a joint slate here, why don't you in Spain', if it wasn't sectarianly motivated the conclusion is even worse — that the SWP actually thinks certain centrist organisations in Spain are revolutionary: a mistake that would flow from its lack of truly internationalist links.

Furthermore, it is quite right for

Socialist Challenge to point out the contradiction between the SWP's call for a 'revolutionary' electoral slate in Spain and its avowed refusal to have anything to do with one in Britain. That the contradictions in the SWP's 'national' and 'international' positions can be demonstrated in four column inches is tribute not to the supposed gratuitous nature of *Socialist Challenge's* comments but to the glaring inconsistencies in the SWP's positions.

Or does John Ross think that all the opportunist and sectarian practices of the SWP are to be ignored while we wait for four-page long 'serious polemics' which most of the current membership of the SWP will simply find mystifying?

Finally, the LCR is the largest revolutionary organisation in Spain and does stand in the same relation as the SWP to the revolutionary left in Britain. Unless, of course, you re-define organisations with centrist programmes, which capitulate to the bourgeoisie through their adaptation to the reformist bureaucratic, as revolutionary. MICK GOSLING [North London]

COMMENT

'Don't worship appearances'

THIS REPLY to Sarah Hart's letter (Socialist Challenge, 16 June) is an attempt to draw out the much wider theoretical differences which the review of The Lost Honour of Katharina von Blum by Carl Gardner and I, and Ms. Hart's response to it have raised. It is written in the hope that the pages of 'Under Review' will intervene in the political and theoretical debates which the paper, as a whole, is trying to encourage.

'Under Review' must not become ghettoised, and consequently politically marginalised, as the page where the revolutionary left finds its consumer guide to left cultural events.

One misunderstanding should be cleared up. Both reviewers are aware of the nature of the state apparatus in West Germany, and its far greater readiness at the present time to use coercion than its British counterpart. Socialist Challenge should commission a serious political analysis of the West German state for the 'Surplus Value' page in the future.

But this knowledge does not entitle Marxists to be uncritical about a film which takes that state apparatus and the way it functions as its subject matter. What is crucial here is the way that subject matter is treated, and the consequences such a treatment will have. Carl Gardner and I argued that the treatment in the film was far from useful; but we should criticise ourselves for personalising the criticism and for attributing blame to the film makers because we felt the film didn't work.

Sarah Hart thinks the treatment in the film is progressive and should be defended because... it begins to pinpoint these very real aspects of the West German state'. (My emphasis - JC) So the film 'shows things as they really are'; in this case that the state is brutally repressive and anti-communist. But we are not talking about 'reality' in West Germany. We are talking about a film - a 'constructed reality' which is determined by a different set of 'laws'.

For example, we do not experience - nor if we are Marxists do we understand - 'reality' as a linear unfolding of events. But in most narrative films we accept such linearity as a representation of real life. 'Reality' is not - as Sarah Hart seems to imply - an unproblematic medium which can be 'innocently' recorded by a camera and projected at 24 frames a second.

Lost Honour is a narrative representation of the West German state apparatus, which reveals the workings of that apparatus as it is experienced by the main female character, Katharina. The film works to generate sympathy and moral indignation on her behalf - as a human victim outside class.

We leave the film feeling that resistance against such an apparatus is futile; they'll get you in the end. This is why we argued that the treatment of the subject matter is unhelpful. This film does not help the spectator to understand the class nature of the state, nor offer any strategies against it.

This is not a plea for films to be prescriptive, nor is it a rejection of narrative political cinema. It is merely an attempt to combat the notion - widespread on the left - that 'political' content in cinema, theatre, music and so on is necessarily a 'good' thing, regardless of its treatment. The bourgeoisie might worship appearances. Marxists should look a bit further.

JANE CLARKE (North London)



Camera power!

By Malcolm Imrie

THE RULING CLASS doesn't hold weekly meetings to decide on the latest series of posters for the London tube stations. But, complex though the question of dominant ideologies is, there is no doubt that the invention of photography soon provided capitalism with a new and powerful string to its bow.

The photograph, like cinema, has tremendous potential - as noted by Marxist critic Walter Benjamin in his famous essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (in Illuminations, Fontana paperback). This is particularly because it could be quickly and cheaply reproduced and should therefore be free of the mystifying and profitable 'unique' status of, say, a painting.

Moreover, the means to produce photographs could be made accessible to everyone; whereas the 'muse' of 'artistic inspiration' had always been rather choosy about who it visited. Photographs were, in theory, open to public criticism, could be scrapped or reprinted, and become part of a collective, analytical process. Workers could begin to document their own history - in pictures as well as words.

Yet none of this happened. In spite of the contradictions, ways were found for photos to become

'works of art'; technique and style became commodities, just as the technology of photography was quickly mystified.

So it is that when David Hamilton takes soft-focus photos of girls in 'peasant' smocks lying vacantly around Provencal villas, they are sold as 'art'. When the Sunday Times ('means caring') has a front cover picture of a starving black child and puts underneath: 'Angola - the Price of Liberation', it is called 'realism'.

And so it is that we use Instamatics and get snapshots printed at Boots; while 'photographers' buy Pentax (marketed more as high fashion than tools) and enter the mysterious realm of dark-rooms and wide-angle lenses. Most importantly, though we perhaps recognise that a camera may be able to lie after all, we don't understand enough about how it can lie. Images taken out of context are made into universal truths and 'naturalise' oppression as something eternal.



1930's - Unemployed trade unionists 'raid the Ritz' for a meal

Few Marxists, apart from a handful of intellectuals (Benjamin, Roland Barthes, John Berger) have devoted any serious attention to photography. It's left as something marginal, and we limit ourselves to cynicism or

a quick comment with a felt-tip when a poster ad is too much to stomach.

So Camerawork magazine, which has been around for about two years now, deserves a much wider readership. It's produced six times a year by a collective of socialists who use cameras and study photography. It looks in depth at the points I've inadequately summarised above and many more - 'art', photography, sexism in photos (the most obvious and savage use which the media makes of them), photojournalism.

And it also examines ways in which we can begin to expropriate photography - as photo-

montage and as 'community' photography. The magazine itself is part of a wider project - Half Moon Photography Workshop - which runs classes in photography for children and adults, organises travelling exhibitions and has permanent shows at the Half Moon Gallery.

Neither understanding ideology nor taking over (taking back) technology are little extras to be left till 'after the revolution'. They are in fact a precondition for it. Photography could be a good place to start.

Camerawork (35p) can be ordered from Half Moon Photography Workshop, 27 Alie Street, London E1.



1970's - Trade union leader at a 'Working Together Luncheon'

Stripping off the mask

by SIMON WAYNE

THE THIRTIES & TODAY

PHOTOGRAPHS & DOCUMENTS OF SOCIAL STRUGGLE

The Thirties and Today is an exhibition of photographs and documents examining relations in social and labour history between the 1930s and today (with more material on the later period to come in a second part).

It has been conceived, as Tony Bennett, one of the organisers, explains: 'Not in order to mechanically transpose the tactics of the Thirties into the Seventies, but to compare the similarities, to note differences, and hence to use the successes and failures of the past as a background to the analysis of the present'.

We are shown pitifully underfed Lancashire mill women, police brutality, atrocious housing conditions, the Ministry of Labour's 'instructional' camps for those unemployed in the context of the rise of the British Union of Fascists. Everywhere the texts serve to clarify and explain the differing tactics of capital over the past few decades, which the continuity of images alone - Cable Street to Grunwick - might tend to obscure.

The photographs are carefully linked to contemporary cartoons, statistics, and quotations, which enable us to locate specific meanings in individual images.

As Brecht explains: 'The oppressors do not always appear in the same mask. The masks

cannot always be stripped off in the same way.'

The fact that this exhibition is being held in conjunction with a season of plays on the same themes, lasting until August, should give an even wider range of meanings to these photographs.

One note of criticism. It is a pity that most of the pictures have been 'tastefully' printed up in sepia, thus connecting them to the prevailing ideology of the nostalgia industry, which such techniques inevitably connote.

The Thirties and Today exhibition is at the Half Moon Gallery, 27 Alie Street, London E1 until 27 July. Mon-Sat 11am-6pm.

They shall not pass

by KILEEN MURPHY

NO PASARAN - 'They shall not pass' - is an anti-fascist play performed by the M6 Company. In documentary form it tells the story of Jan Goldberg, a young German Jew who is a talented boxer during the Nazis' anti-Semitic terror of the early 1930s.

Jan loses the right to box in clubs and competitions, while his parents are forced to close their shop because of frequent attacks. During the 1936 Berlin Olympics, when many discriminatory notices are removed to deceive the foreign athletes, Jan makes friends with some English boxers who persuade him to return with them.

Enter Moseley's Blackshirts and the battle of Cable Street when anti-fascists from all over the country form a massive

barrier to prevent the Blackshirts from marching through the Jewish quarter in the East End. In the second part the enormity of the atrocities committed by the Nazis emerges.

No Pasaran is an excellent play, powerfully performed. Many of the slides of anti-fascist activities in the Thirties are like scenes from anti-National Front demonstrations today. The parallels between Moseley and the NP are not explicitly drawn and whether the links are made must vary with different audiences.

But it is certain that the predominantly black audience and young people with whom I saw the show in Manchester identified with Jan; seethed with humiliation and rage at the fascists, and - with him - were delighted when Jesse Owen's incredible triple win at the 1936 Olympics gave lie to Hitler's theory of the master race.

The play does not say straight out 'the National Front is a Nazi Front' but it graphically demon-

strates what life under fascism would be like - an increasingly important part of anti-fascist work as fewer people remember the Thirties.

The M6 Company is newly-formed from the Bolton Octagon Theatre in Education Company. Having had their local authority grant cut (by exactly the same amount spent by the authority on jubilee scrolls for the children!) the company has become independent.

It is disturbing that this TIE company, the first to undertake to employ an equal number of women and men, is now so heavily male dominated. However, an excellent and important show. See it, just round the corner from Cable Street, at the Half Moon, Alie Street, London E1 on 29, 30 June, 1 July at 2pm and 8pm, and 2 July at 8pm.

M6 performs for community groups and trade unions and can be contacted at TIE, Octagon Theatre, Gorton Street, Bolton.

BOOKMARX CLUB
Selections for third quarter 1977
Begin July
List A: Southam Africa after Soweto
Calkinok and Roges
Daughter of Earth
Agnes Brodney
- one other title
List B: Biography of James Connolly
Samuel Lavrovski
List C: Dietmy
David Edgar
Poems and Ballads
Wolf Bierman
List A plus either List B or List C (please state preference) for £4.50.
Details: Bookmarx Club, Bookmarks, 266 Seven Sisters Road London N4 2DE. Tel: 01-802 6146.

Socialist Challenge

BUILD THE PICKET NOW CLOSE GRUNWICK!

By Geoff Bell

THE GRUNWICK DISPUTE began over the exploitation of women and immigrant workers. It developed on the right of workers to belong to a union. Two weeks ago the issue of police violence against pickets brought the strike national attention.

It is still about all those things. But it is also about much more. It is about how workers should struggle.

Shirley Williams, the Government's Education Minister and leader of the Labour right, posed the alternatives this way. In a speech last Friday she explained that when she attended the picket it was 'wholly orderly and peaceful'.

She continued: 'But I do deplore the intervention of the far right and far left who have no useful place in this dispute... It has done no good to the cause my union is fighting for.'

The ridiculousness of Williams's claim that the mass picketing and mass action has 'done no good' is self-evident. It was this, not Williams's half hour appearance on the picket line which brought national prominence to the strike and sent Government ministers scurrying around trying to get some 'settlement'.



Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

CONTRACT

But it is the general point Williams is trying to make that is important. She offers 'peaceful and orderly' tactics — the same tactics of talks, compromise and 'don't struggle' which produced the Social Contract, and with it a cut in real wages and rising unemployment.

The Labour Government approaches Grunwick with the same attitude. It was Callaghan who advised APEX leader Roy Grantham to limit the number of pickets. It was the Government and Employment Minister Booth in particular, who offered concession after concession to Grunwick boss George Ward.

The final, pathetic cringing climax came on Sunday night. Booth offered Ward yet a further line of escape with his offer of a 'mediator'. When Ward said that he would not be bound by any such finding, and that no matter what happened he would not reinstate the strikers, Booth's grovelling reaction was to describe Ward's response as

'optimistic'.

Booth considers it 'optimistic' because at least Ward had agreed to talk. And that, for Booth, for Williams and for Grantham is a big victory.

Their whole political philosophy is that the employing class and the working class have common interests, and provided people are reasonable and sit around a table everything can be sorted out. The mass picket was seen by Grantham not as a way of winning the dispute, but as a way of pressuring Ward to be 'reasonable'. Accordingly, once the picket threatened to escape from his control, Grantham attempted to limit it.

But the Grunwick strike committee have rejected their leader's advice. They have rejected the use of arm bands and call for maximum picketing. The policy of the strike committee is a living example of the alternative way of struggle to that of the present Labour and trade union leadership.

The strikers rely not on talks, or on compromises, but in building mass action — not as a means of forcing Ward to 'con-

promise', but as a way of winning the strike.

They rely on the working class in action; on class struggle. As Arthur Scargill put it, what Grunwick is about is 'class confrontation on the picket line'.

Which is why Grunwick has become the major political question it has. The Tories and the far right National Association for Freedom are uncritical in their support of Ward. That is not surprising. The independent workers' movement which has turned up on the picket line has given unflinching support to the strike committee. That is not surprising. And the Labour Government and the trade union bureaucracy pose as neutrals, arbitrators, mediators for a 'peaceful and orderly' end.

That also is not surprising. In the past few months the official 'leadership' of the mass working class organisations have done all they can to dampen and defeat independent actions by the working class, be it at British Leyland, Heathrow, Ford or Port Talbot. They know that such struggles are a foretaste of

what is to come in the growing fight against wage controls, cuts and unemployment.

They may prefer the 'negotiated' settlement, but at the same time sanction the Special Patrol Group against the Grunwick picket line. If they get away with it this time, then they will do it again and again.

The stakes are high. Two alternatives are being offered in the workers' movement. One is class collaboration. On that side are the Labour Government Grantham and the leadership of the TUC.

The other is class struggle policies. The sort of policies which won at Saltley, which

defeated the Industrial Relations Act and 'In Place of Strife'.

The same defeat for the ruling class and victory for the worker's movement can happen at Grunwick.

ALL OUT 11 JULY FOR GRUNWICK

The insidestory

YOU'VE GOT to hand it to George Ward. Twice in the last year he's managed to do what the whole of the trade union leadership has failed to do in two years — break the Social Contract.

Tony Jimenez, a 64-year-old cleaner who joined the strike from the Cobbold Road works on Monday told a press conference that he was earning £51 for a 40-hour week. What was he earning last August when the strike began? Since then he'd

had rises of 15 and 10 per cent.

He also revealed how the ambush of APEX General Secretary Roy Grantham — now being touted by the National Association for Freedom as 'proof' that other Grunwick workers don't want a union — was achieved when the APEX chief visited the factory.

Tony was in the canteen when Ward went up to a group of workers and said: 'You go up there and give it to him'. Tony was in no doubt that this was an

instruction. Mahmood Ahmed from the Strike Committee also disputes Ward's claim that 250 people are still working. He puts the figure at a maximum of 140, of whom APEX is claiming recognition for 60.

On NAFF's propaganda ploy that APEX is a closed shop, Mahmood adds: 'It's just not true. All the managers and directors voted in Ward's "ballot" on whether Grunwick wanted a union, but we don't want the managers and the directors in our union.'

A flying start to the 'fiver' campaign

Socialist Challenge

BUILD A SOCIALIST OPPOSITION FOR A UNIFIED REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION

Subscribe now!

Increased postal charges mean that we have had to raise the subscription cost. But they are still exceptional value.
Domestic: 6 months, £3.75; 12 months £7.50
Abroad: Airmail, £12.50. Surface, £9 per annum.

Name.....

Address.....

I enclose a donation for the Fighting Fund of.....

Cheques, POs and Money Orders should be made payable to 'Socialist Challenge'.

Complete and return to:
Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.

The 'Fiver for Socialist Challenge' appeal in last week's issue got off to a flying start. Over £150 came in. Just about on target for the £1800 by the end of September.

Apart from the many individual donations two others were very welcome. Delegates at the NALGO conference, who support Socialist Challenge, sent us £40. While on Saturday a brand new carpet arrived in the editorial offices worth £57. A Pakistani shop steward from the East End of London having heard of the bare boards in the editorial offices decided to save us the expense of buying floor covering.

IDEAS

Follow these two ideas and either send us the cash or let it in kind. Paper, envelopes, stamps, typewriters, filing cabinets... all these would be welcome. We hope that Socialist Challenge groups will be thinking of ways of raising money for the paper. Supporters in Swansea made £21.20 by organising a disco and social.

This week our thanks to: —

R. Watkins	£5
F. Cattle	£10
E. Sinclair	£5
A. Arbustor	£5
NALGO delegates	£40
Glasgow anon	£5
Swansea	£21.20
Carpet	£57
Total	£158.20

A supporter in the North West wrote to tell us about the success of the paper in the region. Besides selling over 800 papers, readers and supporters groups are mushrooming. Our correspondent writes:

"Following the successful meetings held in Manchester, Bury, Wigan, Warrington, Bolton, Birkenhead, Liverpool, Preston and Hebdon Bridge to launch the new paper, Socialist Challenge supporters groups have been established in all those areas. First supporters meetings have been held in most of them.
The Bolton supporters group

includes members of both the IMG and the Marxist Worker Group, as well as non aligned militants. While in Hebdon, Wigan, Warrington and Birkenhead the functioning groups are virtually totally composed of militants in no organisation. Besides these towns the paper is

also sold in Burnley, Oldham, Tameside, Lancaster and Stockport."

Write and let our other readers know what Socialist Challenge is doing in your area. Tell us what you think of the paper. How could it be improved. How can sales be improved.

SUBSCRIBERS AND SUPPORTERS

THE BIGGEST problem all socialist papers face is that the monopoly distribution agencies refuse to handle them. We are no exception.

From the response we have received we know that more people would buy the paper if they could see it.

Why not order more copies each week and sell to your workmates or while

you're queuing up to see a play or a film or a concert. We'll send you a post-free bulk order. Fill in the form below and we'll provide you with more information.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

No. of copies required each week.....
Post to Socialist Challenge, Circulation Dept., 328 Upper Street, London N1.