

# Socialist Challenge

BUILD A SOCIALIST OPPOSITION FOR A UNIFIED REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION

12p

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# BATTLE OF GRUNWICK

## SCABS SHALL NOT PASS ON 11 JULY

“We call for this to be the most mighty display of strength and unity in defence of trade unionism that our movement has seen in years.”

— Grunwick Strike Committee.



Photo: ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFL)

## INSIDE:

“This system has not been transformed, has not been democratised, and has even maintained many of its aspects of coercion in relations with the socialist states of the East, as was brutally demonstrated by the military occupation of Czechoslovakia.”

SANTIAGO CARILLO  
ON

THE DEGENERATION  
OF SOVIET SOCIETY  
&

CHARLIE DOYLE  
ON EUROCOMMUNISM

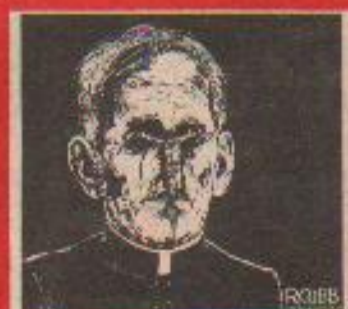
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ITALIAN COMMUNISTS

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GRUNWICK FEVER  
HITS DARLINGTON  
JOURNALISTS



MSL. SELTON (LONDON) PHOTOGRAPHED  
SOURCE OF  
**THE ROMAN  
CATHOLIC CHURCH**

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# Editorial

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## sledgehammer and the nut

*'Would you tell me please, which way I ought to go from here?'*  
*'That depends a good deal on where you want to get to',*  
*said the cat.*  
*'I don't care much where —' said Alice.*  
*'Then it doesn't matter which way you go', said the Cat.*  
*'— so long as I get somewhere', said Alice.*  
*'Oh, you're sure to do that', said the Cat, 'if you only walk long enough'.*  
(Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*)

THE PICKET LINE outside the Grunwick factory in North London symbolises today the most important political struggle which is taking place in the country. Its outcome will help to determine the sort of struggle we are likely to see over the coming years.

It is a revealing commentary on the political situation in Britain under a Labour Government in 1977 that a basic question involving the right of workers to join a trade union of their choice cannot be resolved without a major clash with the State. It proves that Michael Foot's laws to protect trade union rights are a joke; that trade union leaders in the TUC only pay attention when confronted with rank-and-file militancy — after all, they let the strike linger on for 44 weeks. Their advice to the Grunwick strikers that if they persevered (or 'walked long enough' as the Cat would have it in *Alice in Wonderland*) they would get somewhere.

This advice turned out to be worse than useless. The strikers and those workers who support them realised that class-struggle politics are not only correct in the abstract, but also provide the most practical means to lead a struggle to victory.

### THE NUT

The factory itself is a sweatshop, presided over by a nineteenth century employer, George Ward (the nut in question). Ward could have been smashed in a few weeks by concerted trade union action.

He was not both because the trade unions confined themselves to nice words and avoided action; because the judges intervened to end the Post Office boycott, and because Ward's close and friendly links with Scotland Yard ensured heavy police protection for the scabs (we now learn that important police films are processed, no doubt cheaply, by Grunwick).

### THE SLEDGEHAMMER

As a result the union involved, APEX, reluctantly called for 'mass picketing'. The police moved in reinforcements and workers throughout the country began to realise what was at stake.

The Government defended the police and in an attempt to cool the situation appointed a Court of Inquiry headed by Lord Justice Scarman. They hoped by doing so to end mass picketing. The union chiefs were prepared to capitulate and call it off.

But Ward's refusal to comply with the verdict coupled with the strike committee's militancy for-

ced APEX to retreat.

### THE TORY PARTY AND A DEFEAT

The political organisation which is in real disarray over Grunwick is the leadership of the Tory Party. Margaret Thatcher's patronage of the National Association For Freedom and her own right-wing views impel her to back Ward and be done with it. But the interests of the mainstream of the British ruling class require that the dispute is resolved quickly by legislative methods without union bashing.

So the Tory front bench sits sullenly as Callaghan baits them for opposing trade union rights. A significant section of the Tory backbenchers are not as shy, and most of them have been backing Ward. Peregrine Worsthorne in last Sunday's *Telegraph* spoke for them all when he wrote about Ward:

*'It is an infectious, not to say inspiring spectacle, which has already released great waves of pent-up anti-trade union hatred... Let the law against violent picketing be rigorously enforced and the striking postmen punished... Let the Conservatives say that they, when returned to power, will not hesitate to rise to the challenge.'*

But the moderate, consensus Tories are alarmed at what is taking place. Ronald Butt, the dull and uninspired hack columnist of the *Sunday Times* was replying to Worsthornisms when he wrote:

*'Nothing excuses the violence at the Grunwick gates; on the other hand, the right of an individual to join a trade union, as also not to join, is a crucial freedom. The Tories must not allow themselves to be manoeuvred into a false position on this point...'*

A defeat at Grunwick would considerably aid a tougher policy from both this and the next Government. It would show the unions incapable of putting into practice their motto: An injury against one is an injury against all.

### VICTORY: A VITAL SHOT ACROSS THE BOWS

A victory at Grunwick is vital for the British working class. No major union has so far resisted the Labour Government's economic policies. This policy has allowed sections of workers to be isolated and defeated. Grunwick is the opportunity to reverse this tide.

# George Ward's rent a mob strikes again

Rumours flew around the Grunwick picket line last Friday that APEX was going to try and call off the mass picketing. That may have been one reason why the police attacked sections of the picket with more ferocity than at any time since the first few days of the mass picket. GEOFF BELL reports.

Perhaps the police thought it was their last opportunity to show their allegiance to George Ward; their hatred of workers in struggle.

Or maybe the thuggery was a final attempt by someone in high authority to frighten the strikers into giving up mass action and handing over their fate to judges and courts of inquiry.

Whatever the reason, there was no mistaking the scale of the violence. Ray Edwards, Assistant General Secretary of APEX — who has been suspected of being in favour of ending the picketing — described the police attacks graphically.

'I have seen police action on picket lines many times,' Edwards said. 'But I have never seen the brutality which I saw on this picket line today. The violence was caused by the police who waded in with knees and boots, using their helmets as truncheons.'

Edwards was referring to the police assault on the pickets at Chapter Road at about 9.30 a.m. Colin Talbot, a member of the Executive of the National Union of Students, was on the receiving end of the attacks:

*'A half-hearted shove at the police began. Nobody expected the reaction we got. Rather than just counter-pushing, the police started ramming us, crushing a dozen pickets against the wall. A flying wedge of police tried to cut off the front portion of the pickets.'*

*'Then they started singling out individuals for arrest. I was hauled out of the picket. I*



Bill Freeman's arrest: 'They started kicking me'

was punched and kicked by the cops as they dragged me towards a police bus. One of the cops who was holding me turned round and smashed his helmet into the face of a picket.'

Yet Talbot's experience was not the worst. Earlier on in Cooper Road the police decided to mete out their own

punishment to some of the print worker whose solidarity action in demanding the right of reply to several pro-management editorials and advertisements had caused much anger in ruling circles. Bill Freeman, of the print union NATSOPA, told of his arrest:

*'We were standing on the pavement with our banner. The police suddenly came up and said, "Right, get up the road". But we couldn't because other police were blocking our exit. Then they started pushing and prodding and picking us up one at a time. Suddenly I was in the back of the bus and they started kicking me.'*

Bill's brother, George, was also arrested and beaten, while his other brother, Jim, was yet another of the Freeman family who found himself at the end of a police boot.

*'I saw my brothers in the police bus', Jim said. 'I went up and asked the police*

if I could speak to them. The sergeant said "I'll have you".'

*'He grabbed hold of my cobbles and pulled me onto the bus. They beat us near to death in that bus. I've had five serious heart attacks and when they got to the station I took a turn. It took them an hour and a half to get me a doctor.'*

There is evidence that the police picked out those they wanted to arrest. Ray Edwards said: 'Quite frankly I think it was planned in advance.'

### DETERMINED

In some ways there was nothing that exceptional about these pickets' experiences. It was just one more day on the Grunwick picket line; just one more series of police attacks.

Just one more reason why the Grunwick workers and their supporters are determined not to be beaten off the streets — determined to keep up the mass picket.

## Building solidarity

EXAMPLES of what every reader of Socialist Challenge should be doing for the Grunwick strikers were given last week in Manchester.

On the Tuesday a coachload of Manchester engineers travelled down to the picket line. On Wednesday and Thursday members of the International Marxist Group, Big Flame and others arranged a series of factory and street meetings for Kanesh Gandhi, a member of the Grun-

wick strike committee.

Seven factories were visited in all and the tour won the support of the APEX area office, who only a week before had made no arrangements for factory meetings.

Now an action committee has been set up to build solidarity with the strikers and to arrange transport for 11 July. It is the sort of activity which should be duplicated in every town and city.

# 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 win 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 internal democracy not as a luxury but as a vital necessity. This means the right to organise factions and tendencies.

Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

## Interview with Grunwick strike leader 'We will only win by building the mass pickets'

by TESSA VAN GELDEREN

Ten months on strike have undoubtedly changed the lives of Grunwick strikers. The mass pickets have transformed them even more. The strikers are aware of the crucial importance of the issues raised by the picketing, the postal workers' action and all the other solidarity action now being mounted.

While still determined to fight for union recognition, they know that they have become the focus in the struggle against anti-union forces and attempts to push back the advances the working class has made over many decades.

JAYABEN DESAI, the treasurer of the strike committee, is the first to admit the changes that have taken place among the strikers themselves, particularly the women. 'We are better now, more militant', she says. 'Before we didn't know what we were doing. Now we are more confident.'

The lessons the strikers have learnt have often been gained the hard way. APEX decided to use to courts to try to win the strike. This frustrating experience has had its effect. 'I don't want to depend on the courts', Jayaben explains. 'In my mind the High Court action is not important. The only way to win the strike is

by building the mass pickets. We've tried so many ways but they didn't work. But this will.

'We see the picketing as part of a national struggle. It is not only our problem. The National Association For Freedom and the Conservative Party are helping the management to break trade union power. So the picketing is very important for every worker.'

'It has also pushed the trade unions themselves, and it creates workers' power against the trade union bureaucracy. For example, in the Post Office workers' union, where Tom Jackson washed his hands of it all. Now he can't do anything about the action being taken.'

'This dispute has resulted in workers gaining confidence. Up until now in some disputes the union leadership try to get the workers to go back. Now the workers have confidence to do something and stand with unity. They will achieve what they

want.'

But there have been problems with the APEX leadership, which came to a head when Roy Grantham called for a limitation to the pickets and the strike committee disagreed. However, Jayaben Desai does not see this as a big problem:

'APEX expressed their view. The strike committee expressed ours.' But she is very clear on her attitude to the role of the trade union leaderships generally: 'It is not a question of individuals. Whoever is there, they will be the same. It is the job. Workers shouldn't stand. They are the people who can tell the officers what to do, not the other way around.'

'Officers have responsibilities. Workers have none. They are free to express themselves; but the officers are afraid of the bosses, the workers, and losing their position.'

It is obvious what the strikers think of the right-wing forces involved in the dispute, such as the Tories and NAFF. But what of the Labour Government? 'They think in a different way. There are all sorts of pressures on us to decrease the pickets. The Labour Government don't want a confrontation. The Government is made by the workers. They should have to work for the workers.'

There is no question of the strikers' view of the police. They have had to put up with all sorts of harassment and violence, even before the mass pickets started. 'The role of the police has been completely unbelievable. All the violence has been started by the police.'

'We have seen a film of the first day's mass pickets and you can see it clearly. When Merlyn Rees was here we were told that we could talk to the pickets. We could walk on the bus. It was our right to stop them and talk to them.'

'We asked Rees to wait until the bus came but he didn't.



JAYABEN DESAI

When it did, the police pushed us. They didn't even stop the bus.'

The mass pickets to date have not closed down the factory. Scabs are still going to work. Why is this? 'The main thing is that they don't know anything about trade unions. Their knowledge is superficial. They ask people who don't know or who have had a bad experience with the unions.'

'The management takes advantage of their unawareness of the trade union movement. They confuse and bribe them. They use all sorts of tactics. Before the strike they treated the white workers better than the others, it's different now.'

But of course everything is 'different now' at Grunwick. Jayaben Desai and the rest of the strike committee have made sure of that.

### Scabs in our ranks

A COLLECTION of time-servers, ruling class stooges and simple idiots wrote to the *Daily Telegraph* on 27 June to express their 'deep concern at the serious developments in the Grunwick dispute'.

They went on to say that the pickets had tried to 'terrorise fellow workers (the scabs), attack the police and injure and intimidate members of the public'. They claimed the mass picket 'can only discredit the trade union movement'.

Those who signed the letter were not members of the Special Patrol Group or Tory MPs, but 'active trade unionists holding a variety of posts from national office... to the ordinary rank and file member'.

But just whose side they were on in the Grunwick strike was evident the next day in the *Daily Telegraph* when Robert Moss, director of NAFF, wrote to say he was 'delighted' with the letter.

Few workers read the *Daily Telegraph*, so *Socialist Challenge* believes the names of these collaborators should be given wider coverage. They are:

KATE LOSINSKA, co-ordinator; W. BURTON (Civil and Public Services Assocn); W. SMITH (Transport Salaried Staffs Assn); H. FRIED (CPSA); A. HULL (So. of Civil and Public Servants); H. WILLIAMS (APEX); R. KANE (CPSA); B. HORD (APEX); S. BREAKS (EQUITY); J. STAFF (UCATT); J. TARRANT (SLADE); R. WILLSON-PEPPER (CPSA); R. ROBINSON (TSSA); D. ABEL (CPSA), Croydon.

### Staggering Breakthrough

THE OXFORD JOURNAL of 1 July carried the following report: 'Airey Neave, Neil Marten, Michael Heseltine and Douglas Hurd said that teachers were not the only section of the community affected by the public spending cuts.'

### The rise and rise of Comrade Brezhnev

LEONID BREZHNEV'S assumption of the office of head of state has been greeted with considerable cynicism in Moscow. Many Russians can't help feeling that there is something farcical in the attempts of this ageing and sick bureaucrat to play at being Stalin.

The citizenry of Moscow has also not failed to notice the fact that B now holds three positions: he is first secretary of the CPSU, he is a Marshal of the USSR, and he is now also the President. Apart from the political ramifications of this development, the financial aspects are also worth noting: he has three salaries. When these are added up they amount to £37,000 a year, not including 'expenses'.

The average wage in the USSR is at an optimistic estimate £1,500 a year. Wasn't it Lenin who insisted that party and state functionaries could not receive more than the average wages of a skilled worker? But then we know what a hopeless, moralistic old Utopian Vladimir Ilyich was....

### Tennis and reaction

THOSE VIEWERS who were disgusted by the ugly display of Jubilee chauvinism from the centre-court crowd when Virginia Wade ultimately won the women's singles title will not be surprised to learn of the historic links between tennis and reaction.

A former French champion,

Jean Borotra, (vintage 1932), was also posing for the Wimbledon Centenary pic with the Windsors this year. Borotra was a fascist collaborator who served under Vichy as Minister of Sport and Education from 1940-2. He is at present the vice-president of the 'Association to Defend the Memory of Marshal Petain' and wants the Marshal rehabilitated.

The Wade victory, Borotra's nostalgic reminiscences, and Arthur Ashe's revelation that Nastase is a racist who had shouted 'nigger' at him on the tennis court are all reminders of the elitist class basis of tennis as a sport.

### Maidenhead Advertiser [sic]



THE 'JUBILEE SPECIAL' supplement brought out by the Maidenhead Advertiser included this disgusting photograph — an indication of how most young girls are socialised in capitalist societies. The caption read: 'Four year old Bunny Girl Amanda Scott was one of the star turns in the Ewellode fancy dress competition'.

We will offer a free sub to the reader who can get the best letter in to the Advertiser protesting against this appalling display.

### Churm warfare

CHARLES CHURM, right-wing secretary of the Sharlston branch of the National Union of Mineworkers in Yorkshire is no more. At least no more the secretary at Sharlston.

The last time Charles was in the news was when he was the source of a front-page 'exclusive' in the Sun last February denouncing the financing of lobbies and pickets from the NUM funds. He was adopting his favourite pose of being 'truly representative of "ordinary miners" feelings', as against the 'unrepresentative' Scargill.

'Ordinary miners' showed what they thought of Churm's record by voting him out of his branch position.

That's democracy, Charles.

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Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)



## Sunspots, Arab oil and the crisis

by SUE HIMMELWEIT  
and SIMON MOHUN

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development has as its members the world's major capitalist countries. The stated aims of this rich nation's club are to promote economic growth, full employment and financial stability amongst its members; and to help spread the benefits of capitalist development to poorer non-member countries.

Part of the way it does this is by publishing regular surveys of the economic statistics and prospects of its members. One such survey has just been prepared for the OECD by a group of expert Western economists.

They include a former chairperson of the Council of Economic Advisors to the US President, a former governor of the Italian Central Bank, a former chairperson of the German Council of Economic Advisors, a former vice-president of the Common Market Commission, and the Master of an Oxbridge college.

Their subject — what went wrong in the advanced capitalist countries in recent years, why the 'never had it so good' years became years of high unemployment, inflation and very little growth. And their conclusion — it was nothing but the regrettable consequence of a series of unfortunate accidents.

The study, *Towards Full Employment and Price Stability* argues that the problems faced by the advanced capitalist countries in the 1970s have been caused by two main factors. First, there was a series of shocks to the economies of the West, shocks which had their origins outside the capitalist system, and boil down to a succession of harvest failures coupled with the large rise in oil prices in 1972-4.

The second cause is seen as the fact that most capitalist states in the early 1970s pursued expansionary economic policies at a time when these were quite inappropriate. Thus superimposed on the US financing of the Vietnam war by the printing of dollars was a set of natural disasters over which there was no control; an attempt by the Arabs to exploit their resources more effectively, and mistakes and incompetence in demand management policies in the West.

Not surprisingly then, these eminent economists 'reject... the view that existing market-oriented systems and democratic political institutions have failed. What is needed is better use of existing instruments of economic policy, and better functioning and management of existing market mechanisms.'

In the nineteenth century some economists believed that economic recessions were caused by sunspots. The OECD's argument today is exactly the same. For the OECD's explanation takes something external to capitalism as a system (the sun, the weather, the Arabs, the stupidity of governments) in order to explain why capitalism gets into trouble.

But Marxists know that capitalism gets into trouble not through external shocks, but precisely because it is capitalism. Crises are inherent within the capitalist system. They will continue to occur and recur as long as capitalism remains. For capitalism is based on private property, private ownership and control; its driving force is the continuous search for private profit; production is production for profit and not production for people's needs.

But production is organised through the increasing specialisation of tasks in production. This situation, of growing socialisation of the forces of production, is constantly disrupted by private property relations.

Such a disruption is called a crisis. Roughly speaking, the main way of increasing profits is by increasing productivity. Productivity is increased by replacing workers with machines. So this process tends to lead to falls in profitability. A crisis occurs when these falls become so marked that capitalists stop investing.

This is what has been happening in the advanced capitalist countries over the past few years. It is nonsense to identify this necessary interruption in the process of capitalist growth as the result of a series of accidents. Nonsense it is, but this nonsense will be repeated time and time again by the 'experts' of capitalism. For by passing off the troubles of capitalism as a series of accidents which can be avoided in the future, they divert the working class from seeking an alternative to this bankrupt system. Crises are not accidents. They are part and parcel of capitalism itself. The only way to get rid of them is to get rid of capitalism.

# Police assault striking journalists Grunwick fever sweeps Darlington

A raging epidemic of Grunwick fever is sweeping the Darlington police force, erupting last Friday night in the arrest of 25 journalist pickets outside the Northern Echo building.

A hundred and eight NUJ members have been on strike at the North of England newspapers for five weeks, following a management decision to smash the union's closed shop at Darlington by hiring a non-NUJ sub-editor.

Three successive Friday nights of mass picketing have brought a vicious police response. The number of arrests now stands at

Friday, Superintendent Ken England was jumping up and down like a demented monkey screaming at the top of his voice 'Make arrests, make arrests!'

According to a veteran member of Darlington Trades Council watching the chaos, it was the worst police assault on trade union rights in the North-east since before the war.

Two senior NUJ members,

tive member Aidan White and Chairperson of the NUJ London area council Eric Goeden, as well as leading members of the NUJ strike committee at Darlington.

The arrests show the desperation of the Northern Echo management at the journalists' solid defence of their closed shop. At heart is the terrifying fear that they might have to start paying decent wages to their journalists and possibly lose their iron grip on editorial control.

Some of the strikers at Darlington are getting more from their £30 a week NUJ strike pay than from their Westminster Press pay packets. Others with

NATSOPA members, including governing council member Bill Freeman, were arrested on the Grunwick picket line. 250 miles away and twelve hours later NATSOPA members at the Northern Echo were doing precisely what George Ward's leering bus drivers do each morning — drive through a picket line with a load of scab material.

### PLEDGE

The attitude of the National Graphical Association members who compose the type and print the scab papers has also been less than helpful. In spite of a pledge from the NGA executive council for help in the NUJ's closed shop fight, NGA members at Darlington have not yet moved.

The lack of solidarity among the different unions in newspapers is being watched carefully by all newspaper bosses, eager to exploit union disunity by sacking thousands with the introduction of new technology.

The NUJ must be given the maximum support for its right to organise all journalists. The cosy arrangement between the golf-playing senior managements who run the Darlington police and the Darlington newspapers must be exposed, and the police brutality against the Darlington pickets resisted.

### DERISION

Both Darlington and Grunwick are battles for basic trade union rights. But for journalists and the rest of the labour movement the closed shop issue reaches beyond that. When Denis MacShane spoke on behalf of the NUJ to the Grunwick pickets he was greeted with shouts of derision.

Printworkers on the Sun, Observer and Sunday Telegraph have already demonstrated the kind of action that can secure the right of reply to the press's lies about Grunwick. It is vital that journalists now link up their closed shop struggle with the fight for press freedom.

Messages of support and details of the next mass picket: NUJ Strike Committee, 9 Victoria Road, Darlington. Phone 0325 50282.



NUJ vice-president Denis MacShane being arrested — 50 yards from the picket line.

43. The main trouble develops when Northern Echo vans coming through the picket lines attempt to do so without allowing the picket leaders a chance to persuade the drivers to turn back. Even though the police can readily push their way through the pickets, they have deliberately chosen to arrest as many journalists as possible.

Northern Echo management have cheered on the side lines as police wade into the pickets. As the picket line swirled around a van for which the police were successfully clearing a way on

Regional Organiser John Hodgman and Vice-President Denis MacShane, were arrested about fifty yards away from the picket line when they went to help the wife of the secretary of Darlington Trades Council who was being forcibly dragged away by two police officers.

'The police had lost complete control', said a shaken MacShane afterwards. 'John Hodgman and I were trying to restore some calm but the police seemed only interested in the most blatant intimidation against NUJ members'.

Also arrested were NUJ execu-

university degrees, years of training and experience consider themselves lucky if they take home £50 a week. Westminster Press notched up £4.2 million profits last year.

### ARRESTS

The response from other trade union members inside the Northern Echo building has been disappointing. The vans going through the NUJ picket lines belong to NATSOPA.

Last Friday senior London

## 150 fascists charged demo



Fascists [right] abuse black militants on Lewisham 21 march.

EGGS, PIECES of metal, and even caustic soda were hurled by 150 charging National Front members at 300 demonstrators assembling to march against the conspiracy charges laid against the Lewisham 21 last Saturday.

The ranks of the local NF were boosted by a coachload of emissaries from a Tyndall meeting being held in the East End of London. Fifty-six arrests were made, including black shoppers in the High Street at New Cross.

The Front's unexpected charge was restrained by the police, who were reluctant to allow a public escalation of violence but were quite happy to carry out indiscriminate arrests of black youths in side roads. They were aided by the Special Patrol Group. Twenty anti-racist demonstrators were arrested.

The racist Front — under the guise of their 'Stop black mugging, support your local hobby' campaign — will undoubtedly hold their own demonstration in the near future. The whole of the left must take seriously a counter-mobilisation if this occurs. On Saturday, the far left, the Young Communist League, Greenwich Labour Party and individuals from the Labour Party turned out. The Communist Party was notably absent.

### UNITED AGAINST RACISM

TUC National  
Anti-racist Demonstration  
Saturday 9 July 1pm  
Ducie Street carpark,  
outside Strangeways Prison,  
Manchester.

Rally, Whitworth Park, 3.30pm.  
TUC and Labour Party speakers

## Productivity deal threat as Miners spurn Contract

**NO OPPOSITION** will come from the leadership of the National Union of Mineworkers to resolutions which seek an updating of the 1975 policy of £100 a week for faceworkers, with built-in compensation for inflation and a four day working week without loss of pay.

Arthur Scargill has declared that the NUM should press ahead with these policies irrespective of what the TUC decides in September. In a similar vein Scargill intends to seek further support for the 11th of July day of action at Grunwick.

The decision of the miners' executive to back the policy should mean that the motion commands a massive majority. But miners' President Joe Gormley has calmed frayed nerves in National Coal Board and Government circles by saying that the principle was for negotiating purposes.

However a Yorkshire amendment changes 'seeks' to 'demands'. The meaning of Scargill's comments on the TUC is that a new wage increase should start to be sought as soon as Phase 2 ends in contradiction to the '12-month-between-pay-claims rule' at present being peddled by Len Murray.



JOE GORMLEY

But the enforcement of such a rule — Phase 3 by the back door — is not the only snare that awaits the miners' claim.

The Government intends to give concessions to well-organised

By Steve Potter



ARTHUR SCARGILL

workers through 'self-financed' productivity deals. The NUM executive has already backed such deals on a local level principle.

The last time that productivity deals were at the centre of the ruling class wages offensive was in

the late sixties. The bosses wanted increased production and were prepared to trade it off for increased wages. Today's crisis is one of over-production. The pay-off from productivity deals is mass redundancies.

As Scargill put it the number of pit closures would 'rise dramatically' with the consequences of a drive for production in the pits being 'death, disease and disability' for miners. A resolution from South Wales on the agenda reminds delegates of the decision of the national ballot in November 1974, when productivity deals were rejected by a 63 to 37 per cent majority. They call for the rejection of a piecework system because it 'would destroy the unity in the union which the day-wage system has created.'

The policies that will be decided this week at the Tynemouth conference will undoubtedly be adequate to the task of mobilising the miners for action.

But the main test for the left in the union will be whether rank and file forces can be organised around the policy decided at Tynemouth, to give leadership to a struggle which will run straight into the opposition of the TUC leaders.

## Jones' swan song to the Contract

'**WEEPING** may endure the night but joy cometh in the morning.' So spoke the departing prophet Jack Jones from his retreat on the Isle of Man last Friday, before the start of this week's Biennial Conference of the transport workers. He was talking about the Social Contract and his policy of an 'orderly return to free collective bargaining.'

Jones plans that the weeping should extend 'well into next year'. The TGWU Executive voted to support the TUC's rule of 12 months between principal pay claims — Phase 3 by the back door. If the Biennial Conference votes to support this position, then talks with the Government will be immediately resumed. The policy which the TUC leaders will put to the TUC Conference in September will be issued on 23 July.

Speaking to car industry delegates last week before the Biennial conference Jones made it clear that the policy of the TGWU leadership did not mean any break with the Social Contract.

'The return to normal collective bargaining is no attack on the Social Contract — nor is it any about turn in policy', he said.

### OPPOSITION

But over 150 bodies of the union have put down resolutions against the Social Contract. A number of branches combine this opposition with the call for 'substantial increases' combined with a sliding scale of wages which means, as Branch 9/236 puts it, 'that, after tax, real wages are increased monthly by one per cent for every one per cent rise in the cost of living, as assessed by

By RAY BURNS

elect committees of trade union members'. A left wing based on total opposition to the collaboration of the TGWU leaders is beginning to grow in the union. But the right is also active.

### IMMIGRATION

One instance is that out of the six motions tabled on race, four demand a halt to immigration and only one calls for the union to conduct 'anti-racistist propaganda'.

The Standing Orders Committee of the Biennial Conference is notorious for cutting the ground away from under the feet of the left. If the 'Social Contract by the back door' gets through this week in the Isle of Man, Jones plans to continue his role in building a fifth column against struggles for a decent wage. Sounding off against the miners he warned that the TGWU leaders would not tolerate 'ill-founded claims'.

But the immediate impact of cutting off transport workers



JACK JONES — Biblical scholar, from putting in claims to defend living standards will be the isolation of the first workers to take on and test the new policy — the manual public sector workers.

Jack Jones has put on a minimal left face for this conference with his policy for £50 minimum wage for a forty hour week. He cynically

suggests that what is needed is 'some cosmetic treatment' on the face of the Labour Government.

But for Jack Jones one can truly say that in accounting for the sins of the Labour Government he finds, in the words of the Bible, that 'his yoke is easy, his burden is light'.

## HOW THE UNIONS HAVE VOTED ON WAGE RESTRAINT

[Known views of major unions]		TOTAL IN FAVOUR 3.2m	
IN FAVOUR CONDITIONS STATED			
Municipal workers (GMWU)	881,000		
Maintenance of living standards, wage target for low paid, extra price controls			
Shopworkers (USDAW)	377,000		
Productivity agreements, shift premiums, restoring differentials			
Teachers (NUT)	282,000		
Post Office Workers (UPW)	185,000		
Maintenance of living standards, threshold agreement			
Clerical (APEX)	136,000		
Restore differentials, overcome pay anomalies, extra tax concessions			
Garment workers (NUTGW)	109,000		
Compositors (NGA)	107,000		
(No conference) executive decision, repair of differentials, incentive payments			
Steel (ISTC)	104,000		
Raise productivity, overcome anomalies			
TOTAL IN FAVOUR 3.2m			
AGAINST			
Engineers (AUEW)	1,400,000		
Public employees (NUPE) (Position may change)	584,000		
Managerial staffs (ASTMS)	379,000		
Civil servants (CPSA)	225,000		
Civil servants (SCPS)	100,000		
P.O. Engineers (POEU)	125,000		
TOTAL AGAINST 2.8m			
NOT KNOWN (4.7.77)			
Electricians (EETPU)	420,000		
Railworkers (NUR)	180,000		
Transport workers (TGWU)	1.85m		
Miners (NUM)	262,000		
TOTAL 2.5m			

## Teachers open up cuts opposition

by JANE SHALLICE, London Socialist Teachers Alliance

**OVER 150 TEACHERS** attended an Open Conference in Birmingham last weekend in an attempt to build a united opposition to the cuts in education.

The main participants at the conference were members of the Socialist Teachers Alliance and Rank and File Teacher, but a feature of the weekend was the reports from those areas throughout the country where the executive of the National Union of Teachers had been pressurised into calling their members to action.

All the speakers from these struggles stressed the importance of democratic control of the actions that were taking place — an emphasis which is hardly surprising considering the willingness of the NUT leadership to suspend or expel from the union those members who take unofficial action.

The conference also discussed a number of resolutions. One which was passed called for a national one-day strike during a week of action in October against education cuts organised by the Campaign for Educational Advance, a sort of front for the NUT.

### AMENDMENT

Rank and File members argued it was a mistake to fight for official union action. They moved an amendment calling for delegates to fight for unofficial strike action in October. They posed unofficial action as the only tactic to be considered.

This view was rejected by the majority at the conference.

Various resolutions were adopted on salaries. These included demands for a special salaries conference of the NUT once the Government reveals its proposals

on Phase Three; demands for flat rate salary increases, and for salaries to increase at the same rate as the cost of living.

However, the outcome of the conference cannot be viewed in too euphoric a light. Most of the teachers present recognised that an electoral agreement for the NUT elections between the STA and R&F was necessary to draw in broader forces than those presently sympathetic to either grouping.

The vote for a resolution proposing this had by far the largest majority, but the opposition came precisely from the forces whose agreement was essential: the leaders of the R&F. This should not stop further initiatives on this question from being followed up, but it is a scandal that in a union where the left is split into two main groupings there has to be a fight against each other as well as the right wing.

The priority remains to campaign for united strike action, for a special salaries conference and a united left slate in the autumn period.



Oxford pupils join striking teachers in action against cuts.

## Union flashpoints

### Weir support

\* **THE OCCUPATION** of the Weir Hospital in Balham, South London — under threat of closure — has received broad support for a day of action on 6 July. This has come from NUPE workers in three South London hospitals, the DHSS branch of the Civil Service workers' union, the shop stewards committee of manual workers on Wandsworth and Lambeth Councils, and from hospital workers in COHSE in the Sutton Area. The South London medical branch of ASTMS has also joined in the fight to save the Weir.

If this kind of support for the mass picket of the Area Health Authority offices is built upon, there are strong indications that victory is in sight.

### Just wait

\* **SIXTY-ONE** women working at

Wye Electronics in Chesterfield have been laid off, although the firm has contracts to meet. The reason is their decision to join the Engineering Union just two months ago. This was confirmed when 17 women who resigned from the union were reinstated by management.

Despite the clear attempt to break trade union organisation at the factory, the AUEW officials have refused to make the dispute official on the grounds that 'the union is not recognised by the factory...' which is why the women were laid off in the first place!

The AUEW has told the pickets to 'keep it cool' until Wye's boss either reinstates or sacks them. The union hasn't stopped at that. Another recipe for defeat is its decision that ACAS should be called in.

Messages of support to Aileen

Ludditt, 79 Station Road, Hollingwood, Chesterfield S43 21M

### Iron will

\* **THE BRITISH** Steel Corporation has announced its intention to close the plant we are occupying on 8 July, but as far as we are concerned we'll stay put. These determined words come from Morgan O'Brien of the occupation committee in BSC's Greenwch plant.

On Tuesday, supporters of the occupation marched from Hyde Park Corner to Grosvenor Place, home of the corporation.

Although 20 workers have been forced to leave the occupation to take other jobs, and the prospects for settlement with the BSC are dim, Morgan O'Brien is clear about who should take responsibility.

He told *Socialist Challenge*:

'The support we have had from other workers throughout the dispute — especially engineering and health workers — has been fantastic. Our own union, the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, has done nothing.'

'They haven't made a single statement since the occupation began. They haven't mentioned the police files, nor the links between the Economic League and the BSC.'

Messages of support and donations to: Ron Mitchell, 24 Kentmere Road, London SE18.

### Sure remedy

\* **A NEW** rank and file newspaper called Remedy has appeared throughout West Glamorgan hospitals. Produced by a local committee against the cuts, the

newspaper has sold 400 copies in a week.

Secretary Graham Attwell [Chairperson, Morriston Hospital NUPE branch] told *Socialist Challenge*: 'The response to the newspaper has been fantastic. It has shown healthworkers are looking for ideas which can link up different hospitals and groups of workers in a fight for more pay and against the cuts.'

Preparations are already underway to produce a second issue. [Remedy, price 10p from Graham Attwell, 147 Dryn Road, Swansea]

### Morriston sackings

\* **STAFF** HAVE no permission to

be in any of the offices of the sector administrator and his department, and are therefore trespassing. An ashen-faced hospital secretary delivered this hastily-typed memorandum to 25 porters occupying his office in Morriston Hospital last Friday.

The workers were protesting against the sacking of two porters taken on only a fortnight previously to alleviate over-work and staff shortages. Conditions in the Morriston — as in hospitals around the country — are becoming intolerable.

A meeting of the National Union of Public Employees at Morriston decided to give full backing to a campaign of disruptive action to stop the management putting two more young workers on the dole.

# Anti-abortion Bill could win Into battle against Benyon

For months Fleet Street has claimed that William Benyon's restrictive abortion bill wouldn't have a chance in a million of getting through Parliament this session. Yet now the anti-abortionists' battle to put the Bill to its final vote in the House of Commons seems set to succeed.

DODIE WEPPLER reports

After forcing through a resolution for the standing committee which is considering the Bill to meet virtually night and day for three days a week, the anti-abortionists are increasingly confident that their measures will be put to the vote on 15 July.

The National Abortion Campaign has stepped up its campaign for free abortion on demand and the right of women to choose. Its national day of action on 25 June brought thousands of supporters into action: mass leafleting, petitioning and street meetings were held in every major centre.

In Sheffield, London, Leicester, Birmingham and Oxford pickets were mounted at local hospitals, generally with the support of anti-cuts committees. Liverpool NAC — banned from holding meetings in the city centre shortly after it was launched — defied the ban to hold a street rally.

It is this kind of action — which needs to be extended into an even stronger national campaign — that the women MPs on the standing committee should turn to in order to defeat the Benyon Bill. Relying on tactics such as 'talking out' the Bill won't work in the long run. The MPs haven't succeeded in delaying

Benyon's march to date. And whatever the fate of this Bill, there will be others on the way in the next session.

A serious fight by the MPs will only be launched once they turn to the massive support for women's abortion rights which exists today. How many MPs who claim to support NAC were in their constituencies organising support in the community and in the factories for the day of action?

Every effort must be made to enforce the call put out by the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign for a 3-line whip against the Benyon Bill. There must be no 'free vote' on this attack on the working class. If the MPs refuse to support the Government in the lobbies — and they have threatened to strike over the abortion issue in the past — the Labour leaders would very quickly comply and treat the Benyon Bill like any other which is of vital concern to the working class as a whole.

The MPs can't be relied on to take the fight forward. If they remain tied to parliamentary manoeuvring they will be forced to compromise. That's why the decision of the national planning meeting of NAC taken in Birmingham last weekend is so

important.

The national demonstration to be held on 29 October in Birmingham — with its dearth of abortion facilities thanks to reactionaries like gynaecology Professor Hugh McClaren — can unify the local campaigning activity, the backbone of the abortion movement.

The national planning meeting also agreed to support the call by the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign for a lobby of the Labour Party Conference on 3 October, which is an important means of bringing home to delegates and the party leadership that women are determined to fight for control of their fertility.

## What's Left

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

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

**CARIBBEAN Socialist Group.** Summer School 9-10 July. Carston 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.

**HULL SOCIALIST TEACHERS Conference.** Saturday 16 July, noon. Venue: Students Union, Hull University. Speakers: Terry Ellis and Brian Haddow (Tyndale), Dave Pictor (S.T.A.). Conference fee: £1. Contact: G. Daniel, 41 Severy St, Hull. Tel: 0482-799184.

**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 Carol 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.

**Scottish Socialist** ISSUE NUMBER 102 PRICE: No 100-101 10p No 102-107 8p

**THE FAR RIGHT IN SCOTLAND**

**donald campbell on HUGH MACDIARMID**

**Scottish Socialist No.6** now out. Available from Colletts and Red Books (London), Credwell Books (Newcastle), Grass Roots (Manchester), Clyde Books and John Smith's (Glasgow), Boom Town Books (Aberdeen) and Better Books (Edinburgh). Sub £3 per year (libraries £7.50). Single copies 25p from: Scottish Socialist, 64 Queen Street, Glasgow.

**BENEFIT BOP** for the Children's Community Centre, Dartmouth Park Hill at Carston House, St. John's Way, London N19, Friday 15 July, 5-10pm with Jam Today, Clapperton and Mystery Band. Disco and Bar. 80p (80p for children).

**SOCIALIST FEMINISTS** North West regional one-day conference, Saturday 16 July. Manchester Polytechnic Students Union, Cavendish House, 10am-5pm. Women only. Further details from Nuave Woman — Bolton 0428. Checks provided.

**OUT NOW.** 'Revolutionary Road or Overland?' A pamphlet containing Charlie Don't's critique of the British Road. These on Bourgeois Democracy and Proletarian Democracy (Lovers) passed by the 1st Congress of the Third International. Commentary by former member of CPGB on British Road debate. Available from Glasgow S.S.L. c/o 54 Queen's Street, Glasgow (Tel: 041-221 7481). Price 25p plus 10p post. 10 copies or more post free. Cash with orders.

**WANTED** place in flat for two comrades in London (preferably South) from beginning of August. Phone 359 8371 and leave message with Cath.

**HANDS OFF IRELAND!** No. 2. Anti-imperialist Bulletin includes 'Political Trials' by Jackie Kays, 'The PTA' by Brian Rose-Smith, 'The Loyalist Strike', 'Trade Unions in the North'. 20p + 7p postage. Sub for four issues £1. 5 copies for £1 — post free. From RCG publications Ltd, (R/W), 49 Ralston Road, London SE24 0LN.

**INTERNATIONAL Association of the Families of Iranian Political Prisoners.** Information Bulletin No. 1, June 1977. Available from Colletts Bookshop, 66 Charing Cross Road, London WC2.

**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 9DF.

**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. Organised by the Committee Against British Brutality in Ireland.

**INSTITUTE of Race Relations.** Meeting 8.30pm Tuesday 19 July. Maurice Ludmer, Editor of Searchlight, on 'The Rise of British Fascism in the 70s'.

**WE HAVE the Power of the Winds** Broadside 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: 34, 27, 134, 137. Tube: Camden Town. All Camden Residents welcome.

**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.

**TYNDALE DEFENCE** Committee meets every Thursday, 7.30pm. Prince Albert pub, Wharfedale Rd, London N1.

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

**OUTCOME** Latest issue. No. 4. A sexual liberation magazine produced by gay people. 20p incl. postage from 35 West Road, Lancaster.

**NAC Fundraising party.** With live bands Transcriptions and the Dead. Real Ale and Disco. Saturday 9 July, 5-11.30pm at the Waterloo Action Centre, 14 Baylis Road, London SE1. 75p, claimants with cards 50p. Dance to defeat the Benyon Bill.

**MANCHESTER Socialist Teachers Alliance,** next meeting 14 July, 8pm in Centre, Gifford Street, Manchester. Discussion around the report back from the NUT Open Conference and future activities.

**BELT & BRACES** Roadshow's Central Rock Performance A Day in the Life of the World. Collegiate Theatre, Gordon Street WC1 (01-387 9626). 7.30pm. 13-23 July. Late Night Show. Not So Green as It's Cabbage. 11pm. 20-22 July. Half price seats for booking of 10 or more!

**WANTED** place in flat for two comrades in London (preferably South) from beginning of August. Phone 359 8371 and leave message with Cath.

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## Gay pride - world wide

by JAMIE GOUGH

As Gay Pride Week ended last Saturday the offensive against homosexuals was resumed with the opening of the blasphemous libel case against Gay News in the Old Bailey.

Although the charge brought by Mary Whitehouse against the mass circulation weekly paper is ridiculous, the intention behind her campaign is not. She aims to parallel the campaign of Anita Bryant, the US demagogue, in clawing back the few miserable concessions that gays have extracted from the state and whipping up sentiment to strengthen family morality and the family itself as an element of capitalist rule.

The Gay Freedom Week in the USA was a massive response to Bryant's reactionary campaign. Demonstrations of 25,000 marched in Chicago, Los Angeles and New York. In San Francisco 200,000 people took to the streets.

The demonstrations were the largest in the USA since the anti-war mobilisations.

The 1,000 people who came out



10,000 demonstrated for gay rights in Barcelona last month to cries of: 'We are all a social danger.' The demo was called by the Catalan Gay Liberation Front

in London at the beginning of Gay Pride Week showed how far the movement in this country has to go. That was one of the problems facing a conference of gay socialists last Saturday.

The traditional strategies of the Gay Movement are increasingly being seen as inadequate, but the new socialist groupings in the movement capable of giving a new direction — the trade union gay groups, the Gay Left journal, Lesbian Left, Gay Socialist

groups and gay groups in political organisations — remain fragmented.

Members of all these groups attended the conference to discuss issues like gays and class, 'personal' life and public campaigns, women and men in the gay movement and 'socialist morality'.

An autumn conference is now being planned where the necessary clarification and direction for a strategy for the gay movement

could start to be resolved. A nationally based collective is to be set up to plan the conference and all socialist gay groupings and individuals will be welcome to join it.

Whitehouse's campaign makes the need for clarity in the gay movement not just desirable but vital.

\* Contact Nigel Young, 36a Craven Road, London W9 for details of the national collective.

## Fight for occupations

The Government's proposals on criminal trespass are likely to become law within the next six weeks. In the coming months more and more workers, especially in the public sector, will occupy their workplace in response to the Government's attacks and they will be met by the armadas of criminal trespass in place of the blunderbuss of existing legislation.

The existing legal weapons against occupations are slow to move. But the Criminal Trespass Law would give the police power to make arrests at any time, in any occupation, without a warrant.

This law, if passed, will be tried and tested against weakly organised and isolated militants. It will be used not only in the workplace, but also against students, tenants taking direct action in the community, and squatters.

The tactic of occupation is not the solution to every dispute but it has often strengthened shop floor organisation and the self-confidence of the workers involved. In many cases occupations are the only effective option, such as in the fight against closures. Here the first objective

is to prevent the removal of machinery off the site.

The picket line needs to be maintained night and day. But with the tactic of occupation — one which is not limited to the fight for jobs — there are many advantages: workers in occupation are in a better position to have collective discussion, decision-making and exchange of information when they are not isolated at home for most of the day.

And sipping tea in the management's suite of offices beats shivering under torrents of rain on the picket line.

The control over property and capital which results from occupations is central to their effectiveness. When the workers occupying the Fisher-Bendix fac-

tory in Kirkby in 1972 ran out of fuel to keep the factory warm, it only took a couple of phone calls to management — pointing out that the extreme cold might force them to light a fire — before the company sent in what one worker called 'enough fuel for an oil-well'.

The Campaign Against a Criminal Trespass Law (CACTL) has worked since June 1974 to co-ordinate opposition to the law and to build active local unity between workers, tenants, squatters, and students. Through close support and work with most of the current occupations, the campaign is seeking to extend to workers who will have to decide whether to go into occupation themselves.

A meeting for Health Service

workers faced with closure battles is being held this week, jointly organised by the London hospital occupations and CACTL. One of the questions under discussion will be the organisation of a national conference in the autumn to take forward the fight against the health cuts. A further meeting between all five current occupations in London is planned, with the aim of developing co-operation between them.

The Criminal Trespass Law can only be defeated by rank and file action on a massive scale and the successful defiance of the law in practice. As Lord Hailsham has quite rightly said: 'A law is not enforceable at all, if a sufficient number of people disregard it — and this is true of all laws.'



ALEX FRASER, National Organiser CACTL

**TROTSKYISM HAS failed to re-situate the Leninist theory of party-class relations because of its analysis of the historical epoch. In practice, this analysis appears as an over-emphasis on the problem of leadership, an exaggerated belief that the lack of correct leadership is the cause of under-development of the class struggle and the failure to seize power.**

The Trotskyist conception of the epoch has remained static and leads to an undialectical separation of 'objective' and 'subjective' factors. Take this quote from the Revolutionary Communist Group:

"In the imperialist epoch capitalism suffers from a deep and prolonged crisis which can only be resolved if there exists a revolutionary party capable of winning the mass of the class to its programme. The maintenance of capitalism rests, not on its material foundations, for those are in decay — but on the immaturity and backwardness of the working class and its leadership.

"The various sharp political turns and alternations of periods of revolutionary advance with periods of reaction, spring not from changes in the economic base, but from impulses of a purely super-structural character. In this epoch the outcome of the crisis rests on the subjective factor; the understanding, organisation and determination of the revolutionary party." (*Our Tasks and Methods* — *Revolutionary Communist No 1*, page 5)

In this statement can be seen most of the weaknesses of Trotskyism. Firstly, it is absurd to see an undifferentiated period or 'epoch' which stretches from the first quarter of this century to today. To state, as the International Marxist Group does, that this 'Imperialist stage of capitalism is the epoch of wars, crises and revolutions' is both empirically inadequate and so general as to make it meaningless.

If it is to show, as Lenin put it, 'the actuality of revolution', it saddles the revolutionary movement with a mechanical 'law' which, when it doesn't operate, requires a substitute factor of explanation. In this 'epoch', when capitalism is supposedly finished and stagnant as a productive force, 'temporary' factors have to be used to cover the inadequacy of the analysis. These include, for various Trotskyist groups, all or one of, not simply backward leadership, but also a 'third technological revolution', arms spending, the role of the dollar and neo-colonial exploitation.

## TRANSFORMATION

Without denying the role of these factors, our criticism of Trotskyism is that it will not recognise the profound transformations of capitalism initiated in the 1930s, 40s and 50s under the influence of Keynesianism, etc. Let us make ourselves perfectly clear. We are not capitulating to some form of 'revisionism' which denies that capitalism any longer has internal economic contradictions, but we believe that the post-war reforms froze that process and now provide a very different set of problems as these changes collapse into a new crisis.

The changes in the relations between working class, capital and state have decisively altered the terrain of struggle. By using wages as a motor of capitalist development (encouraging consumption and rationalisation of plant, etc), by involving the State directly in economic and social management, by attempting to institutionalise the class struggle through further incorporation of the trade unions: not to mention other processes like restructuring capital through mergers and other financial and monetary relations between states — the system was given a new lease of life.

Trotskyism fails to recognise the totality and importance of these changes in the 'material foundations', or their effects on class consciousness. Trotsky and his later followers failed to recognise the import-

# THE REVOLUTION UNFINISHED?

## A CRITIQUE OF TROTSKYISM

PAUL THOMPSON & GUY LEWIS



A BIG FLAME PAMPHLET 50p

# An Extract

ance of the New Deal or the post-war Keynesian reforms. They were prevented from doing this by the very nature of their analysis. The nature of Trotsky's characterisation of the epoch meant that any identification of capitalist development automatically ruled out proletarian revolution. Hence:

"If the further development of productive forces was conceivable within the framework of bourgeois society, then revolution would be impossible. But since the further development of the productive forces... is inconceivable, the basic premise for revolution is given." (Trotsky, *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, Vol. 2, p. 4)

This was added to by statements that 'capitalism could no longer meet the "immediate needs of the masses"', and that 'systematic social reforms were impossible'. Given this, any changes in capitalism, while seen by Trotskyists as a concession to reformism, could not be

seen as real reforms.

No matter what imaginative and more serious attempts by the Trotskyist movement were made to analyse post-war developments, they are held within their own theoretical straitjacket. They can only see the development or expansion of capitalism (the 'booms') as due to temporary measures or to the weakness of the 'subjective factor' of leadership.

## BOOM SITUATION

At the IMG's Fusion Conference in 1972 they related the ability of capitalism to regenerate itself as a product of Stalinism giving the breathing space for temporary measures to create a boom situation.

It is even shown in the title of Mandel's recent book, *Late Capitalism*, to which one observer acidly responded — a system is never late until it is dead.

Trotskyism had ceased to regard the bourgeoisie as able to develop the productive forces and therefore create systematic reforms. In fact, it was able to use both the needs and the desires of the masses and the collaboration of European social democracy and Stalinism to create a new period of stability and expansion. But this does not mean the bourgeoisie became a politically progressive force.

It was the strength, actual and potential of the working class which forced the bourgeoisie to make reforms to develop the system: attempting, for example, through the use of wages, to institutionalise class needs and struggle rather than simply negate them as in the 1930s. This only confirms Marx's often ignored statement that 'the working class is the greatest productive force of all'.

In this light, the boom and stability of the system has to be seen in certain ways. The reforms were real, systematic and entailed changes in capital's material

foundations. The crisis was due to the combination of two forces. Firstly, the struggle of the working class for its economic and social needs; for income divorced from productivity and a decent level of social services. This has reinforced the second factor: the competitive crisis that capitalism cannot escape. The crisis is not a question of over-production or demand management, it is a product of the law of value, profitability and the ability of the international working class to accelerate these conditions of decline.

This separation of base and super-structure has been exaggerated on different basis within the Trotskyist tradition and has greatly distorted the ability to see new types of class struggles in new conditions. It is completely wrong to see the nature of class struggle as dependent on 'impulses of a purely superstructural character'. The changes in class struggles are, for the most part, a direct result of changes in capital's material foundations. To take a couple of examples.

Firstly, there have been immense changes in attitudes to work as a product of mechanisation, de-skilling and 'massification', involving both manual and white collar workers. This has made many traditional left attitudes to work out of date. Workers in many industries who spend much of their time fighting the capitalist nature and organisation of work are unresponsive to traditional notions of 'workers control'. Even the 'right to work', when unconnected to the daily fight against time speeds, work discipline and gradings, can fail to motivate struggles.

## GUARANTEED INCOME

What is often more important to workers is guaranteed income and jobs, whether 'work' is available or not. Like the miner who was asked why he only worked a four-day week, and replied 'because I can't live on three days' money'.

Secondly, the role of the State. The direct involvement of the State brings home far more clearly the political nature of struggles. Its ability to act as a 'collective capitalist' and shape the direction of the crisis reduces the ability for unemployment, etc, to be presented as 'natural disasters'. The role of the State in social management also means that it acts as a factor of cohesion between different sectors of struggle — the community health, education, etc — thus totalising the impact of the crisis and making links between struggles in consciousness and practice more possible, as in present anti-cuts campaigns.

Because these factors go unacknowledged, the effect on Trotskyist theory is for subjectivity to be separated from its objective basis. Class consciousness is seen as separate from the changing structures of capitalism and the relationships it throws up which help determine that consciousness.

In practical terms it is Trotskyist constant battle cry that the conditions were ripe, but the consciousness lacking. But this separation is undialectical. If working class consciousness is not mature enough then that is part of the objective situation! Because Trotskyism has not re-analysed the objective world it can only conclude that the missing factor is consciousness and leadership.

What this separation leads to is the belief that leadership can be transplanted on top of the struggle; whether or not the struggle itself has undergone sufficient transformation and maturation.

For Trotskyism, the existence of the party is the condition for development of the subjective factor, the supposed only missing link. So we end up where we started, with the vulgarised and over-estimated notion of leadership. A concept of leadership that bears no relationship to whether or not Trotskyists have the actual capacity to lead the struggle from inside the process of the struggle itself.

# United we stand

Thirty delegates attended a planning meeting in Birmingham last Saturday to discuss standing a united socialist slate in the next General Election.

The meeting was called by the International Marxist Group and Big Flame, but as Paul Thompson of Liverpool BF explained: 'It would be to trivialise the discussion to say it simply flowed out of the talks going on between the IMG and Big Flame.'

It arises from the fact that in the last year or so the left has been trying to come to grips with a working class in retreat. It also stems from the fact that the revolutionary left has fought shy of elections in the past. Where it has stood it has done so merely to get protest votes or as a party-building stunt.

The election strategy we are proposing aims to steer a path between these two courses, acting as a focus for putting over alternative socialist policies and as a focus for existing struggles.'

Represented were all the local areas where talks are going on about standing united revolutionary candidates: Thameside United Revolutionary Front, the Hull Socialist Alliance, Tyne-side Socialist Centre, and Merseyside Committee for Socialist Unity candidates. In addition several IMG branches intending to stand candidates as part of any slate attended.

The meeting agreed that there would have to be a hard and on-going fight to attempt to involve the Socialist Workers Party in a common slate.

Socialist Unity was the title provisionally adopted for the class struggle slate. But the name and all other questions of programme, as well as the basis of an appeal to other groups and individual militants, will be finally decided at a conference this autumn.

However, in the event of a snap election, a steering committee comprising representatives of IMG and Big Flame and independents from all the other bodies involved was given full powers to go ahead and draw up a programme and list of seats.

The steering committee will meet monthly, rotated around the areas where Socialist Unity candidates will be standing: The next will take place in Manchester on Saturday 23 July.

# Where the SWP stands

THE FOLLOWING resolution was adopted by an overwhelming majority at the recent conference of the Socialist Workers Party:

**1** Electoral activity will not be a significant field of work for the vast majority of the units of the party except, in the event of a General Election, for a few weeks over the next year. Intervention in a General Election (or in suitable by-elections) is a useful supplement to our main areas of activity but no more than that.

**2** We stand candidates as a party building operation, with the aim of

recruiting and putting our ideas to that minority of workers who, at this stage, are receptive to some of our criticisms of the Labour Party and the TUC bosses. We will mount a firm anti-fascist campaign. We will not enter into a bloc or front with other organisations, least of all with those who have no base in the working class.

**3** We adopt a tactically flexible position with respect to votes for the candidates of other parties where we are not contesting. We will not campaign for them. It may well be useful, depending on circumstances, to offer an elect-

oral arrangement (not a common platform) to the Communist Party.

**4** We will heavily attack the record of the Government, emphasise the need to build the revolutionary socialist party (the Socialist Workers Party) and call for a vote for Labour solely as against Tories, fascists, nationalists, etc (where we have no candidate). We will not urge support for Labour, especially right wing Labour, against more left-wing candidates and our own members will be expected to vote for these. Our campaigning will, however, be for the SWP.

# EUROCOMMUNISM

## Extracts from Santiago Carrillo

Santiago Carrillo, the central leader of the PCE (Spanish Communist Party) has moved farther away from Moscow than the leaders of the Italian, French or British Communist Parties. His new book 'Eurocomunismo' y Estado ('Eurocommunism' and the State), extracts from which we publish below, contains an extremely sharp critique of the Stalinist regime in the USSR. It is therefore hardly surprising that it has been angrily denounced by Moscow and its supporters.

Readers will be able to decide on the merits and demerits of the book for themselves when an English translation (presumably by Carrillo's publishers in this country, Lawrence and Wishart) becomes available.

In our opinion the book reveals all the contradictions of Eurocommunism which can be listed as follows:

1. On the struggle for socialism in Spain itself, Carrillo takes up positions which are identical to those of classical German social-democracy. Thus capitalism has to be 'transformed' not overthrown. The army has to be 'democratised' by peaceful means. If this cannot be done then socialism is impossible for the only other option is civil war. For advanced capitalist countries, Carrillo excludes the

possibility and questions the desirability of socialist revolution.

2. On the other side, he challenges, albeit in a partial and confused fashion, the theory of 'socialism in one country' and links it to the 'bureaucratic degeneration' of the USSR. This is the first occasion on which the leader of a mass Communist Party has, in effect, vindicated the theses first advanced by Trotsky and defended today by Trotskyists.

3. He treats the Soviet bureaucracy as a privileged social layer (unlike a former leader and historian of the PCE, Fernando Claudin, for whom the bureaucracy is a 'new exploiting class'); he admits that there is no workers democracy in the USSR and affirms that the bureaucracy has formal characteristics comparable

"Eurocomunismo" y Estado

Santiago Carrillo



to those of fascist and authoritarian regimes.

4. He explicitly rehabilitates Trotsky and Trotskyism as a current within the working class movement with which he disagrees strongly on most questions, but which has been correct on some

points. Also rehabilitated is Andres Nin, the Spanish working class leader murdered by the Soviet secret police during the Civil War. Carrillo calls this killing 'an abominable and unjustifiable act'.

Despite these criticisms Carrillo's critique remains incomplete. He fails to understand the need for institutionalised organs of workers democracy in a socialist state. He does not call for the abolition of the one-party state in Russia, China and Eastern Europe. He does not because these are questions which would have repercussions on the internal organisation of the PCE itself.

We still do not know, for example, whether the support for Carrillo's position is unanimous, whether there are divisions within the leadership, or whether there are oppositional currents at the base of the party. Factions and tendencies are, of course, still prohibited.

However, Carrillo's book will, regardless of the structure of the PCE, open up an important discussion amongst militants of that organisation. It is with these militants that revolutionary socialists will have to conduct a dialogue.



THE October Revolution produced a state that is obviously not a bourgeois state, but is also not a genuine workers democracy, even though the proletariat is organised as the ruling class.

The Stalinist phenomenon has swelled and acts within this state through a series of formal features similar to those of fascist dictatorships. I stress formal features, because the essence of the Soviet social regime was and is radically opposed to that of fascism.

This is not merely a theoretical assessment but a truth that was confirmed by the blood of the peoples of the USSR during the Second World War. And the revolutionary essence of the Soviet social regime was affirmed repeatedly in solidarity with the peoples who struggled against fascism and imperialism.

For some time, using the formula 'cult of the personality', we ascribed these phenomena to the personal characteristics of Stalin, and it is certain that these personal characteristics had serious effects. Marxists do not deny the role of individuals in history.

But why did a person with the characteristics of Stalin manage to hold sway, even though these characteristics had been denounced by Lenin? It is true that Stalin was able to play with supreme cleverness on the contradictions among various groups within the leading team of the Communist Party of the USSR, posing as the unifier while eliminating one by one all those who could have interfered with his rise.

But it must be asked whether the practice of Stalin was not more in consonance with the type of state that was being formed in practice, with what Togliatti called the system, with the objective realities as they existed, than that of his opponents, especially from the moment that illness reduced Lenin's possibilities for action and precipitated his premature death.

It is obvious that the Stalinist phenomenon, which was a form of totalitarianism abundantly utilised by capitalist propaganda, weakened the democratic prestige of the Communist Parties among a part of the population of our countries.

Khrushchev's denunciation of the Stalinist horrors temporarily shook the whole system erected by Stalin, both in the USSR and in the socialist countries of the East. Events occurred such as those in Hungary and Poland, during which a heterogeneous 'national front' against the Stalinist system of rule arose spontaneously and tacitly.

Although in Poland there was a Communist opposition to this system capable of redressing the situation, this was not the case in Hungary. It was Soviet troops who re-established 'order', a new blow to the international prestige of communism, which also had repercussions on our parties. [pp. 198-201]

### System not transformed since Stalin

In reality, one of the causes of the fall of Khrushchev perhaps lay in his inability to transform the state apparatus created under Stalin, the system of political power to which Togliatti alluded, which managed to crush him.

This system has not been transformed, has not been democratised, and has even maintained many of its aspects of coercion in relations with the socialist states of the East, as was brutally demonstrated by the military occupation of Czechoslovakia.

The massive and annihilating repression of the time of Stalin has disappeared. Khrushchev, although deposed, died at home in bed. There has been progress, marred by forms of oppression and repression in certain domains, such as that of culture. But we are still not dealing with a state that could be considered as a workers democracy.

This affects the credibility of our party more, much more, than if the dictatorship of the proletariat really existed in the USSR. If there is much that is formal in the bourgeois democracies, this is also true of the workers democracy attained by Communists up to now.

Some comrades who resist admitting the truth may believe that saying this is a crime against

internationalism.

But these questions are being raised more or less openly in the workers and Communist movement, in the progressive movement today, and not because of the 'influence of bourgeois propaganda', as the conformists would like to maintain, but because the evidence of reality cannot be ignored.

And can Communists, whom we correctly consider a vanguard force, be the last to admit this evidence, refusing to recognise reality?

Moreover, doing so is the only way to serve the cause of socialism, both in the countries which have eliminated capitalist property and in those in which it still exists.

How can this type of state which has arisen in the Soviet Union — which is not a capitalist state because it does not uphold private property, but is also not the state Lenin imagined, with the working class directly exercising power — be situated in a Marxist conception of the state?

Lenin said that the state during the first phase of socialism would preserve much of the content of bourgeois law. But the state we are dealing with has gone beyond the predictions of Lenin in this respect. It has not only maintained some of the content of bourgeois law, but has moved to deformations and degenerations which in the past we could have imagined only in imperialist states.

And I insist that at the same time this state has served the progressive policy of the Soviet social regime on a series of world problems. [pp. 201-202]

### Phenomena of bureaucratisation

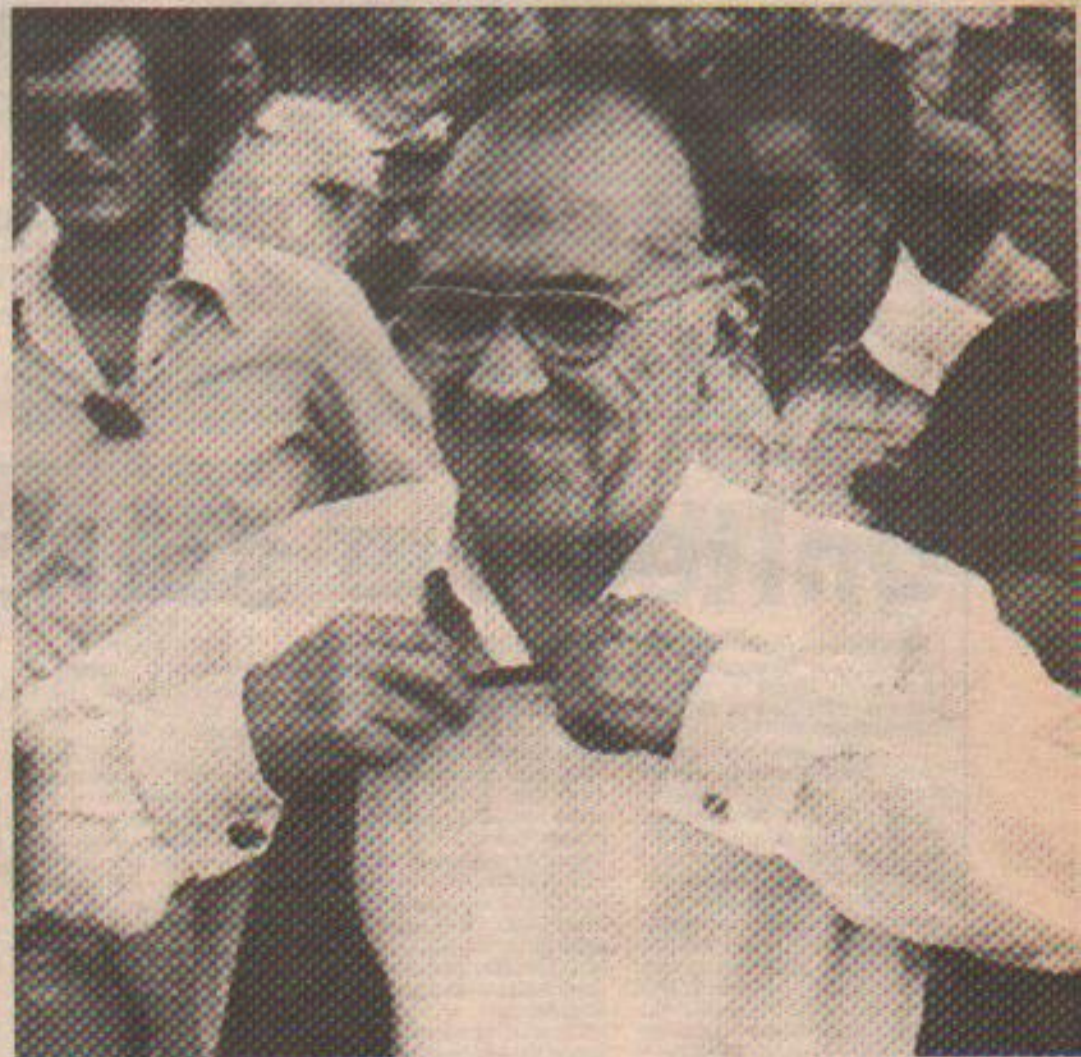
The phenomena of bureaucratisation arise not only out of the traditions of the Tsarist state, but also out of this situation, unforeseen by theory. Marx, Engels, and even Lenin had imagined the dictatorship of the proletariat as a regime in which the immense majority would repress a tiny minority and in which the organisation of broad workers democracy is the very condition for

functions of leadership, convinced that it was the bearer of the social mission of the working class and the personification of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but which was insensitively sinking roots, developing its own interests, acting in accordance with objective laws and mechanisms specific to itself.

In a speech made at the First Congress of the All-Russian Council of the Economy on 26 May, 1918, Lenin said: 'We do not close our eyes to the reality that we alone, with our forces, could not complete the socialist revolution in one country, even if

this country were much less backward than Russia, even if we were living under much easier conditions than those created after four years of an unprecedented painful, harsh, and ruinous war.'

What is the relation between this idea, ideologically abandoned in favour of the proclamation at the Eighteenth Congress that socialism had been victorious in the USSR (which did not prevent the greater part of the delegates to this conference from later being physically liquidated on the orders of Stalin, nor the holding of the infamous trials) and the characteristics of the state constructed in



SANTIAGO CARRILLO — loosening Moscow ties.



# AND THE STATE

## 's attack on the Soviet Party



the USSR?  
This state does not serve capitalist property, which has disappeared in the USSR. In this sense the bureaucratic layer cannot be considered as a capitalist class. It does not own private property and the portion of surplus value extracted from Soviet factories which goes toward maintaining the bureaucratic layer is certainly lower than that which maintains the bureaucracy of any capitalist country.

Nevertheless, the bureaucratic layer, at its various levels, commands unlimited and virtually uncontrollable political power. It decides and administers over the working class, and even over the party, which in turn has also been subjected to it.  
In this stage of social development we are dealing with a state that has placed itself above society, a state that is relatively free in relation to society, which does not mean that society itself is free.

In the final analysis, the present Soviet state has fulfilled the functions of guaranteeing the economic, industrial, technical cultural and hygienic development of the country, as well as safeguarding national defence. That is, it has accomplished tasks that in other, advanced capitalist countries have been carried out by the capitalist state. By eliminating capitalist property it has created the material conditions for the transition to an evolved socialism.

### 'The state of the whole people'

The question that is now posed is whether the very structures of this state, if they are not transformed at least in part, are not an obstacle to the transition to evolved socialism; if this state as it exists now is not in itself a brake on the development of genuine workers democracy, and even more, if it does not constitute a brake on the material development of the country.

The question is whether this state, which is not capitalist, is not an intermediary stage between the capitalist state and the authentic socialist state (as the centralist monarchies were an intermediary stage between feudal society and modern capitalist parliamentary democracies) a stage which, in its characteristics and functions, would permit a more objective and scientific explanation of the Stalinist phenomenon and other similar ones.

The question is whether this state does not require that the party and Soviet society transform it seriously and profoundly in order to convert it into a genuine workers democracy. Into the type of socialist state that was foreseen

by its founders.

There is no doubt that this concern has arisen among the Soviet leaders themselves in one form or another, even if only through recognition of the insufficiencies of socialist democracy. In Khrushchev's time they even developed the thesis of the 'state of the whole people', on which they no longer insist. But the confusion between the party and the state appears to lead to the construction of ideological images that hold up a reality which has not been reached rather than to a genuine transformation of this reality.

I do not pretend to have the explanation or solution to these problems. I simply point to the need for theoretical investigation that can serve as a basis of political opinions, and which is of interest to the entire workers and progressive movement, in the first place the Soviet comrades and those living in similar situations.

That is, perhaps the theoretical analysis of the political system that Khrushchev was unable or unwilling to make at the Twentieth Congress, is necessary, which could serve as the point of departure for a new leap forward of the Soviet Union and all the socialist countries.

Another element that must be taken into account in analysing the characteristics of the Soviet state apparatus is the world encirclement in which it developed.

Accelerated industrialisation, which reduced the possibilities of democracy and led to tightening the vice to achieve the capitalisation necessary for this goal, was not an option freely chosen for purely internal reasons. It was to a large extent imposed by the imperialist encirclement, by the

threat of war which, although it did not become a reality until 1941, nevertheless hung over the USSR permanently. Industrialise or succumb: that was the dilemma which fascist aggression was to confirm.

This threat of the imperialist powers influenced the whole internal development of the USSR, whether consciously or not. It compelled a rate of accumulation and industrialisation that necessarily limited social measures and had effects on the backwardness of agriculture; that is, it gave rise to a pace which, in the final analysis, made the worker-peasant alliance difficult and reduced the mass base of the system.

At the same time, it fostered the crystallisation of a state standing above society in which the coercive aspect took on gigantic proportions propitious to the excesses of the Stalin period.

This reality confirmed the impossibility of building complete socialism in one country as long as this system had not triumphed in a series of developed countries.

### Diversity of forms

In another international situation the process of industrialisation perhaps could have been slower and the social transformations in agriculture more cautious, thus avoiding the loss of allies, and the living conditions of the masses could have improved more rapidly, thus creating more favourable conditions for the flourishing of workers democracy.

The world circumstances forced the options of the Soviet leaders: to transform the new state into a great military power and to sacrifice many things to this objective. This also gave the state born of

the October revolution, later developed by Stalin and now mired in this dilemma, specific features more likely to accentuate its authoritarian character.

Nor did the breaking of the siege, the expansion of the circle of socialist countries after the Second World War, modify the essence of the situation. The new revolutionary states also arose in economically backward countries in which agriculture predominated, which necessitated industrialisation.

The only country which had a modern capitalist level, Czechoslovakia, had achieved it in complete dependence on the capitalist countries of the West. When it lost the markets, capital and raw materials of the West, Czechoslovakia did not find effective substitutes in the East and did not prosper economically as did the capitalist countries that had been at its level in 1936.

The model of the Soviet state was extended almost automatically to the new socialist countries. Under the influence of the policy of Stalin, 'solidarity' and 'internationalism' were applied in such a form that the independence of these countries was gravely damaged, as was recognised after the Twentieth Congress. In these countries the diversity of forms of transition to socialism that had been seen by Lenin became purely formal.

The Soviet military occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968 on the one hand showed the crisis that this country was suffering as a consequence of the mechanical application of the Soviet model and on the other hand the conservatism and power policy that characterised this system. (pp. 206-13)

## Carrillo 'chauvinist' and 'reactionary' - Charlie Doyle

Santiago Carrillo was denounced as a 'chauvinist' and 'reactionary' when Charlie Doyle, a leading oppositionist in the Communist Party of Great Britain launched an eloquent assault on 'Eurocommunism' at a public meeting of 100 in East London last week. DAVE BAILEY was there.

Doyle quoted Carrillo as boasting proudly of how he was 'a Spaniard not a Russian', and that the Spanish CP would be responsible only to the Spanish working class, and to no-one else. Even worse, Carrillo was reputed to have said he was sorry the Moscow party had not attacked the Spanish CP earlier, as the Communists in Spain would have got more votes at the recent election!

Doyle was pointing to the way the 'Eurocommunists', hoping soon to get into government in Spain, Italy and France, were abandoning internationalism, pandering to national chauvinism, and breaking the defence of the Soviet Union. The reactions of the audience showed that Doyle had touched on a very real nerve.

Doyle relates this criticism of Carrillo's Eurocommunism — its national chauvinism — to his criticisms of the latest draft of the Communist Party's *British Road to Socialism*. What Carrillo and the authors of the latest draft of had in common, he suggested, was a failure to understand the international context of the class struggle. Carrillo's chauvinism would only weaken the Soviet

Union and strengthen imperialism ('the USSR is in the front line', the world is 'divided into two camps).

What, therefore, Carrillo didn't understand was that the chances of a revolution in Spain as well as elsewhere, depended on the world situation and were reduced if the USSR was weak. A parallel national chauvinist deviation, Doyle alleged, underlay the new draft of the *British Road to Socialism* — for how could there be a British road, a French road, an Italian road, and so on? Surely this was to make a strategy for socialism in isolation from the international context?

Doyle pushed this line of reasoning further. You could not predict how a revolutionary situation was going to develop in any particular country, he said. To try and say in advance that the revolution had to go through Parliament, was to fail to take sufficient account of the international context. As to the question of whether there would be a peaceful or violent road, this was not possible to predict either. 'The more the relation of forces in the world favours socialism, the more peaceful the revolution'.

What the party was forgetting in

its quest for the parliamentary road was that the 'struggle is fiercest at the point of production', not in Parliament. This was greeted with much applause. Next, said Doyle, since the working class was steeped in class collaboration, the task of communists is not to 'tail-end other parties' such as the Labour Party (in the interests of a parliamentary alliance), but to build a 'vanguard party of the working class'.

If the CP existed essentially to keep a left Labour Government, as suggested in the new Draft, then people will argue that communists should join the Labour Party. But 'we will not liquidate the Party', he said. 'We do want to destroy the Labour Party', he insisted.

On top of all this, Doyle attacked the social composition of the leadership. The lack of worker members on the Executive Committee of the Communist Party was the result of putting too much emphasis on creating a 'broad alliance'. The middle class 'allies' were now leading the Party of the proletariat.

Finally, Doyle came back to the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This concept must not be abandoned. But how should we understand this idea? Let us be clear, said Doyle, on this business about 'plurality of parties'. The only parties which Lenin was in favour of allowing in Russia according to Doyle, were those who were 'strictly in favour of socialism'.

This is not true. However, these final remarks had the effect of driving home to the CP members present the need for waging an implacable struggle against social democracy. They also had the effect of drawing a sharp line against the criticism mounted by the Fourth International on the need to guard and extend the democratic rights of the working class in a proletarian state—including the rights of all political parties, only excepting those who try to overthrow Soviet power.

Doyle was warmly received. Apart from one or two spirited defences of the parliamentary road by younger party members, most of the CP members who spoke in the debate seemed either to echo Doyle's points or else treat them with respect. The debate was free and open and a number of far-left groups spoke.

Doyle raised the question of internal democracy a number of times in his speech. His protest that his pamphlet had been suppressed by the leadership, while Monty Johnstone was free to write what he pleased, drew a sympathetic response, and Doyle wondered aloud whether his political stand would have any repercussions for his wife's job as women's editor of the *Morning Star*.

The Young Communist League were not present. They were holding an educational round the corner on the lessons of the Russian Revolution.

## Communist University of London

### IMG / CP Debate



# POLAND: ONE YEAR AFTER THE STRIKES

## Eyewitness in Ursus

The little town of Ursus is about a quarter of an hour by train from the centre of Warsaw. On one side of the railway is the tractor factory with its crèche, its cinema, its swimming pool. Large banners proclaim the productivity of socialist labour and the unity of the party and the people. The factory employs 5,000 people, so every family has at least one member or friend working there.

On the other side of the railway are the workers' cottages with their tiny vegetable gardens.

Special correspondent ARSENE DUPAIN returns to the Polish town of Ursus one year after the strikes which reversed the Government's attempted price rises.

Everything revolves around the factory. A year ago the workers, like those of Radom, Plock, Gdansk and forty other Polish towns, made the bureaucrats tremble in their boots. Within a day the uprising was general.

The workers blocked the trains, including the Paris-Warsaw express. They cut the rails with oxy-acetylene lances and derailed a locomotive. The workers understood that this was the only way to get their movement known in the outside world, through travellers who carry the news. The same evening, after the Government had backed down, the strike was stopped.

But the next day the man-hunts began, the arrests and the sackings of workers who were isolated, with no way of resisting,

stopped. Then we had a visit from the plain clothes cops from Warsaw — they wanted to buy us off by promising us small material advantages.

In Ursus everyone supports the Workers Defence Committee. When the students from the WDC first visited the cottages the families of the workers who had been jailed were in a dire situation. The majority were penniless, isolated, without anyone to turn to.

Right from the start the students were accepted. Not because they brought financial and legal aid, but because these were the first signs of solidarity. Then the families took upon themselves the distribution of the money collected by the WDC.



factory with a fat cat from the Central Committee who had come down to test the water and see what would be the reaction to a compulsory levy against our wages. The workers didn't dare express their opinion so some of them said to him: "This is a railway meeting". Him: "I don't understand". Them: "Don't lean too far or your head will be chopped off".

"Party members have different attitudes. Some of them are pretty hostile to the authorities. But the activity of the factory cell is closely controlled, mainly collecting dues and sending people off to rest-houses. As for the union, it's about as much use as a wet fart."

Marian: "Outside periods of upsurge like last June, which are responses to gross provocations by the Government, things are fairly passive — a situation which is encouraged by the complete absence of any independent organisation for the defence of the working class."

"It reminds you of the early nineteenth century, before the birth of the workers movement."

Tadek tells of how in one department of the factory there was the beginning of independent organisation in an attempt to help the sacked workers. The management immediately reorganised the department. The workers' organisers were tracked down and either got rid of or bought off.

### OFFICIAL

Tadek nevertheless thinks that it is possible to use the official union structures: "It is very difficult but it is possible. Each year the union councils have to present a report to a general assembly of the department. It's possible to get a new election if the shop rejects the report. This year, as if by coincidence, these meetings didn't take place."

"For the six seats, the outgoing council presents four names and the shop elects two. You can't have more candidates than seats available. Clearly you can't go head on to try to put yourself forward. But if it's well organised you could have a majority on the council. All it needs is for every candidate put up by the council to be criticised for his work, his socialist morality, and so on."

"Of course, you have to get candidates who aren't going to be corrupted. Because, however illegal, the union often pays its officials double what they'd get in their own job. If we succeed in one department it would be possible, step by step, to create a balance of forces which would change the situation in the whole factory and open up still greater possibilities."

Perhaps Ursus isn't the best place to try that experiment, since it is overrun by political police. But there's no doubt that things have changed in the past year.

**'As for the union, its about as much use as a wet fart.'**

now that the strike had ended. There were condemnations of the 'ringleaders' for 'attacks on socialist property', as if socialist property were not the property of the workers themselves. And today, despite Gierk's 'pardon', two Ursus workers are still in jail.

For a year now the factory has been regarded by the authorities as a test case. It was here that Gierk came last May to announce the Party's conditional pardon for 'repentant' workers. Gierk's speech didn't stimulate much enthusiasm, Tadek, a worker at the factory told me.

"The workers at the meeting were hand picked and immediately after the First Secretary's promises, the Party Secretary in the factory got up and said that there were still bad elements and the political work needed to be strengthened. In the days after Gierk's visit there was a wave of intimidation in people's homes. After a letter of protest the visits

"The authorities were afraid of contact between the intellectuals of the WDC and the workers", said Marian, the student who accompanied me. "We came down here when ten members were arrested after the student demonstration in Krakow. The town was inundated with political police who stopped us making any contact with the workers."

Janusz, who works next to the factory and who came to the help of his comrades on strike: "When I was arrested, a week after the events, there were at least 15 people prepared to make a false testimony on my behalf. The funniest thing is that I was accused of being a parasite, though I've worked hard all my life."

"The prosecutor asked for four years. A week before the strike the commissariat gave me a certificate of good character to do with a court case against a neighbour, but now they gave a bad report, saying I was an

agitator who went to subversive meetings.

"I was sent down for two years, but I only did three months because I was given parole after the board found that I had supposedly 'changed my attitude' in jail. They had to find

production target could be met'. The argument was for purely tactical reasons, but it was effective and allowed them to collect a large number of signatures.

And despite being questioned by management and the police to

illates between the carrot and the stick', Janusz speaking. "Two months ago the police came to my place and took all my books and papers. There was WDC stuff and some letters. At the time I put in a request to get them back, which was refused. Now I've just had a positive response which is fairly unusual."

"On the other hand six people got fines of 5,000 zlotys [more than a month's wages] for distributing a lorryload of eggs to the strikers. They didn't pay and have just been given fines of 150,000 zlotys. They couldn't pay even if they wanted to."

The atmosphere in the factory? Tadek tells a story: "There had just been a meeting in the

**'It reminds you of the early nineteenth century, before the birth of the workers movement.'**

some reason. Anyway, it brought the seven of us who were put away together very close."

And then there was the petition signed by 1,100 workers demanding the reinstatement of those who had been sacked 'so that the

find out who instigated the petition, ten of the hundred sacked workers were reinstated, though in less skilled jobs than before. The others got jobs nearby.

"The authorities' attitude asc-

## Italian Communist paper claims 'Polish student was murdered'

by TARIQ ALI

The newspaper of the Youth Federation of the Italian Communist Party, La Citta Futura [City of the Future] has published a detailed article nailing the lies of the Polish bureaucracy regarding recent student demonstrations and the death of Stanislaw Pyjas.

The article appeared on 25 May 1977, signed by Alberto Flores and headlined: 'Repression is useless: The Murder of Stanislaw Pyjas Re-opens in a Dramatic Fashion the Problems of Defence Work in the Eastern Bloc'.

The first paragraph of the article

is unequivocal: 'Stanislaw Pyjas, a young student member of the Polish Workers Defence Committee, has been murdered. According to the authorities it has been an accidental death. According to the members of the Committee it has been a political murder in the full sense of the word.'

The article goes on to describe the development of the new workers and students opposition in Poland in an extremely sympathetic fashion. It accuses the 'ruling apparatus' of consistently attempting to 'solve internal problems through methodical repression'. Flores explains that Poland is at the crossroads because the movement against the

bureaucracy is no longer restricted to students and intellectuals, but has been joined by the workers.

It is obvious that the Federation of Polish Youth will not be happy with La Citta Futura, but more importantly Flores' article raises issues which are swept under the carpet by 'young communists' in a number of Western European countries, including Britain. The CP-dominated National Union of Students has consistently refused to wage a fight to defend democratic rights in the 'Eastern bloc'.

Furthermore, the Polish ambassador in Britain who denounced the Polish Workers Defence Committee as 'Trotskyists' will

have a hard time proving that the latter have also taken over the paper of the Italian Communist Party youth.

Flores' article concludes by appealing to the Western left to take up two immediate tasks in relation to Eastern Europe:

1. The most elementary human rights which are nowadays constantly violated must be respected.
2. The immediate and unconditional release of all the workers arrested in Poland in June 1976.

We are convinced that virtually all Socialist Challenge readers can agree with these demands. Will the Morning Star even be prepared to print Flores' article?



ZDENEK MLYNAR, pictured at his first press conference in the West since leaving Czechoslovakia on 13 June. In April 1968 Dubcek appointed Mlynar to the Party Praesidium and as Central Committee secretary for ideology. He was responsible for drafting the Party's Action Programme, the political manifesto of the Dubcek leadership during the 'Prague Spring'.

A leader of the Czechoslovak socialist opposition after the Warsaw Pact invasion of 1968, Mlynar is the most senior official of a ruling Communist Party to go into exile since Trotsky's expulsion from the USSR in 1929.

However, one place where Mlynar was distinctly unwelcome was 16 King Street. The leaders of the British Communist Party have refused to meet him. This follows their refusal to speak on a platform against repression in Czechoslovakia and their last minute withdrawal of an invitation to Soviet dissident Zhores Medvedev to speak at the Communist University.

Italian governmental accords

by RICHARD CARVER

Wage cuts in Wonderland

The conclusion of an agreement between the major Italian parties, including the Christian Democrats and the Communists, had all the features of a Lobster Quadrille.

For weeks the question was: will they, won't they? In the end they did, and they didn't.

A programmatic accord has been signed by all the six parties — except the Liberals who are taking the matter to their entire party leadership — but the Government itself will probably remain unchanged.

The shades of Lewis Carroll do not stop there. The leaders of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) live in a Wonderland where it is possible to defend jobs and wages at the same time as pursuing a deflationary policy of reduced consumption, cuts in 'labour costs' and 'rationalisation of public spending' — in other words, cutting jobs and real wages.

Any lingering doubts about the reality behind this strange equation are cleared up by the Italian Government's own statistics: in the first four months of this year the cost of living rose by 6.3 per cent, but index-linked wages only went up by a maximum of 3 per cent — considerably less among skilled and semi-skilled workers. During the first quarter of 1977 employment dropped by 1.1 per

cent against an increase in production of nearly 11 per cent.

As we go to press the final text of the accord has not been published. It is still the subject of byzantine manoeuvrings over whether or not it should be put to Parliament for a vote. The larger parties — the governing Christian Democrats and the PCI — are in favour, while the smaller groupings, who regard themselves as the losers in the agreement, are against, as they want to leave themselves a certain elbow-room.

But 'there are no victors and no vanquished' declare the big parties, 'It is the country which has gained.'

The accord is believed to include an extension of police powers to tap phones and interrogate suspects without legal



Guerrilla leader Antonio Lo Muscio: killed by police last weekend. The 'historic compromise' won't help him, but terrorism is no alternative either.

advice; a reinforcement of selectivity in education; and a reiteration of the terms of the letter of intent to the International Monetary Fund in March.

The last point included the reweighting of the cost of living index to avoid triggering pay rises — a proposal made by the PCI and the union leaderships and gratefully accepted by the Government. It also seems likely that the new deal will reactivate the plans — initiated in last October's economic package but shelved in March — to increase tax revenue. This would mean a rise in various forms of purchase tax — another veiled attack on the workers' pay packet.

PCI leader Enrico Berlinguer has signed his name to all this, but it will not provide any lasting solution to his problems. The accord is not the 'historic compromise' — the formation of a

'national government' with the major capitalist party — though it is being presented as a step in that direction.

For a year the PCI has supported the Government by abstaining on all important issues, which has aggravated opposition among the party membership itself. This opposition has not yet received any clear political expression, but has emerged as a current demanding more vigorous action in the industrial sphere.

Workers in the larger factories, such as Fiat, Montedison, and Italsider, have been taking action against the austerity measures which has brought them smack up against the party leadership. For example, *l'Unita*, the PCI daily paper, recently carried a furious denunciation of the Genoa dockers' strike.

The irony is that these workers

are not, for the most part, even sympathetic to the far left. The three major union conferences last month all gave overwhelming support to the governmental agreement.

But what the party rank and file — or at least a section of it — is demanding is the implementation of the historic compromise now. They believe, with Berlinguer, that this will 'introduce into Italian society and the economy at least some objectives, values and methods which conform to the socialist ideal'.

Quite transparently this has not happened nor could it happen. But the fact that his own rank and file is demanding that it does happen, after a year of wasted support for their class enemy, puts Berlinguer on the spot.

IN BRIEF

**PORTUGAL:** Parliament has passed a new law forbidding unofficial strikes and setting up a mandatory 48 hour warning for any action. The measure was introduced by the Socialist Party and supported by the Communist Party. The only deputies to vote against were one from the far left and the two expelled from the Socialist Party last November for being 'Trotskyists'.

**SOUTH AFRICA:** Unemployment is rising by 1,000 every day and now stands at 1½ million. Witnesses before a commission in Cape Town have confirmed that the attack on Nyanga township by migrant workers last Christmas was led by police.

**ICELAND:** Seven weeks of widespread strikes have led to record wage increases for most Icelandic workers. These will mean immediate 26 per cent rises, going up to 46 per cent over the next 18 months.

**USA:** Valentin Prussakov, a Soviet dissident living in the United States has written to President Carter complaining of repression in the US. He said that dissidents like Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Andrei Sakharov are too uncritical of the West. 'If in the Soviet Union Russian culture finds itself under the control of the KGB, in America the impression is created that it falls under the tutelage of like-minded functionaries.'

**UKRAINE:** Pyotr Grigorenko has sent details to the West of the trial of human rights campaigners Mykola Rudenko and Olexi Tikhy. Friends and relatives of the accused were barred from entering the court.

**CHINA:** Huo Kuo-feng is dismissing provincial party leaders at the rate of one a month in his continued drive against the 'Gang of Four'.

**ESKIMOS:** More than 200 Eskimo leaders met in Barrow, Alaska last week to work out common positions for bone rule from Canada and Greenland.

**ITALY:** The Radical Party has collected more than the requisite half a million signatures to call referenda on eight different civil rights issues. The only way the six parties which have just concluded the governmental accord can avoid holding the referenda before next spring is by reforming the offending legislation or calling an election!

**WEST GERMANY:** The final word on the police pay debate? The following advertisement appeared in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*: '105 Cologne detectives, middle-aged, independent, responsible experts, familiar with combating murder, seizure of hostages, robbery, blackmail, fraud and commercial crime, etc. owing to undervaluation and lack of promotion opportunities, seek occupation in the private sector.'

STOP PRESS:

As we go to press news has come of a military coup in Pakistan. Bhutto and several opposition leaders have been arrested. It is not yet clear whether the coup was sanctioned by the Generals or carried out by junior officers. If the latter is the case then bloody reprisals against the People's Party cannot be excluded. The move was obviously prompted by the breakdown of government-opposition talks to reach a political agreement on the country's future.

In next week's issue, there will be a detailed analysis by Tariq Ali on the implications of a third period of military rule for an already truncated state.

Pretoria frame up trial

by Roy Alexander

THE SOUTH African Government has put twelve black activists on trial on charges relating to their alleged membership of the African National Congress (ANC).

Already the trial has revealed how the racist state operates. The chief state witness, after five days of apparently damning testimony, has admitted under cross-examination that he lied under



threat of torture and death at the hands of the police.

When the man, Ian Ruxwa, was arrested last December he was beaten and kicked until he bled from the nose and mouth. Eventually he made a statement. 'I wrote what the lieutenant told me to', he said.

Ruxwa appealed to the judge to grant an order protecting him from the police. The judge refused.

The readiness of the Government to answer the growing discontent among the black population with repression is well-known. But the determination of the people is too great for anything short of a bloodbath to crush their spirit.

Unable yet to embark on such a course — because of its implications within South Africa and internationally — the racist regime instead strikes at the vanguard of the struggle and at those groupings capable of providing the mass movement with any kind of coordination. Hence their brutal repression of the student demonstrations and their arrest and prosecution of the leaders of the black consciousness movement and the Soweto students.

ROBBEN ISLAND

Many of the 'Pretoria 12' have passed through the hands of Vorster's jailers and torturers before. Between them, five of the defendants have served a total of

48 years in the notorious Robben Island Prison. They were subjected to tortures and brutal 'interrogation techniques'.

Charged under the Terrorism Act, the defendants face a minimum sentence of five years and a maximum penalty of death, even though in many cases they are accused of no more than being active or recruiting to the ANC. There is a strong possibility that the prosecution will demand the death penalty, and a real danger in the present climate, that it might be granted.

COMMON CAUSE

As readers of *Socialist Challenge* will know, we have many differences with the ANC, but we also understand the importance of making common cause in the face of the enemy and of the need to treat an attack on any part of the anti-imperialist movement as an attack on all. We therefore urge our readers to support the Anti-Apartheid Movement campaign being launched in this country to free the Pretoria 12. An information briefing, leaflets, posters and other material can be obtained from: *Free the Pretoria 12 Campaign, AAM, 89 Charlotte Street, London W1P 2QD.*



Support trade union week of action

by ROY ALEXANDER

THE Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) decided at its National Committee meeting on 25 June to initiate 'a campaign in the trade union and labour movement at all levels on the issue of solidarity with the authentic organisations of the South African working class to culminate in a week of local trade union action'.

This proposal grew out of discussions among local anti-apartheid groups involved in work among trade unionists, especially in multi-national firms like British Leyland and Massey Ferguson. The week of action is seen as taking place in the early part of the New Year (the date of 17-22 January has been proposed), subject to any call issued by the international labour movement. Speakers at the National Com-

mittee stressed the importance of initiating the campaign of solidarity immediately, and winning support for the idea at the base of the trade union movement as well as among the leadership, if the poor response to last year's appeal for action by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and World Federation of Trade Unions is not to be repeated.

Recognising this need, the National Committee agreed on a number of steps to get the campaign off the ground, including the preparation of special leaflets and posters; the circulation to local groups of information about wages, working conditions and trade union activity in British multi-nationals operating in South Africa; and a request to national unions to circulate their members about the

campaign and proposing the invitation of AAM speakers to local committees, branches and shop stewards committees.

It was also agreed to make the campaign the main priority of the AAM's trade union organiser, to allocate regular space to it in *AA News* and to expand the AAM's trade union committee with local trade unionists and activists involved in the campaign.

This decision by the AAM is a real opportunity to take the South African solidarity campaign right into the workers movement, and begin organising the sort of support the workers of South Africa need.

For further information or to offer support to the campaign, contact: Trade Union Committee, AAM, 89 Charlotte Street, London W1P 2QD. Tel: 01-580 5311

ISSUE NO 9 includes Ernest Mandel on the economic policy of the Italian Communist Party. The next issue (available 11 July) will consist of a long resolution on 'Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat' recently adopted by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. These theses deal with such questions as: the dictatorship of the proletariat; for a one-party or multi-party system; workers councils and the extension of democratic rights; the role of workers democracy and dual power in the revolutionary process. Single copies 30p plus 10p p&p from: *Impreco! c/o Relgocrest Ltd., 328/9 Upper Street, London N1. Five copies or more post free.*

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ERNEST MANDÉL

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## Tribunal on Hull prison 'riot' finds Warders went on orgy of violence

by  
**GEOFFREY SHERIDAN**

'Contrary to what the Home Office would lead many people to believe, the riot at Hull prison was not a carefully planned conspiracy. It was an utterly spontaneous reaction of long nursed grievances against petty restrictions and increasing prison arrogance.'

This is part of the evidence from Bertie Costa, a prisoner who was at Hull during the three-day rebellion last September. And it is in line with the conclusions formed by the public inquiry held last month by the prisoners' rights organisation PROP.

'Men were being placed on report for minor breaches of discipline and landing up with loss of remission and confinement in the segregation unit', continues Costa's evidence which — like that of the other prisoners — was smuggled out of Hull and read to the inquiry.

'Increasing numbers of men were placed on rule 43 — solitary confinement — for months at a time. Then came the cutback in prison officers' overtime, which resulted in the inmates association time being shortened. The news that a prisoner had been assaulted in the seg unit brought it all to a head.'

It is what took place when the prisoners agreed to come down from the roof that most vividly reveals the brutality of a regime which makes no pretence at 'rehabilitation'.

Numerous assurances were given: no prisoner would be physically harmed; an MP would be available to receive represen-



Hull prisoners during the three-day rebellion in September. None of the warders was injured: they struck back brutally at the prisoners.

tations; prisoners' personal property would be respected; there would be a full inquiry into grievances, which was the prisoners' demand when they took to the roof.

If the Hull prisoners had thought that the Government's talk of 'reform' as a means of dealing with the crisis would follow from their aroused hope of being treated as human beings, the Home Office and the warders rapidly put paid to that.

As soon as the MP and the TV

cameras were gone, the screws went on the rampage. The beatings were systematic, with particular attention paid to black and Republican prisoners. It went on for days. They had to run the gauntlet of scores of screws wielding riot sticks and chair legs, with an instruction 'not to mark their faces'.

'Meals' consisted of handfuls of cornflakes thrown in the air; jam smeared on prisoners' backs, pots of urine poured over their head. All their personal posses-

sions were burnt. Removing the ashes required three lorries.

Irish prisoners were made to get on their knees and sing 'God Save the Queen' and were beaten if they refused. The warders greeted each other with Nazi salutes and 'Sieg Heils'.

The utterly repressive nature of the regime was amply exposed in the files that the prisoners obtained during the riot. Each prisoner was labelled a 'psychopath', with such enthusiastic epithets as: 'These are all good

solitary material'; 'This man is unlikely to be released from prison ever'; 'This one will be a cabbage on release'.

These files had been completed by warders. The army used an armoured car to secure the files held in the administration block.

The Home Office did institute an inquiry—under Gordon Fowler, its own Chief Inspector of Prisons. He carried out his investigations alone and in secret. Prisoners who gave evidence

were threatened with disciplinary measures for any 'unwarranted allegations' against prison officers. Hardly surprisingly, most prisoners refused to co-operate.

With the announcement of the PROP Tribunal, the Government promptly decided that the Fowler report will be published. It is expected to say that the Hull regime is 'too soft' and place responsibility for the riot on two 'subversive' prisoners.

### INQUIRY

The report of the public tribunal, which was chaired by John Platts-Mills QC and included Peter Chappell of the 'Free George Davis Campaign', notes on the Home Office's sole response to the prison crisis:

'It seeks to contain the pressures by a policy of isolating those prisoners who dare to speak about their conditions, and by a widespread and growing administration of drugs in order to tranquillise our grossly overcrowded prisons into a state of numbness.'

The PROP inquiry calls for a full public inquiry into the Hull riot, with a suspension of all the sentences imposed on prisoners as a result of it. And the demand is put forward for an end to the secrecy which seals the prison system behind a wall of silence—a silence which is only broken when prisoners take to the roof as a desperately brave act of solidarity and agony. They are demands which no socialist can ignore.

### Rally against rape on 16 July



Three High Court judges — by now infamous for their treatment of a young woman raped by Coldstream Guardsman Tom Holdsworth — will be put in the dock with Labour Ministers Rees, Healey, and Ennals, and Lord Elwyn Jones at a public trial on 16 July. The Trafalgar Square rally has been called by Women Against Rape, whose picket of the High Court (above) received wide publicity in the Fleet Street press. More on rape next week.

## Unions put the screws on Lord Snooty

YOU MAY never have heard of D.C. Thomson, but unless you were a very strange child you've certainly read their comics — the Dandy, Beano, Beezer and Jackie — in fact just about the entire range that children read between the ages of five and 15.

This massive concern is very much a non-union shop, a policy which dates from the aftermath of the General Strike, when the print and clerical workers in NATSOPA were kicked out on to the street. Successive attempts by the Scottish TUC in the early '50s and from inside the offices in the early '70s met with failure. Now plans have been launched which may finally change this.

The first of these attempts is spearheaded by the National Union of Journalists. Under Schedule 11 of the Employment

Protection Act, any group of trade unionists can claim parity with co-members elsewhere as long as they are not covered by an existing collective agreement.

### JOINT CLAIM

Now, with over a dozen NUJ members in Thomson's Glasgow office (all of whom are 'underground'), the union has lodged a special claim for wage parity with their well-organised and thus better paid members at the *Daily Record*. If successful, this would mean a union card would entitle an employee, under the law, to a considerable rise in wages — an unbearable incentive to unionisation.

At the same time, all seven unions involved in the newspaper and publishing world have submitted a joint claim for bargaining rights at Thomson's to ACAS, the Government's arbitration service. With over 60 per cent of the total Glasgow workforce unionised, success is guaranteed in the west of Scotland ballot. Even if the Dundee ballot goes against unionisation, a significant crack would be forced in the company's no union policy.

### DICKENSIAN

For decades the treatment of the staff at D.C. Thomson has been rightly famous in the labour movement. Like nineteenth century bank employees, all workers have to negotiate as individuals. Low wages combine with arbitrary Christmas bonuses, very cheap mortgages and extra holidays to give a Dickensian air to the 2,500



workers in Dundee.

There is, however, nothing quaint or amateurish about the firm in spite of its contrived family atmosphere. In reality it is a huge concern, holding stock in many of Dundee's investment trusts, Grampian TV and in local radio.

Hostility to trade unions is an integral part of the Thomson ethos and its 'hard-working, Church-going' universe of Victorian Scotland. Even a modest victory for the principles of trade unionism inside this vast and culturally influential company must make some dent on the smug parochialism which makes up the staple diet of Scottish middle class life.

### LOSING

From a former position of total dominance of the Scottish Sunday newspaper market, Thomson's own unique *Sunday Post* is steadily losing ground to the openly campaigning *Sunday Mail*, which is straight out of the IPC instant newspaper kit.

The contrast between the two papers is best seen in their cartoons. The *Mail* has the 'Big Yin' modelled on Billy Connolly, a drunken extremely funny (sexist) Glaswegian. All the *Post* can offer is 'Oor Willie', 'lovable and cheeky', living in a forgotten world of bawbees and bairns.

Whether this racist, parochial gag is strangled to death by its workforce or slowly poisoned by competition is a matter of indifference. More worrying is the fact that the real comic characters, in the shape of the Thomson bosses' will be living on until next week's instalment.

NEIL WILLIAMSON

## Rebirth of the Troops Out Movement

FOR WHAT SEEMS like an eternity those in this country who have been trying to build support for the right of the Irish people to determine their own future have conducted their affairs in an atmosphere akin to an Orange Lodge.

Secret meetings, mysterious references to past faction fights, and under the counter deals have been the order of the day.

So it is refreshing to report that last weekend saw a change from all that. Approximately two hundred activists met in London to rebuild a troops out movement which had been all but decimated by internal wranglings, persecution complexes, and threats of violence.

That more people attended the London meeting than had been present at any similar event for a long time; that a new United Troops Out Movement was launched were not the only gains. Another was the kind of unity which the conference projected.

Inevitably the organised groupings predominated, with each having different attitudes on how to take the movement forward.

Nevertheless an amended resolution submitted in the name of the Committee for a Free Ireland, Big Flame, and the International Marxist Group received overwhelming support.

There was general agreement

on the main perspective of the united TOM, with provision for other activities to be taken up in the localities.

The perspectives centred on the planned International Tribunal of Britain's Crimes Against the Irish People — an initiative in which it is hoped broad support will be built in this country and internationally for a public hearing of British oppression in Ireland.

The spirit and determination of the activists is perhaps best shown by the fact that after two days of discussion and warm weather, a number of people went off after the conference to leaflet for a public meeting of three Belfast mothers organised

for 19 July.

If this kind of seriousness is matched in the localities, the united TOM will have already taken a major step in re-establishing the solidarity movement as a major source of annoyance and worry for the war masters of Westminster.

\* Support for the new united Troops Out Movement and the International Tribunal came from the Feminism and Ireland workshop organised last week by the Women and Ireland group.

Nearly 100 people attended the meeting and speakers included one from Irishwomen United and another from Andersonstown Socialist Women's Group.

**A**N IRISH newspaper recently carried a detailed, sober report of a sermon delivered by the Most Rev. Dr. Lucy, Bishop of Cork and Ross, on the subject of delayed baptism. The bishop warned parents that babies who died before being baptised would certainly lose their measure of supernatural happiness, but would probably still receive a modicum of natural happiness. Not only infants: 'Equally, we should not regard pagans, Moslems, and non-Christians generally as lost for all eternity. They won't get to Heaven, of course, but if they live a good life, neither will they go to Hell — they too will have their lesser reward. (*Irish Independent*, 16 May 1977).

Apart from signalling a convergence of Feuerbach and the Church on the question of eternity, the prospect of a celestial class society which reflects even the phenomena of underdevelopment must be encouraging for militants prematurely cut off from struggle, although some might feel cheated to discover that they really have been 'dead people on holiday all along'.

Yet once the immediate incredulous amusement recedes, it has to be faced that the existence of this atrocious old prelate as a social force (while no longer typical of even the Irish Hierarchy in the sheer crudity of his utterances) is merely a local, exquisite twist of the law of uneven development which has permitted the Church to survive on a global scale, when according to the logic of bourgeois enlightenment and progress, it should lie quietly with the spinning wheel and bronze axe in Engels' 'museum of antiquities'.

The tenacity of powerful Churches warns advanced bourgeois societies that their certainties are paralleled and in some ways undercut by obscurantist ideologies, useful as they prove to be in reproducing the forms of social relations given by those societies. Conversely, the Churches have an intimate relationship with the domain of politics. It is difficult to account for this enduring symbiosis, and a brief historical survey of the development of the largest, most coherent Church, the Roman Catholic, since the dawn of the imperialist period might contribute to such an understanding.

A preliminary apology for a lack of sharp social focus is necessary, but the oppressive, sour comedy of Catholic power in Ireland has been rehearsed too often to repeat it here. If the Church as a whole mocks late capitalist society with its populist resistance to rationality, the Irish Church's iron grip on education and everyday life and its crucial role in the oppression of women, prevents the emergence of a real 'secularised' democracy and openly resists the timid attempts of the bourgeoisie to conjure one out of the materials of underdevelopment and its own historic capitulation to that Church.

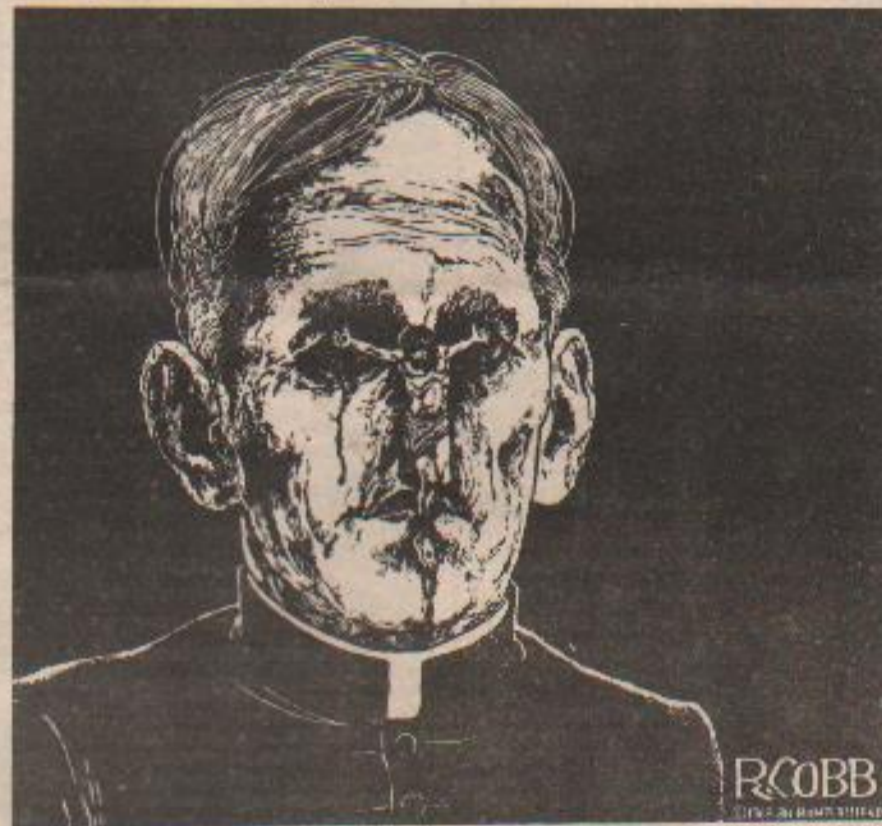
## Night Thoughts

The Catholic Church entered the modern world backwards, embracing the mediaeval synthesis of Church and State. Pius 9th's *Syllabus Errorum* (1864) denounced liberalism, socialism, naturalism, democracy and rationalism as deviations, and to forestall possible argument, the final error was decreed to be the notion that 'the Roman Pontiff can or ought to reconcile himself to... modern civilisation'. Six years later, the Church was protected against the night of reason still further by the decree of papal infallibility. The structure of authority in the Church had always been monarchical, but this seemed to condemn the Church to a slow demise in splendid isolation. Its history since then has been a century of night-thoughts, fantastic soliloquies in a world without god.

By aggressively entrenching the Church against everything progressive in the modern world, Pius 9th seemed to acknowledge to the satisfaction of liberals and anti-clericals that Catholicism could fight only venomous rearguard actions against progress. Religion seemed marginal to the dynamic of capitalist development in the evolutionary logic even to many socialists. But it hardly needs to be reiterated here how fatal the belief was that late capitalism could be free from unreason and superstition, and the survival of the Church was part of that ineradicable strain of barbarism marking modern western society as it lurched into the twentieth century.

Less than a year after the First Vatican Council had been dispersed by the seizure of the Papal lands by the forces of the new Italian state (with Napoleon III's help), the Paris Commune revealed a rather different contradictory aspect of capitalism to the outraged bourgeois world. It was in the movements and ideologies that had formed the Commune that the Church saw its real antagonists and towards whom it became more and more explicitly hostile at the

**'Issued from a post-tribal ethnic minority, triumphant in late Antiquity, dominant in feudalism, decadent and renescent under capitalism, the Roman Church has survived every other institution — cultural, political, juridical or linguistic — coeval with it.'** [Perry Anderson, *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism*, NLB]



NEIL BELTON discusses the continued existence of

# THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

expense of its nominal opposition to capitalist liberalism.

The Church, as a corporation with definite material interests bound up in its ideologically reproductive functions, was willing to accommodate itself to any regime that would permit it to retain its particular rituals of control and its sources of revenue.

The deadlock created by the rejection of history meant that the Church's kingdom was not of this world, but that its preference was for a world of kingdoms, committed to ensuring that the masses of this world thought as little as possible about its wealth. As a result the ultramontane isolation of the Church fused with the crudest diplomatic and political pragmatism.

In France after the Dreyfus scandal, the Vatican began to encourage the Action Française, despite the fascists' blatant opportunism in their support for ultramontane Catholicism, and the fact that Maurras was well-known as an agnostic. In audience with Maurras' mother, Pius X told her: 'I bless his work'. Meanwhile, the officials responsible for compiling the Index of proscribed works had found, with the devotion to reconditte theological literalism that has always placed Vatican bureaucrats to the right of even the popes, that Maurras' writings were heretical. Pius solved this embarrassing dilemma by deciding that they were 'damnable, non demandus' (worthy of condemnation, but not condemned) and no formal condemnation was made until 1827. Maurras had proved to be a rather unstable ally, and in 1929 there occurred the formal sealing of a more secure friendship by the Lateran Treaty, the 'concordat' with Mussolini which still governs Church-State relations in Italy.

The main thrust of Vatican policy in this period was anti-communism, and it formed the Church's strategic attitudes. The intimate relationship between the Church and domestic Italian politics was partly responsible for this rigidity in a period when the Church of England, for instance, was experimenting with 'Christian Sociology'.

Salazar's Portugal was seen as a laboratory for Catholic social dogma; Franco's counter-revolution was the focus of popular Catholic enthusiasm. Fascist Germany, while suspiciously pagan (one English Catholic intellectual described Nazism as a 'new puritanism'), reached a concordat in July 1933.

The humiliating political expropriation which followed provoked the only attack on

a fascist state ever made by the Catholic Church, a protest at violations of the 1933 concordat — a quarrel between partners. Even under Nazism, the Church maintained sufficient institutional and ideological autonomy to prevent an open break. At the end of the Thirties almost a quarter of the SS were Catholics. There were no protests at the genocide.

On the eve of the Second World War, Pius X looked out across a smouldering Europe and announced with the perplexed, gloomy catastrophism so characteristic of Catholic thought — that war was inevitable because modern man no longer heeded the word of god and his supreme incarnation, himself. Five years later he found it acceptable for Catholics to participate in 'moderate' forms of representative 'democracy'; hitherto even Christian democracy had been viewed as largely 'erroneous'. This concession to modernity was timely, given the military defeat of Fascism and the growth of the mass 'anti-fascist' movement.

## A Fossil?

To assert that the Church is a fossil and leave it as that is to beg the question. The force of organised religion in many European countries — Spain, Italy, Ireland — forms a culturally derelict and oppressive penumbra around the political which cannot be explained solely in terms of backwardness fuelling blindness. This shadow on the modern world is, rather, one of those stubborn internal embarrassments to bourgeois triumphalism: a pebble beneath its foot, to employ the clerical metaphor for conscience.

It reflects the historically relatively recent normalisation of the bourgeois democratic order, the uneasy coexistence with fixations and myths it has formally transcended, and the dependence on such myths when the 'overheads' begin to grate. Hence the peculiar shrillness of some bourgeois anti-clericals, and perhaps the tendency to exorcise Marxism by comparing it to a creed, a theology.

It was stated earlier that the Church has produced a morbid soliloquy on late-modern history, but of course it has not been speaking without listeners. It has been, if the discourse it produces is set against the background of the main intellectual and cultural forces of the recent centuries. Unfortunately a major support of the Church has been its successful populism.

It has succeeded in retaining the loyalty

of sections of the masses, particularly in the peripheral areas of Europe and Latin America (the involvement of sections of the clergy in revolutionary movements is outside the scope of this short article), with its aggressive rejection of ideologies inimical to certain sets of 'traditional values', especially and crucially those that threaten the family and patriarchy.

Although its mass appeal has characteristically been in the under-developed regions, a palpable cause of the Church's survival is its social roots in those states which achieved national unification or became major capitalist powers in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The West European system of capitalist states has proved remarkably stable, despite severe shocks, and here the Church has found its main haven. Just as its missions depended on European imperialism and declined rapidly with the rise of anti-colonial movements, its important centres remain the old imperialist states and their former colonies.

## Cold War

The Church's wealth, which is regarded as the essential guarantee of its spiritual authority is not based solely on its ability to mate marketing skills with its traditional techniques of moral coercion to raise funds: the Church is a wealthy corporate investor, with 100 billion lire invested in Italy alone in 1968, and this merely the amount from which dividends were being collected. Until the Seventies, the Vatican's most important Italian investments were in Generale Immobiliare, a huge real estate corporation with operations in the USA, Mexico and France (one of its projects was a certain Watergate Hotel in Washington) and the Institute for Industrial Reconstruction — the semi-state cartel set up by Mussolini to protect private industry. It also had a large direct interest in SNIA-Viscosa, an Italian textile conglomerate connected with Courtauld and Hambros Bank.

Conrado Pallenberg, the only writer to have systematically investigated these links (*The Vatican Finances*, Peter Owen 1971) also demonstrates a connection with Shell Italiana, an associate of the British Shell Transport and Trading Company. Since the early 1970s, however, the Vatican has diversified into more anonymous securities, and has sold its controlling interest in Immobiliare. Aristocratic stooges no longer serve as markers of Vatican capital on boards of directors, but it is safe to assume that caution still dictates investment in large conglomerates and banks, where the church can be as sure of its dividends as it is of an Irish Prime Minister.

In the Fifties, the Church was a determined protagonist in the cold war. The Soviet Union and the 'workers republics' were erased from official papal speeches, becoming 'the Church of Silence'. Catholic schools cultivated a red demonology and a martyrology which mixed genuine cases of repression with clerical fantasy. It would be a mistake, however, to counterpose this fervour to the ecumenical rhetoric which emerged during and after the Second Vatican Council.

The timid experiments with worker-priests in the early part of the decade in France were abruptly terminated when the implanted priests were dragged into struggle with the workers, but the more intelligent Catholic ideologists were aware of the need to break the deadlock of ideological intransigence and political prostitution.

One consideration which moved the Council was a new awareness that the Soviet Union's external stance and a desire to achieve 'communist world domination' were not necessarily identical. It was recognised that although a Communist leader might talk about world revolution, in practice he would probably settle for peaceful coexistence. This enabled a distinction between a 'false philosophy' of man and his place in the world, and the 'legitimate' social programme which might be derived from it.

The Church was trying to find an acceptable path back to the history it had tried to suppress, in a political world now predominantly social-democratic at its European centre and increasingly inhospitable to imperialism elsewhere.

Anaemic as new initiatives in international relations ('harmony') and social legislation (recognition that the State, and not solely the family could provide for an individual's needs) proved to be, they effectively highlighted a stillness in areas of more crucial importance to the Church's ideological coherence and populist hold: the family (the ban on contraception in 1970) and freedom of conscience (restatement of Papal infallibility).

Catholic liberals like Paul Johnson who thought that the Vatican Council would become a sort of spiritual House of Commons, with the pope as constitutional sovereign, encountered a Maternal figure more familiar in Catholic iconography than in the mythology of parliaments.

# The People's Jubilee



to mention: the persistence of the Francoist machine, the powerlessness of the new parliament, the widespread irregularities in polling, the gerrymandering of constituencies and the disenfranchisement of young people under 21.

The politics was well-tempered by the wide variety of other events (music, cinema, theatre, etc) and the wide range of stalls and exhibits. The event was, of course, essentially sectarian in nature, but many of the movements and campaigns represented (the Anti-Apartheid Movement, the Chile Solidarity Campaign, Palestinian Liberation Organisation, etc) were not just CP fronts. Sellers of various non-CP papers appeared to move about un molested and a generally jolly atmosphere between a Red Butlins and a large union conference prevailed.

All this makes it seem most odd that *Socialist Challenge*, while providing several pages to the CP's problems in previous issues, should have ignored the positive initiative of the CP in organising one of the few major popular left festivals in this country in recent years.

There is no reason why the far left could not get together and stage an even better festival than the CP (indeed it should!), but *Socialist Challenge* would have no excuse if the CP ignored it. **MIKE LEVI [London]**

Weagree - Eds.

# Time to lay the ghost

CHRIS HARMAN, acting editor of *Socialist Worker*, has said that the change from *Red Weekly* to *Socialist Challenge* is 'as significant as the move from *Black Dwarf* to *Red Mole* and from *Red Mole* to *Red Weekly*'. The less partisan *Leveler* has stated that the change is largely a manoeuvre to 'catch' other small Trotskyist groups, initially the Workers League and then perhaps the Chartists and the League for Socialist Action as well.

Many other socialists with some sympathy for the project as well as many suspicions are likely to look at *Socialist Challenge* and say: 'We won't participate unless we can see that it's not an IMG front'. Then they will stand aside and 'await developments'. Then, observing that other groups, like themselves, are not involved, they will point and say: 'Look, it is an IMG front', and refuse to participate.

Unless *Socialist Challenge* acts rapidly to lay the ghost that it is merely an attempt to build the IMG through a 'front' tactic, and can instead carry conviction that it intends to become the paper of a 'class struggle left wing' within which the IMG will be only one component part, then the project to advance real revolutionary unity will fail.

How can *Socialist Challenge* act consciously to overcome this problem? Only the utmost hon-

esty about what *Socialist Challenge* is, what it aspires to be, and how it intends to move from the one to the other can clear the ground. It seems to me that this has not yet been done within the paper.

What is necessary in the first place is a categorical statement that, although launched by the IMG, *Socialist Challenge* is a wholly independent paper. To accompany this, it must be clearly specified how other organisations, groups and individuals can fully participate in the paper. This means not just writing for the paper, but also a full role in the formulation of editorial policy, deciding what articles to commission, etc.

The rights of access of minorities to its columns must be clarified, as must be the norms of organisational and financial support expected from participants. Something far more definite is needed than the current general appeals to participate, offers of space in the paper, and well-meaning statements of willingness to consult other groups to see if they have got any ideas.

The IMG also needs to state clearly that it accepts the possibility of being a minority within the *Socialist Challenge* of the future, in which case it, like other organisations, will have the right of a minority to space within the paper to argue its specific political disagreements.

The paper should carry regular details of the composition of the Editorial Board, and vigorous attempts should be made to involve independent militants in that Board.

This, then, would go along with a perspective of setting up broadly based *Socialist Challenge* groups around the country who will in the relatively short term elect a new and fully independent Editorial Board.

A policy on these lines would be a real demonstration of workers' democracy in action and as such would disarm sectarian suspicion. Having begun to attack out its neck with the launching of *Socialist Challenge*, the IMG cannot now afford to hesitate and temporise, otherwise a bold venture will be stillborn.

**STEVE TOLLIDAY [London]**

See future issues

## 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 2352.

Open Tuesday 6-8pm, Thursday 6-8pm, Saturday 10-12pm. 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, Deans Rd., Bolton, 20m. Criche. Raffle winners: Pete Sweet, Anthony Whiteside, Rita Timkin, 706, June Wilkes.

## MIDLANDS

For details of activities of local supporters contact Socialist Challenge Centre, 76b Digbeth High Street, Birmingham. 061-643 9209.

**WOLVERHAMPTON.** Discussion Group. 'How can we fight for socialism today?' Tuesday 12 July, 7.30pm. The Vine Hotel, Broad Street Wolverhampton.

## HOME COUNTIES

**BRIGHTON.** Forum. 'Fighting the Transport Crisis'. Thursday 7 July, 8pm, Springfield pub.

## WEST & WALES

**CARDIFF.** Forum. Friday 8 July. Rhymney Hotel (opposite prison), 7.30pm. 'Revolutionary Socialism - Why and How'. Local speakers.

**BRISTOL.** Supporters meeting. 'Trotskyism and the Labour Party'. Friday 8 July, 7.30pm. The Swan, Stokes Croft, Bristol.

## LONDON

For details of activities ring 01-283 3061, 10-5pm.

**BRENT.** Public Meeting. 'Grunwick - Class confrontation on the picket line'. Speakers: Bob Pennington (author of IMG pamphlet *Revolutionary Socialism*) and Tessa van Gelderen (Brent IMG). Monday 11 July, 7.00pm. Willesden Junction Hotel, Station Hotel, Station Road, NW10. All welcome.

## SCOTLAND

For information on Socialist Challenge write c/o Scottish Socialist League, 54 Queen Street, Glasgow. 041-227 7481.

## YORKSHIRE

**SHEFFIELD.** Readers Group. Thursday 14 July, 7.30pm, The Lion Hotel, 3 Nursery Street (off the Wicker), Sheffield. Further details 0742-53156.

# Grossly inaccurate

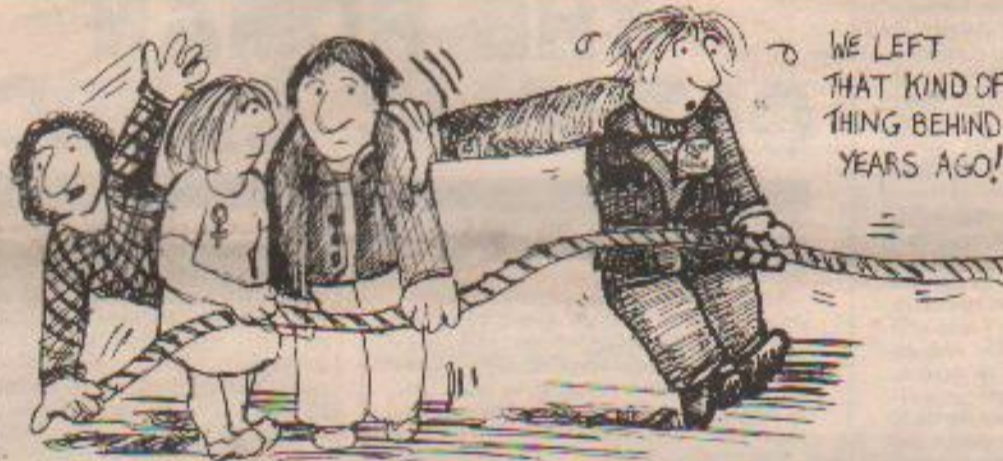
WHILE IT is amusing that you chose to designate a member of the Socialist Workers Party as one who wears our 'Fight the Cuts' and 'Stuff the Jubilee' badge, as the designer and producer of it, I'd like to point out that your cartoon on page 7 of issue 3 of *Socialist Challenge* is grossly inaccurate. You show this sloppy male freak roughly pushing away at least two women.

I designed the badge to show an active woman holding a 'Fight the Cuts' placard and 'Stuffing the Jubilee'. The very first place we sold it was at the National Woman's Liberation Conference. Of the 47,000 we've sold so far, nearly half of them have been distributed through libertarian and feminist bookshops, women's centres, battered

wives refuges, gay centres, and adverts in *Spare Rib* and *Gay News*. The members of the SWP Gay Group sold the badge on the Gay Pride march.

Your cartoon portrays the SWP as being uninterested in the struggles of women and other oppressed groups. This is absolute rubbish. Has *Socialist Challenge* really not noticed that we produce the only regular monthly revolutionary feminist magazine, which is written by the women in Women's Voice groups.

Rather than pushing women and gays aside, we see their struggles as a crucial part of building the revolutionary party capable of overthrowing this racist, sexist, capitalist system. **Ms. SHERRYL YANOWITZ [N. London]**



# Vietnam and democracy

*SOCIALIST CHALLENGE* said 'we must attempt to get our house in order' in relation to violation of democratic rights in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

May I suggest we might apply this advice in relation to the refugees who are so anxious to leave the 'Democratic' Republic of Vietnam that they are willing to risk their lives in leaky fishing boats. Like many socialists, including many members of the IMG, I supported unconditionally the armed struggle of the Vietnamese against their American-backed native tyrants and the American intervention.

In later years, however, I became extremely suspicious of the NLF/DRV leadership. I think recent events have shown that my suspicions were fully justified.

I think *Socialist Challenge* can contribute to remedying the situation by demanding that the Vietnamese authorities allow any dissidents to freely emigrate just as the Cubans did in the early years of their revolution. However, this may not be a practical solution in the case of Vietnam due to the unwillingness of many countries to take Vietnamese emigrants.

The Cuban petty-bourgeoisie could fit into Miami society without much difficulty. But many of those wishing to flee Vietnam may not be petty-bourgeois but proletarians who the authorities are trying to force 'back to the land'.

I do not want to imply that emigration can ever substitute for a fight for democratic rights inside Vietnam itself. That is for the Vietnamese to undertake.

I would also point out that there are indications of a vast 'purge' in China too. It is better for socialism that we air these tragic events now than wait until the right wing 'friends of freedom' do so. **L.F. HOLLEY [Bath]**

# Is Zionism racism?

I AM WRITING as chairperson of the Essex University Communist Party branch, to you as editor of *Socialist Challenge*.

As you know, there have been several recent incidents of the banning of Jewish and Jewish societies from Student Unions. This has been done on the pretext that such societies, flying proclaimed themselves Zionist, have been characterised as racist. We have noted the active role played by local IMG groups in supporting such characterisations and banning.

We would therefore like to know the political position of *Socialist Challenge* on these issues. **ALAN MACDOUGALL [North London]**





David Carradine as Woody Guthrie in Bound for Glory

# Filtering history through a haze of dust

There is a thin layer of dust which covers the screen for the entire running time of *Bound For Glory*, Hollywood's adaptation of the autobiography of dust-bowl poet and songwriter Woody Guthrie.

by ANNIE JANOWITZ

This dust acts as a filter through which the poverty and ugliness of the 1930s Depression in the American West is made into a pastel romanticisation — dominated by soft, diffuse colours.

And it acts as a distancing mechanism to put not only years but a disguising haziness between the audience and the subject of the film.

Films, like the man said, are never 'innocent' — no more than any other medium shaped by ideology and shaping history. And *Bound For Glory* provides us with a good example of how material which is subversive can be contained and manipulated in a variety of ways to render the subversive impotent.

Moreover, the containing devices act in such a way as to leave no crevices for a political analysis to emerge. We learn both about history and about film by looking at both what a film does not say and how the cinematic coherence of the film makes subversive questioning an impossibility.

It is, I think, no accident that *Bound For Glory* has been made

at the present time. Along with other films such as *The Front*, we are seeing Hollywood's response to Americans' search for their roots.

The connection between the end of the post-war boom and this almost desperate hunt for an earlier, affluent vision of America has been catered to by a growing number of films which appear to answer that need.

Yet rather than being of our history as Americans, these films are views of an idealised history — they reproduce the audience's longing (that is, their nostalgia) rather than any political awareness of that history.

The material *Bound For Glory* draws on is the dust-bowl in the 1930s, when the droughts in that area forced thousands of home-seekers and small farmers off their land, and sent them out on the road towards California, where there was work to be had as fruit-pickers. The parallel between the struggles for unionisation on the fruit farms which these white people waged and those being fought today by the Chicanos is striking. With so many people unemployed, those

who got jobs picking were frightened to fight for unionisation, as there were more than enough scabs to fill their place.

Woody Guthrie was one such Okie, and the movie traces his career from the time he leaves Oklahoma through his activities as folk-singer and union agitator until he leaves California to try his luck in New York.

The film works on this material in such a way as to draw into the foreground the legend of Guthrie as a rootless, inarticulate and passionate defender of the workers' rights, and simultaneously puts the very questions at stake in terms of these struggles well out of sight.

By transferring onto Guthrie alone the general fight against exploitation, an opportunity for the glorification of defeat is opened up. For example, in one scene we see Guthrie take on the whole of the bosses' henchmen, and when he is beaten up and forcibly kicked out of the packing station, the scene turns into an exaltation of his individual courage.

By relaxing the focus of the camera in the scenes of the shanty-town settlements, the workers all blend into a rosy blur. This chasm between Guthrie as a solitary fighter and the people is covered deftly by the film in making the Guthrie-character make continual references to 'the people' as if they were the last reserve of true, human values in an increasingly commercialised world.

That is to say, the Guthrie of the film *colludes* in the camera's vision of the 'noble simplicity' of poverty. The scenes which depict the brutality of the bosses are always reducible to a contest between Guthrie and capitalism — a nostalgic view of the American pioneer figure. Guthrie never mounts a freight train without a sunset at his back.

This rootless pioneer motif works again in the role to which women are assigned in the film. On the one hand, Guthrie's wife is *theoretically* seen as having clear grievances in terms of her fears for her family in a situation without financial security.

Yet, each time we see her it is in the role of *inhibiting* Guthrie — of trying to keep him from wandering. So any insight into her situation is transformed, painlessly, into a condemnation of her as a reactionary nag. Guthrie's personal 'call' is seen by the movie as transcendent.

The continual distancing of Guthrie from his environment is also bridged by the film in its use of music. So that while the camera and the pioneer motif of individual heroism create a gap between the workers' struggle and Guthrie, the music helps to bind over the direction and ultimately gives the film its own coherence.

Guthrie talks of the people and he sings of the people, and so they and their struggles are musically subsumed into the heroic figure of Guthrie himself. The film then satisfies the audience's desire for pre-boom pastoral, and everyone can leave the cinema with a palatable view of American history.

*Bound For Glory* is showing at the ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, and several local London cinemas, and will be going on national release.

## Workers' struggles on screen

by MICHAEL CHANAN

a deliberate step by The Other Cinema in order to try and build up the role which they believe they ought to play.

But they have pointed out that they can only succeed if their regular programmes are also better supported, as they are facing severe financial difficulties. They feel that the left has not been giving them the support which they need, and which, for instance, independent cinemas in Paris receive. Some of them ask why revolutionaries continue to go to the latest big budget movies simply for the delight of giving vent to their inevitable frustration.

Even if some of the films shown at The Other Cinema are also frustrating because they're more difficult to watch than the commercial stuff, these comrades believe that oppositional cinema can only progress if we pay more attention to the work of radical film makers of all types and engage them in open debate. Cinema Action now support this argument.

For several years they have had to work to make do with inadequate facilities. They now believe that in order to extend the kind of political work which can be done with film on the factory floor, we need lots more other cinemas all over the country, where workers from different workplaces can come together and share their experiences with each other and with other sectors of the left. But we're less likely to get them if we allow this one to fold.

FILMS ARE currently being made about the struggles at Grunwick and at Chloride. Footage from both these projects was shown at The Other Cinema in London last week, together with Cinema Action's Film from the Clyde.

On the Monday night, a special delegation from Camden and Brent Trades Councils heard a Chloride worker introduce the Chloride footage and explain the struggle now taking place in the plants.

A member of Cinema Action said afterwards that they thought it was an event of the greatest importance. It showed a way of breaking down the isolation of film from the course of the class struggle and of bringing into the cinema the real world which its screens so often seem to reflect only passively.

It can help to promote solidarity in a very immediate way, and at the same time serves as a counter, however small, to the insidious propaganda of the capitalist media. Cinema Action also pointed out that it helped film makers in the process of film-making.

Monday's event was the first time any cinema has given the chance to see work in progress during the course of the struggles it is concerned with. This is



Migrants who jump a train to reach California are hauled off by a goon squad



The gay criminal Maltessa Falcone

## Gays as grotesque in films

by SIMON WATNEY

THE NEW YORK Council on Inter-Racial Books for Children has defined a stereotype as 'an over-simplified generalisation about a particular group, race or sex, which usually carries derogatory implications'.

Homosexuality is rightly regarded today as an important civil

rights issue, but it is also something rather more than that.

In the history of the cinema it is clear that homosexual men and women have been portrayed exclusively in terms of stereotypes which serve to obscure the actual revolutionary threat which homosexuality presents to the values and institutions of a society which so often prefers to see itself solely in heterosexual or 'straight' terms.

Hence the importance of a new collection of essays *Gays and*

film, which has been edited by Richard Dyer for the British Film Institute, together with an accompanying season of films at the National Film Theatre in London.

In the first paper in the book, Caroline Sheldon describes how cinema 'may give clues as to the mode of operation of capitalist/patriarchal power'. Ms. Sheldon sees film as a 'male-identified' medium, that is, conceived around particular male 'needs', fantasies and modes of socialisation.

Gay women suffer from extremes of stereotyping, such as *The Killing of Sister George*, because of their obvious threat to the reproductive norms of heterosexual family unit and, by extension, to the productive forces of capitalism itself.

Hence, for example, the fundamental and dangerous nonsense of regarding lesbians as no more than mannish women. It is precisely that kind of fixed, gender-oriented role-playing which homosexuality should call into question. It is also crucial to

recognise that all the major studio films in the season are made by men. The lesbian in the film occupies the same position as that of all women mediated through a male-dominated industry geared around male fantasy and 'sexploitation'.

In place of this male identification Sheldon looks for a 'female-oriented' cinema which can explore the systematic nature and usage of the sexist mythology concerning both lesbians and gay men, while not merely replacing the heroes of patriarchy with equally misleading matriarchal equivalents.

Dyer himself sets out to examine the actual roles and types employed in the cinema to over-categorise gay people. He explains how film has shown only 'grotesque types' (the miming queen, the butch dyke) which, as Kate Millet has pointed out, are in fact no more than parodies of straight society at its most vicious and extreme.

Films need these types precisely because homosexuals are not immediately 'apparent' in everyday life — something of a problem for an industry rooted in sexual anxiety and obsessive theories of normality. Gays are certainly not 'normal'. We celebrate our 'abnormality'!

Homosexuality then is consistently seen as a 'personality problem', with a very limited range of 'solutions', suicide apparently being seen as the box-office favourite! This is sexism at its most violent. That is to say, it is bourgeois sexual ideology at its most transparent.

'Show me a happy homosexual and I'll show you a gay corpse'. Thus speaks one of the puppet-like characters in *The Boys in the Band*. This is the language of

cliché, over-simplification and ignorance which many gay men and women come to internalise, thus ironically accepting the very stereotypes by which 'straight' society oppresses them.

In the book's final essay, Jack Babuscio discusses what he regards as a specifically gay (male?) sensibility — that of camp. But camp is surely not, as he claims, 'a heightened awareness of certain human contradictions'. On the contrary, we may best see it as a defensive ideology by which many gay people, men in particular, interpret their oppressed sex-class position as an innate psychological state, as in the de-humanised world of David Hockney's 'A Bigger Splash', or in the body fetishising attitudes of Andy Warhol's films.

The few independent lesbian/feminist film makers showing at the end of the season should begin to call into question this entire machinery of gay stereotyping in the cinema. One can only look forward to the day when such stereotypes appear as

ludicrous and as evil as the racist caricatures of black people in the films of the 1930s seem to us today.

\* *Gays and Film*, edited by Richard Dyer is published by the British Film Institute at 75p.

Images of Homosexuality, National Film Theatre Season, 2-31 July.



The gay victim: Firworks

## THE OTHER CINEMA

25 Tottenham Street, London W1. Tel: 637 9308/9

Joris Ivens and Marceline Loridan

### HOW YUKONG MOVED THE MOUNTAINS

'I had the impression not only of learning but of seeing the only place where "political life" is the very existence of the people. That is what makes the film beautiful and intense.' (Michel Fourcault)

Reduced price vouchers available

# Socialist Challenge



## Legal diversions ahead Build the picket!

### Stand and deliver Jackson

THE FUTURE of the boycott of Grunwick mail by post office workers at Cricklewood is not known as Socialist Challenge goes to press.

One thing is apparent — the role played in the dispute by Tom Jackson, general secretary of the Union of Postal Workers.

Jackson called off a previous boycott of Grunwick mail after the intervention of NAFF and Ward's supposed 'cooperation' with ACAS.

Jackson's action gave Ward a very big breathing space. If his threats against the postal workers succeed they will have the same effect again.

### Ward to take break?

GEORGE WARD is considering having to close his factory for one day on 11 July.

This was revealed on Monday by Susan Pitts who had just walked out of Grunwick to join the strike.

Susan said that many of the workers were wary of going to work on 11 July so Ward is thinking of giving a holiday. That in itself would be remarkable as Ward never gives holidays during the summer months.

But George Ward's promises can not be taken as face value. That he may be wavering means it is all the more important to show him the strength of the workers movement on 11 July.

THERE CAN ONLY BE CONTEMPT for the Labour Government proposals for 'settling' the Grunwick strike. They could have called off the police rioters. Instead they have proposed that the Grunwick strikers should submit themselves to the judges, the High Court and Scarman's court of enquiry.

Supporting their sort of solutions are:

★ John Gourlet of NAFF who has made the courts his chosen battleground for an offensive against the unions.

★ George Ward, Grunwick boss, who pins his main hopes on the High Court action and promises cooperation with the court of enquiry so long as it operates on his terms.

★ John Gorst MP, who would dearly love to carry the cause of the right wing of the Tory Party into the highest courts of the land.

The reason why these people enjoy legal games so much is the same reason why working people should only have the greatest suspicion for their machinations.

The main use of the courts has been to deprive the working class of its basic rights. Judges have done this job for the ruling class from the Tolpuddle Martyrs, through the Taff Vale judgement right up to the present day.

Their second and more unfamiliar role is that when the

workers force the employing class to give in through mass struggles, the judges then step in to graciously grant the labour movement's demands and claim that this victory was not due to militancy but to the 'fairness' of the law. Lord Wilberforce's Court of Enquiry into the miners' claim in 1972 was one example of this 'human face'.

No such human face will head the Court of Enquiry. Lord Scarman is a man experienced in whitewash and repression. It was he who covered up Unionist policy in the north of Ireland. It was Scarman who blamed the death of Kevin Gately on anti-fascists' covering up the role of police action.

His job is to ensure that whatever the result of the Grunwick strike the bosses will extract some gains limiting the right to picket.

### LEGAL ACTION

The APEX leadership who are going along with the policy of relying on legal action are leading the Grunwick struggle into a deadly trap. It is the mass picketing and the post office blacking that have brought the Grunwick strike within sight of victory.

The press and the Government tried to ignore Grunwick. Since the mass picketing started, the strike has become a rallying cry for the trade union movement. The mass picketing and blacking is the sure way to win the strike.

Making 11 July a second Salley Gates, extending the blacking and picketing, and defending the post office workers blacking Grunwick will bring Ward to his knees. Then what the courts decide will hardly matter. Even Scarman can't stand up to that victory — just as the High Court 'recognised' the Freeing of the Pentonville Five.

But calling off the mass picketing to rely on the legal infighting is the road to disaster. It means allowing Ward to continue his lock-out of union members for months. It means hardship for those on the picket-line. It means Scarman, Ward and all the rest being given months to work out and try every possible method to defeat the strike.

### TWO ROADS

There are two roads at Grunwick.

One is that of the struggle which has brought the strike to within sight of victory.

The other is the legal manoeuvres of Ward, Gorst, Gourlet, Grantham and the Labour government. That is a road to give up all the gains of the last 3 weeks and go back to the 42 weeks without progress. Whether to extend the picketing and blacking or to rely on Scarman and the courts is the most important choice so far in the Grunwick strike.

It is the choice between victory and surrendering all the main weapons to the enemy.



Home Secretary Merlyn Rees: Fraternising with the cops he could call off.

MEETINGS explaining the need for our paper are going ahead all round the country and meeting a warm reception.

Over 50 people came to the first Socialist Challenge meeting in Lambeth, South-west London. The meeting was chaired by Brian Hodge, the President of the Lambeth Trades Council, while the speakers included Dodie Weppier, a member of the editorial board of Socialist Challenge, plus members of Big Flame, Workers League, ALARM (All Lambeth Anti-Racist Movement) and a teacher from Lavender Hill School, recently reprieved for a year from closure.

Michael Ward, the Chairperson of the Direct Labour Committee, Wandsworth Borough Council, sent his support to the meeting:

'I welcome the establishment of Socialist Challenge as a non-sectarian paper seeking to focus the efforts of socialists committed to building for an alternative to the reactionary policies of the Callaghan coalition Government.'

'Opposition to cuts in public spending, racism, women's oppression and the attack on living standards will be furthered by the availability of the new paper.'

'The task of labour movement representatives on Councils and other public bodies must be, not to acquiesce in the attack on working class living standards, but to fight for policies in the interests of the class and to cooperate with the wide movement, not work in isolation from it.'

'The attitude of the Grunwick management, and their ultra-Tory backers, is a sign of a new offensive by employers — just as was seen after the General Strike. In this situation unity on the left is crucial. Socialist Challenge will help to bring that unity about.'

Those at the meeting recognised that the fight against the attacks on the working class all costs money. Over £14 was raised for the Socialist Challenge fighting fund.

Last week's cover certainly was popular on the Grunwick picket line. Over 500 copies of the Socialist Challenge number four were sold before Saturday. The previous issue had equally good sales. A further four pages in this issue should see those sales figures maintained.

The next issue of Socialist Challenge will contain —

- ★ Reports from the T&GWU conference;
- ★ Surplus Value: Fred Halliday on Zionism;
- ★ Interview with Israeli socialist;
- ★ 'Speak Out' on Mozambique.

## Slay our dragon



To encourage you to give more our fighting fund has a new logo. It shows Leon Trotsky slaying the dragon of the counter-revolution in 1918. At this time civil war raged in the newly-born workers state and Trotsky had just been appointed Commissar of War.

Socialist Challenge too has a battle on its hands — that of survival. Our dragon will be vanquished when we fill the empty body around Trotsky with £1,800. To keep on target, the Socialist Challenge and its supporters have to raise £130 per week. This week nearly £124 came into our coffers.

Our thanks to the following Socialist Challenge groups and individuals:

N. Shorelton	5.00
H. Daley	5.00
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