

Socialist Challenge

BUILD A SOCIALIST OPPOSITION

FOR A UNIFIED REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION

12p

11 August 1977

No. 10

ELIZABETH OF ORANGE IN IRELAND



NEXT STOP LEWISHAM AND THE NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL?

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Editorial

Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.
Editorial 01-359 8189
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time to take stock

WITH THIS ISSUE SOCIALIST CHALLENGE is ten weeks old. It is an opportune moment to take stock, to stand back and reflect on what we have been able to achieve so far and where we hope to go in the coming period.

While the newspaper is still so far being edited by members of the International Marxist Group, we are confident that other left wing organisations can be won over to the project. Already national aggregates of three organisations — Workers League, Big Flame and the Anarchist Workers Association — have discussed the Socialist Challenge project and have shown varying degrees of interest. Their possible participation on the editorial board at a future stage is the subject of discussions we are having with them at the moment. This raises important questions in relation to the political basis of the paper: the constitution of the Editorial Board, the character of Socialist Challenge groups and their relationship to the paper, future conferences of the paper's supporters, etc. These discussions will be open. A preliminary draft 'Statement of Aims' together with a detailed balance-sheet of the paper will be published later in the autumn to start a debate on these issues.

We still remain convinced that the needs of the class struggle in Britain necessitate the broadest possible unity of action coupled with a principled battle to unite the revolutionary socialist left. Our task is to build a non-sectarian force within the working class movement in opposition to Labour's policies. Our electoral interventions, our campaigns, our newspaper are all designed to further this aim. We believe that it is such activities which will lay the basis for the creation of a large unified and democratic revolutionary organisation in this country.

In that sense despite criticisms which both our supporters and ourselves would have of the newspaper we are nonetheless convinced that the newspaper has so far been a limited success. It has developed a broad readership, its circulation continues to increase and it is beginning to be seen as the only far-left paper where real debates and discussions on a wide range of issues are possible.

The autumn period will see us making a concerted drive to develop the newspaper further. We are preparing discussions on the type of class struggle organisations we need in the trade unions; we are organising supplements on the Ford and other claims, the Russian Revolution, the tasks of the socialist press; a special review of books, etc. In addition we will be preparing to intervene in the TUC and Labour Party conferences this autumn.

We are by no means complacent. We are fully aware that the paper has a long way to go before it becomes vital reading for every militant socialist and trade unionist. However we should also shun false modesty. We think the paper has, to a certain extent, filled a certain space which existed on the left for a popular political paper. That it has done so has been largely due to the support (in terms of articles, graphics and distribution) of our readers. The next leap forward will depend on whether we are able to win other socialist organisations to an active involvement in the paper. With our limited resources we believe that we have shown what is possible for a paper fighting for unity. Whether that potential is realised depends not only on us, but also on you.

This is the last issue before our summer break. We will resume publication on Thursday 1 September.

CBI dictates starting orders for Lib-Lab pact

by STEVE POTTER

THE EVE of the Ladywood poll will see the one and only Labour Party public meeting. Speaking will be Michael Foot and Roy Hattersley. These two members of the Cabinet will be on the last lap of a marathon speaking tour around Britain.

Like most other Labour ministers they have been hard at work pushing the merits of the Government's policy on wages. They started when the Confederation of British Industry sharply instructed Callaghan that his ministers were not being serious in the job of bulldozing through the next phase of Labour's Social Contract policies.

The call from the CBI came late on Wednesday night last week. John Methven, CBI director general, phoned a meeting of senior ministers at Downing Street and said that Callaghan and Co should use their summer holidays usefully in touring the country.

But Callaghan knows his limitations. His agents in the trade union movement are far more sure-footed in their efforts to get the TUC Congress in September to approve the 12-month rule, which will keep Phase 2 going for many workers until July 1978.

The great hostility in the trade unions to any further restrictions on free collective bargaining means that Jack Jones, Hugh Scanlon and all have little chance of winning over the rank and file to the continuation of pay policy. So they have resorted to trickery.

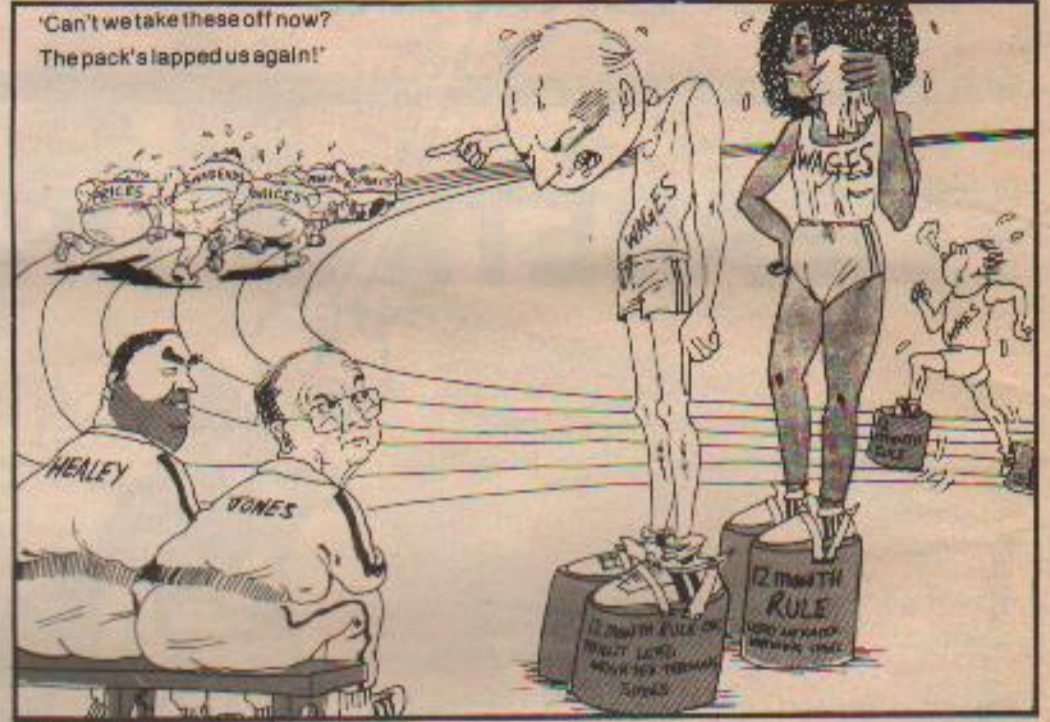
Jack Jones was first off the mark. In a circular distributed to his members, Jones stood the decisions of the July Bi-ennial Conference on their heads by asking the union to respect the 12 month rule. To add insult to injury he went on to abstain in the vote on the TUC General Council which approved the 12 month rule by 23 votes to 4.

All this is part of a strategy which the TUC leaders hope to enforce at Blackpool. The idea is that if Jack Jones can bully the Transport and General Workers Union delegates to abstain, and if Scanlon can deliver the votes of the engineers, then despite decisions of the summer trade union conferences for an immediate return to free collective bargaining, the very reverse will come out of the TUC's Congress.

TRIPLE OFFENSIVE

The diet for the TUC to swallow is the new triple offensive, enforcing cash limits to 'hold the line' against public sector worker wage claims, the 12 month rule and the six per cent norm for wage increases.

Policing this agreement in Parliament are the Liberals. Callaghan will use the Lib-Lab pact to confront workers fighting for decent wages. They will be threatened with the demise of the Labour Government at the hands of the Liberals if they succeed.



In Birmingham the results of these policies can already be seen only too clearly. At the end of last week 10,000 Lucas workers found themselves locked out by management, in an attempt to divide them against the 1200 toolmakers fighting for a claim which management says is outside Phase 2. They are among the first employers to stand firm on the CBI directive of 'holding the line' in the private sector.

Foot and Hattersley are so deeply in thrall to interests of the bosses that they care little for the fact that they are signing the death warrant for their own government, let alone contributing the decimation of living standards.

Already there is a growing sentiment among Labour supporters that a socialist alternative must emerge to the betrayals of the Labour leadership. It will not be found amongst the Labour lefts, who instead of fighting the Labour right confine themselves to a campaign pointing out the advantages of a capitalist federation of the European countries as an 'alternative' to the Common Market.

Neither will it come from the Communist Party who abjectly followed every twist and turn of Scanlon and Jones in the toolmakers and Heathrow engineers against Phase 2.

The beginning of such an alternative, a modest beginning to be sure, is to be found in the efforts of the revolutionary left to build tendencies in the unions pledged to fight against class collaboration of the trade union leaderships.

The elections find the far left for the first time vigorously seizing the opportunity to put forward a socialist solution to the crisis to the largest possible numbers of people. But the very weakness of these forces makes it all the more critical that these efforts are concerted, and better still, unified.

LOBBY THE TUC CONGRESS

5 September, 11.00am Blackpool
Called by Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions

Supported by: Manchester AUEW District Committee; Manchester TASS No 10 Divisional Committee; CSEU District No 29

Socialist Challenge calls on all its supporters in the trade union movement to rally and demand:

- ★ Abide by conference decisions
- ★ No TUC deal with Healey. No to the 12 month rule
- ★ End unemployment. Reduce the working week without loss of pay
- ★ Wage claims to restore living standards with automatic compensation for inflation
- ★ Full support for picketing and boycott at Grunwick
- ★ TUC must support ALL workers in struggle

SOLIDARITY WITH THE ABC THREE

As we go to press a judicial farce sponsored by the Labour Government is about to commence. Three journalists, Aubrey, Berry and Campbell are being prosecuted for 'contravening the Official Secrets Act'. Serious new charges have been added to the original. If convicted they could face between three and fourteen years in prison. Socialist Challenge is in total solidarity with the ABC Three. In the next issue ABC will write a 'Speakout' on their trial.

OUR POLICIES

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

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

- ★ To build broad-based class struggle tendencies in opposition to class-collaborationism in the labour movement. These should be non-exclusive in character grouping together militants holding a wide range of political views.
- ★ To begin to fight for the creation of a unified and democratic revolutionary socialist organisation which can, through an application of united front tactics, begin to be seen as an alternative by thousands of workers engaged in struggles.

Such an organisation should be based on the understanding that:

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

2 Our socialism will be infinitely more democratic than what exists in Britain today, with full rights for all political parties and currents that do not take up arms against the socialist state. The Stalinist model 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.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

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

I am interested in more information about activities in my area.
I would like additional literature and enclose 50p to cover costs.
(Delete if not applicable)

NAME

ADDRESS

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

'I wish you would win one day just to show them'

by ALISON ROBERTS

SOCIALIST UNITY has definitely got off the ground in Ladywood. The morale of the IMG, Big Flame and other supporters active in the campaign is high.

'If we can reproduce the spirit of Ladywood in the General Elections, we might be able to force unity on those who at present shun it', said a member of the election committee as the fight for a class struggle campaign moved into full swing.

LADYWOOD is one of Labour's rotten boroughs. The total number of voters is 36,000 and about 40 per cent of them are black. A smell of decay pervades the area. There are rows and rows of run-down houses, decaying shop-fronts and derelict buildings.

The constituency boasts two tourist attractions: Winston Green prison and Handsworth police station. It was in the latter that black kids rioted last year. It was in the former that the



Ahsan arguing for a vote for Socialist Unity.

wardens tortured Irish political prisoners.

Ladywood Labour Party is notoriously right wing. Not even a Tribune here. Small wonder then that Peter Marriner became election agent and acting chairperson. Brian Walden was an ideal MP to represent such a

Labour Party. Whether John Sever will build the seat for Labour is a question open to doubt.

There are occasions when it is easy to believe one is in the Deep South. A Socialist Unity canvasser was talking to a white woman, solid working class. She'd voted Labour all her life. The SU campaigner explained our policies. 'Oh, I agree with all those', she said.

The comrade handed her a leaflet showing Raghiv Ahsan, the SU candidate. She took one look: 'That's right love, he should be sent home.' The results of decades of Labourism resound around the constituency.

A 15-year-old school student is more hopeful. 'I hate the racists', he told our canvasser. 'I can't vote yet because they think we're fools, but I'll work for you.'

The response from Asians is tremendous. Many of them say they wouldn't have even bothered to vote, but since Ahsan is standing they might think again. 'We get the worst of both worlds', said an old Sikh worker. 'The Tories hit us and so does the Labour Party.' We try and explain why. 'Yes, yes, you're right', he replies, 'but I wish people like you would win one day just to show them.' We agree.

Morale among our campaigners is high. In a curious way can-

vassing itself is a useful political experience. You're forced to deal with everyday problems. The low level of mass consciousness hits you again and again. What keeps you going is the realisation that the same people in different conditions can stand up and change the world.

Sub Pennington, the IMG's National Organiser, has just returned from addressing a crowd in a Sikh Temple. The experience has done him good: 'Who says we're not for building a broad front against the racists?' he asks.

CINEMAS

There is no reply, for it is a rhetorical question. Ahsan will speak at Asian cinemas this weekend. For us it's back to the hard grind of canvassing, of distributing anti-racist leaflets, arguing. And on top of that there are two left candidates again. If only we had a united candidate how much easier things would be.

* Raghiv Ahsan sent a letter to the Socialist Workers Party last Sunday, appealing to the SWP 'to discuss, even at this late stage, standing a joint candidate'. Ahsan suggested the calling of a meeting of all those who support an independent socialist candidate, which could decide both the programme of the campaign and who the candidates should be.

Socialist Unity fights Ladywood



What made Peter run?

Following last week's revelations by Socialist Challenge and the Socialist Unity campaign in Ladywood, Birmingham, Peter Marriner — Labour's election agent in Ladywood by-election — has now resigned and gone into hiding.

The resignation came after Marriner's links with the fascist British Movement were exposed. We revealed:

* Marriner had appeared on the platform of a British Movement rally in Trafalgar Square in April 1976.

* He had attended and spoken at a meeting of the officers of the British Movement in February 1976 in his position as leader of the youth wing of the British Movement.

* His position in the British Movement had been mentioned in *British Patriot*, the organ of the British Movement.

Marriner resigned as Labour election agent the morning after these revelations were made public by Socialist Unity on 1 August. But he has denied that he has ever been a sympathiser or a member of the British Movement.

He told the *Birmingham Post*: 'As part of my degree in politics at Birmingham Polytechnic I prepared a dissertation on right-wing parties in Britain ... This work meant I attended right-wing rallies.'

There is a problem with this story. Marriner's thesis on fascist movements was restricted to studying those movements in the 1930s. He had thus no 'academic' reason to infiltrate the fascists in the 1970s.

INFILTRATED

His second explanation is that he infiltrated the British Movement in order to supply information to anti-fascists. But Maurice Ludmer, editor of the anti-fascist journal *Searchlight*, says that he has enough evidence to suggest that Marriner is a right-wing infiltrator in the labour movement.

There are other contradictions in Marriner's explanations. He told the *Birmingham Evening Mail* that he went on the platform at the British Movement rally because 'there were outbreaks of violence in the crowd. A lot of people climbed on the platform to avoid flying bottles'. But if it was necessary to



Peter Marriner (centre) on the platform of the rally organised by the British Movement in Trafalgar Square in April 1976.

appear beside the speakers — for this, as our picture shows, is where Marriner stood. Hardly the safest place to avoid bottles.

Similar contradictions appear in Marriner's account of his post as leader of the British Movement's youth organisation. He told the *Birmingham Post* that he invented this title in order to gain admission to a meeting of officers of the British Movement. This seems rather far-fetched.

The idea that he could gain admission to a meeting of the officers of a fascist organisation

by simply turning up and claiming to be the leader of a wing of that movement which the rest of the officers knew didn't exist, defies imagination.

Rather than seeking to cover up this affair with Nixon-style blanket denials, Birmingham Labour Party would be doing a much greater service to the workers' movement if it agreed to the Socialist Unity demand for a labour movement inquiry into Peter Marriner — Labour agent, academic researcher, infiltrator, flying bottle dodger, or... What?



Wards of George

HILLINGDON branch of the National and Local Government Officers Association is to be awarded the George Ward medal for services to industry. Annoyed by the decision of some NALGO militants who had moved a resolution calling for support for the Grunwick strikers, the right wing mobilised for the following branch meeting. 161 members turned up. A record attendance by all accounts. After red-baiting speeches the branch voted by 87 to 74 to make a donation of £50 from branch funds.

Just one small catch: the donation is to be sent to the Police Federation welfare fund in 'recognition of the magnificent performance of the police in upholding law and order' in the face of overwhelming odds.

Don't remember Cable Street

AT A RECENT meeting of ALCARAF — the broad anti-fascist coalition which is calling the counter-demon on 13 August — it was suggested by a committee member that Phil Piratin, an organiser of the Cable Street resistance to fascists in the East End in the Thirties, be invited to speak. Piratin was also one of the two Communist Party Members of Parliament ever to be elected.

It was a good idea to have him speak, one would have thought, to provide a link with the Thirties and the struggle in those days. But the idea was vigorously opposed. Who by? The church? The liberals? The dreaded 'ultra-left'?

No, you're wrong. It was ALCARAF chairperson Doug 'I get outflanked by the clergy' Smith who was extremely hostile.

Doug is a member of the CPGB. But Piratin was as well. Well, yes, but... his daughter Jean Geldhart is a leading supporter of Sid French's Brezhnevite breakaway New Communist Party. So Cable Street is best forgotten as far as ALCARAF is concerned.

The San Marino road to socialism

THERE ARE occasions when in the course of debates with reformists we are guilty of polemical excesses. For instance we always say that there is no peaceful road to socialism. A reader has pointed out that in 1945 a Communist government was elected in the tiny state of San Marino in

Northern Italy (pop. 20,000). That is certainly true. However, 'socialism' was not achieved and the area is now a tourist resort with the 'communists' out of 'power'. Surely a historic compromise would be in order?

Spot the chauvinist

THE JAPANESE Communist Party has been denounced strongly by the Russians for demanding that the Kurile Islands be returned to Japan. Leaving aside the merits or otherwise of the JCP's position, what is horrendous is the implication that it is the Soviet Union which is defending 'internationalism'.

After the Second World War, Stalin spelt out quite clearly the reasons for the occupation of the islands: 'The defeat of Russian troops in 1904 left bitter memories in the mind of the people. It lay like a black spot in our country. Our people believed and hoped that a day would come when Japan would be smashed and that her millions of people would be free. Fifty years have not passed, and the people of the old generation, raised for this day.'

As Lenin described remarked in his letter to the old generation — including Bukharin, Mandelstam and others — had witnessed the Russian defeat in 1904-1905. Another spokesman of the old generation had put the matter rather succinctly: 'The European bourgeoisie has its reason to be frightened. The proletarian has its reason to rejoice. The disaster that befell our worst enemy means not only that Russian freedom has come nearer, it foreshadows a new revolutionary upsurge of the European proletariat.'

His name was Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. The gulf between the two quotations cannot even be measured.

Martial hooligans

BRITISH SOLDIERS experienced in the martial arts have discovered a new weapon — billiard cues. During a match between Manchester United and Werder Bremen in Germany a group of 250 British soldiers threw bottles at the Bremen players and lashed out with billiard cues.

The British Army PR department said no action was being contemplated 'because German police were not prosecuting the German supporters they detained. Follow that logic through to Ireland and the Provos would have the right to use CS gas, rubber bullets, torture, etc, without being charged at all.

Attention: New vermin sighted

THE NATIONAL Party has suffered a split. Its result is the Britannia Party, whose central leader is appropriately named

Marion Powell. Recently observers in North London have reported seeing this new species of vermin emerging from the sewers at night and doing their dirty work on the walls. Samples are appended.

Scrap the Race Relations Board

WITH THE **Britannia Party**

Head Office—385a LORDSHIP LANE, LONDON, N.17. 6AE
All Enquiries to the Secretary—10 GREENWAYS, STEVENAGE, Herts.

Great Britain NOT State Britain

WITH THE **Britannia Party**

Head Office—385a LORDSHIP LANE, LONDON, N.17. 6AE
All Enquiries to the Secretary—10 GREENWAYS, STEVENAGE, Herts.

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (left part)

Solidarity with the Lewisham Blacks Defeat the National Front

'Blood could flow through the streets of Lewisham in an afternoon of violence', the *South East London Mercury* has predicted. 'Blood will flow' on 13 August, promises the National Front's Führer, Martin Webster. Speaking from the safety of a Catford pub, the NF's 'activities organiser' said: 'We will fight for the possession of the streets.' MICK GOSLING reports.

Also fighting for the streets will be Granwick scab police commissioner David McKnee's in the groin. The new Scotland Yard chief has stepped in to overrule the Lewisham police and place a virtual ban on the march organised by the local anti-racist campaign.

McKnee wants the All Lewisham Campaign Against Racism and Fascism to march in a circular route from Ladywell Fields, instead of going to its

original destination point at Railway Grove — just a few yards from the NF's assembly point in Clifton Rise.

ALCARAF has so far refused to bow to this intimidation — despite the efforts of some Communist Party members — and has now been joined by Lewisham Trades Council and Deptford Labour Party in insisting that the destination point remains Railway Grove.

The executive committee of the

trades council was unanimous in its condemnation of the restriction of the democratic rights of anti-fascists; while Deptford Labour Party is calling for the 1pm rally to show the fascists 'the strength and power of the labour movement'.

The Labour group on Lewisham council is in emergency session as we go to press. Anti-fascists will be insisting that they use their control over Railway Grove, which is part council property, to sanction the rally.

Meanwhile the 13 August Organising Committee — which includes the Socialist Workers Party and International Marxist Group as well as London anti-fascist groups — is working flat out to ensure the anti-fascist march reaches the Railway Grove and Clifton Rise area and blocks the path of the fascists. It is also organising strict stewarding and will have medical and legal standby teams, together with a creche.

The over-riding task on 13 August remains demonstrating our solidarity with the black community of the area, against both fascist and police attacks, and calling for the organisation of self-defence against the fascists. It now looks increasingly possible that not only will this be done, but that the NF's 'turn' from electoral 'responsibility' to physical violence will itself be transformed into another humiliating defeat, as in North London on 23 April.

Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)



MARCH AGAINST THE NAZIS Saturday 13 August

Assemble 11am — Ladywell playing fields (behind Lewisham Hospital, off Ladywell Rd, 100 yds from Ladywell BR Station)

Rally 1pm — Clifton Rise (nr New Cross Station)

★ Socialist Challenge will be organising a contingent of readers and supporters on the march — join us.

★ Coaches for the demo from:

Hackney — leaves Town Hall, Mare St, 10am.

Lambeth — leaves Town Hall, Brixton Rd. Tel. 674-8825 for time and details.

State racism suffers setback in Islington 18 debacle

In beginning the trial of the 15 out of 18 black youths arrested in Islington after the police riots at the Notting Hill Carnival, Judge Campbell said that, as far as he was concerned, there would be no 'racial undertones' in the case. OLIVER NEW and ANN BOND explain how the trial fits into the rise of police racism.

As the Islington 18 trial came to an end this week after a marathon jury sitting of more than 170 hours, denials that the charges were a direct racist attack were still coming thick and fast.

The youths arrested were charged under the conspiracy laws — a new police method in prosecuting blacks — and were consistently refused legal aid and bail.

However, the defendants and their lawyers mounted a fight for their minimum right to be 'judged by their peers': 103 jurors were challenged in an attempt to get six black members on the jury. Eventually they managed to get five, after the judge had taken exception to one young black and replaced him.

FARCE

The prosecution case was a farce. None of the youths had been picked up at the Notting Hill Carnival. No one except the police was able to identify the supposed 'attackers'. The only positive evidence supplied by the police were 'confessions' which, as the defendants clearly explained in court, were wrung out of them under duress. Desmond Riley was kept in isolation for three days; others were beaten. The police wrote or dictated statements after statement, using their bully-boy tactics until they were signed.

The police and prosecution kept up a constant barrage of

pressure on the jury to return verdicts in the state's favour, and Judge Campbell's emotive summing up, in which he talked of 'gangs of thieves and robbers' was an overt suggestion of guilt: 'These defendants if they are guilty have committed far more crimes than those with which they are specifically charged'.

But the jury refused to be bullied. They returned 51 verdicts, of which 43 were acquittals, and failed to agree on 29 charges including most of the conspiracy charges. They confessed that they were worried about the allegations of police violence in obtaining the 'confessions'.

The jury was dismissed with the court wondering what to do about the undecided charges. Then came a sensational 'last minute interruption', with allegations that one of the defendants had approached a member of the jury. Defending counsel accused the Crown lawyers of concealing this fact — which they had known for some time — until it became absolutely clear that the trial had failed to achieve their objectives. The deliberations about a retrial continue.

Altogether several youths were convicted of offences, and three more had entered guilty pleas. Five were sentenced for conspiracy to steal or theft and sent to borstal. Dennis Binns and Hiram Braithwaite were convicted of robbery and theft — and each will be in prison for the next

three years. Another two were fined. One sentence was postponed.

It is not only a few weeks until this year's Notting Hill Carnival. That Carnival was staged on the streets of Notting Hill last year represented a political victory for the black community over local racists, including councillors and police, who mounted a campaign to force it into the confines of White City Stadium.

Carnival is one of the biggest expressions of the identity, strength and unity of the West Indian Community. Last summer, as *Race Today* points out, it was the youth of the black community who saved Carnival from humiliation at the hands of police thugs. So it is not surprising that the police and the state have tried to regain face by continuing harassment of black youth.

VIOLENCE

The focus of this campaign is turning once again to Notting Hill. The police have said that if Carnival goes ahead this year it will be 'an occasion of hate and violence'. They are planning to turn out in force equipped with riot shields for use 'if necessary'.

As socialists we must support the democratic right of the West Indian and other black communities to organise events such as Carnival. We must demand that these events are free from the outrageous police provocation which we saw last year, and which is due to be increased this year. And we must continue the fight against racism in all its forms — be it police harassment of black youth, judges in courts, or the National Front.

Socialist Woman

The summer issue of *Socialist Woman*, just out, takes up some of the key debates of the women's movement. It includes an extensive critical review of Eli Zaretsky's influential book *Capitalism, the Family and Personal Life*, two contributions on the 'matriarchy discussion' and an historical survey of the positions and activities of the Second International on women. Plus reviews and letters etc.

Available from Relgocrest, 328 Upper St, N1 [30p plus 15p p&p]. Special rates for bulk orders.

Rape vigil

by LAURA MITCHELL

FOR 46 HOURS women in Brighton held a vigil in the centre of the town. Every hour was in solidarity with the handful of courageous women in Sussex who reported their rapes to the police.

The jeers and filth flung at the vigil by men leaving the pubs late at night made the point that the forty women who participated were challenging 'the unspoken curfew of fear which discourages women from walking the streets after dark without male protectors'.

The vigil, and the hundred-strong demonstrations which followed it were organised by the local Women Fight Rape. The group was set up after a workshop on rape organised by the Women's Liberation Movement.

The demands of Women Fight Rape are: more sympathetic treatment of victims, recognition of rape in marriage, that the definition of rape should include all sexual coercion and physical assault, including instruments inserted into the vagina.

Racist of the week

TOM DUNCAN is a racist. He is also editor of the *Newham Recorder*, which means that he is in a position to inflict his vile views on some 50,000 readers in this racially volatile area of East London.

Duncan has just been expelled from the National Union of Journalists. He had been fined £30 under the union's code of conduct for using the front page of the *Recorder* to promote and build a National Party demonstration in Newham, and was automatically expelled after failing to pay the fine.

The press freedom 'safeguards'

drawn up by the Royal Commission and now endorsed by the NUJ leadership would put a stop to any such action against racist journalists. The press, hounds and the union bureaucrats are anxious to stifle any disciplining of journalists for racist reporting. The Commission has also said that journalists must be free from discipline by the employers for anything they write.

This is laughable, as the barons know full well. Duncan, for example, is an editor who handles his staff like a tyrant. One journalist, by-lined for a viciously racist report of 'muggings' in a Newham park, told a meeting of the Campaign Against Racism in the Media last September that this front-page header had been cobbled together by spurious editorial staff from two short inconsequential items he had written.

The outcome was local and brutal fabrication. That is a story which is repeated daily throughout our 'free' press, and journalists are left in no doubt as to what would happen if they query news censorship and distortion.



ANOTHER court case went on last week — but this time it didn't need a marathon jury sitting to decide the verdicts.

Three fascists — all of whom were candidates in the May elections — appeared in court after attacking anti-fascist leafletters in Stoke-on-Trent. None of the anti-fascists was informed that the case was not proceeding, and thus were not in court when the assault charges were dropped.

The Front's defence solicitor, who normally handles police prosecutions, told magistrates that the leaflet produced by the Jewish Board of Deputies was 'libellous filth' and that the NF had 'sincere political views', and thought they were entitled to make citizens' arrests of the anti-fascists.

The bench fined the fascists £10 after they had admitted threatening behaviour, and commented that this derisory sum reflected the 'seriousness' with which they viewed the case.

* Magistrates took a slightly less kindly view of Gerry Hedley, an International Marxist Group candidate in the London local elections last spring. He has just been fined £80 for using 'insulting words' on the 23 April anti-fascist demo in Wood Green — allegedly calling a cop a fascist pig.



An extremely well produced 12-page paper — CARF — has just been launched by London's Anti-Racist, Anti-Fascist Co-ordinating Committee. It aims to co-ordinate the struggle on these issues in London, and to expose the workings of Britain's neo-Nazis.

It is obtainable from progressive bookshops in London or from: ARAFCC, Flat 3, 5 Huntley Street, London WC1. Price 10p plus postage.



TAMESIDE'S Tory council, fresh from its attempts to stamp out comprehensive education, is now trying to protect its friends even further to the right.

The National Front is planning to hold a demonstration and rally next month in this area, which has a large Asian community. The council has instructed its officers not to reveal the place or date of the rally, to be held on its property.

Tameside anti-fascists meet to discuss their counter-offensive on 14 August, 2.30pm at AUEW House, Margaret Street, Ashton.



The anti-fascist poster on last week's back page around a dustbin with the slogan 'Don't vote Fascist' are produced by the Hackney Committee Against Racism. They are available at the following prices (p&p inclusive): £1.75 for 20 copies; £2.75 for 50; £4.50 for 100; £9 for 200.

Single copies are 25p plus 20p p&p. From: HCAR, c/o HCRC, 245 Mare Street, London E8.

SUPPORT ARTHUR!

ARTHUR GRANT, a campaigner in defence of Gay News comes up on a theft charge on Thursday 15 August. His case at 10.30 in London's Horseferry Road magistrates court will involve allegations about police brutality on his arrest in July. Supporters would be welcomed in court. By Arthur at least.

Where do the Grunwick strikers go from here?

That 4,000 trade union militants turned up on the Grunwick picket line on Monday is evidence enough that this dispute remains the most important single struggle within the trade union movement.

Those militants came despite the Strike Committee being forced to call off the 8 August day of action following the tremendous pressure from the bureaucracy of APEX. Those who came also had to contend with another official circular from the TUC not to mass picket.

Given the odds the mass picket of 8 August was a success. It was the second largest turn-out for Grunwick, and this after seven successive weeks of mass picketing.

The picket did not attempt to stop the hated scab bus. In so far as that was the wish of the Strike Committee that was correct. It was a correct response also to the deliberate series of provocations adopted by the police. They banned a loudspeaker van with which the Strike Committee hoped to control the crowd, they only permitted 250 pickets on the Cooper Road factory entrance, and they blocked off Dollis Hill tube station letting people neither in or out.

ITCHING

The police were itching for a bust up, under conditions when they could attack the pickets whom they knew were totally unprotected by the official trade union movement. That they didn't get that opportunity is a tribute to the discipline of the pickets.

There was undoubtedly a good deal of frustration on the picket line. But this was the result of failing to see how the situation at Grunwick had changed. The failure of some pickets to understand this was evident in the sickening heckling of strike leader Mahmood Ahmed — who, after all, with Jayaben Desai and a substantial minority of the Strike Committee, was against calling off the picket.

The Strike Committee is capable of taking the year-long dispute to victory. Fighting for their authority over all matters relating to the strike is the best way of fighting the sabotage of the trade union leaders. But the necessity of discussion and criticism within the movement backing them has been reaffirmed in the events of the last three weeks.

PHILOSOPHY

Whatever Scarman says, George Ward is free to ignore it, and has said he will if the inquiry goes against him. This is what Roy Grantham and others in the APEX leadership ignore.

They do not wish to see the strike get out of their control. Their whole philosophy of industrial disputes is to rely on the good sense of the employers, to

avoid friction, to avoid class struggle.

BLACKMAILERS

At Grunwick even more is at stake — the attitude of the Labour Government. As *Socialist Challenge* revealed last week it was Denis Howell, Labour Minister and President of APEX, who was one of the most vicious blackmailers when it came to getting the Strike Committee to call off 8 August. Howell was not speaking for himself. He was speaking for the Labour Cabinet.

The Government could have rushed the Appeal Court decision through the House of Lords in a couple of days had they wished. They could have exerted the sort of pressure they exerted on the Strike Committee on their friends in the CBI, and the Tories to denounce George Ward. They could have given the green light to the entire labour movement to cut off Ward's services, by promising immunity from any legal prosecution. They could have declared an amnesty for all those arrested on the Grunwick picket line. They have done none of these things.

They will never back the Grunwick strikers because they know that a success for mass action would threaten their own policies of wage control, cuts and the rest. If workers throughout the country saw mass picketing and solidarity action win, then the Labour Government's ability to control rank and file trade unionists would be up for grabs.

How is victory at Grunwick to be achieved? The mass picketing must continue. Especially in these next couple of weeks, when we are 'waiting for Scarman'. But one of the aims of mass picketing is to give encouragement to those who wish to take other forms of solidarity action.

BOYCOTT

There is every possibility that after Scarman the boycott of Grunwick mail by the Cricklewood sorters will be re-instated. Already the sorters are doing a lot to hold up Grunwick mail — banning overtime, refusing to allow Grunwick personnel on the premises, refusing to take the mail from the factory. These workers have not been demoralised.

Other forms of solidarity action must be directed to the union members who have the power to cut off the electricity and water of Grunwick — principally the electricians and GMWU. Resolutions, lobbies must pile in to these union leaderships demand-



Contingents came from Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham, Nottingham and towns and cities nationwide.

Photo: DERECK SPIERS (IFL)

ing they take a stand on the trade union principles the Grunwick fighters have been struggling for.

Pressure must also be exerted at the very top. Preston dockers have called for a lobby at the TUC conference in Blackpool. This has been endorsed by the Strike Committee. If the Grunwick strike is not won by the TUC conference that lobby has to be massive. The gentlemen

who claim to lead the trade union movement tend to get nervous when they see thousands of people knocking at their door.

These and other forms of solidarity action will be discussed at an emergency conference on Grunwick on 23 August — called by the South East Region of the TUC. That conference could outline the many steps which are needed, and has to be supported.

Coventry's George Ward resigns from CP

by BRIAN BEVON

SURINDER SINGH resigned his membership of the Communist Party last Friday. It wasn't a minute too soon for striking women workers at the Forward Trading Company in Coventry. For the owner of this sweatshop is Surinder Singh.

Most of Singh's 27 employees are Asian women. This is how their working conditions are described by a leading striker, Marbhajan Dhani:

'We got 15 minutes break in the morning, a lunch break for half an hour and no break in the afternoon. There is no rest room or canteen, we eat our lunch sitting at our machines. There is no hot water to wash with and rarely even a toilet roll.

'Wages are low — 42 hours of piecework can yield as little as £8. Most of the workers earn £15-£18 weekly, at the rate of 45p an hour. We get one week's holiday in the summer and two days at Christmas.'

These conditions explain why 18 of the women joined the

Transport and General Workers' Union last November. Surinder Singh — at the time one of the CP's prominent members in Coventry — was offended by this, and on 15 July six workers, including the shop steward, were sacked.

The pretext was 'shortage of work'. Immediately 12 of the workers went on strike and on 1 August, the first day of picketing, only four workers went in. Since then this small sweatshop has been temporarily closed down. It is not clear whether Singh has found new premises, or simply expects the pickets to disappear.

They have no intention of disappearing and are determined to win their strike for recognition and re-instatement. But Surinder Singh doesn't like to see it like that, for him 'these women are not able to work in English factories because they are not trained. They should be really grateful to those who create jobs for them.'

Surinder Singh made this statement while still a member of the CP. His resignation came at the end of the week the strike began.

Victory in sight for Darlington journalists

by DAVE CARTER

THE DARLINGTON journalists' strike bulletin proudly claims it now has South West Durham's biggest readership. Since support action by printers closed down the presses of North of England newspapers last week, there's not much local competition.

Their attitude is summed up by Dave Lodge, a member of

NATSOPA in the despatch department: 'We are prepared to stay out until the strike is won, no matter how long it takes.'

It is now up to management to solve this dispute since it is they who have caused it. There can be no excuse for them employing non-union labour when every other department in the building has a closed shop.

As the strike for a journalists' closed shop goes into its tenth week, this support has come not a moment too soon. The resulting failure of the *Northern Echo* to appear for the first time in 107 years not forced the Westminster Press management to suggest bringing in AGAS to resolve the dispute.

Last weekend the National Union of Journalists executive agreed to this. However if an-

thing substantial emerges from these conciliation talks, the NUJ leadership is empowered to call out other selected Westminster Press chapels in support.

FREEDOM

The *Darlington Evening Despatch*, one of the papers shot down, is under threat of total closure by management. But as Northern region secretary of SLADE, Laurie Pye, points out: 'Westminster Press has been threatening to close this paper for almost 20 years now. The membership will not be intimidated.'

With this strength of support, it is now likely that a closed shop will be wrong from Westminster Press, one of the biggest provin-

cial newspaper groups. But NUJ General Secretary Ken Morgan has already bonoded that such agreements can include the so-called safeguards on press freedom put forward by the Royal Commission on the Press — effectively ditching the NUJ's own code of conduct and any ability to discipline its own members. If this is accepted, it will mean a serious setback in the fight for real press freedom.

DARLINGTON DRINK UP

NUJ Darlington cause for celebration. Open party to mark the anniversary of Darlington closed shop declaration and impending strike victory. Friday 19 August, 8pm-1am. Live music, disco, cabaret, tea bar. Beetham Ballroom, McMullan Road, Darlington. Tickets 50p from NUJ Strike HQ, 9 Victoria Rd, Darlington — or at the door.

Strike power on the oil rigs

'They even threatened to bring in the Royal Navy!'

by 'BLOW OUT'

In the last two months there has been a wave of industrial action on the largest oil-rig in the North Sea — the 'Thistle A' — owned by Burmah Oil. You didn't hear about it? Not surprising. Because the management have the exclusive right of communication from the rig. That's why a group of oil rig workers are setting up Blow Out, a rank and file newsletter, and are writing this article for Socialist Challenge.

THE WORKFORCE in the North Sea has changed over the last four years. It has consolidated. Transient workers have become a small minority as people look to it as their permanent work. The anti-union policy of the oil companies is a direct response to the tremendous power of the strike weapon on the oil rigs.

It was the catering and accommodation workers on the Thistle A rig who were the first to try out that power. Mick Mullins, a member of the strike committee, tells of their grievances: inadequate staffing and supplies of materials, very long hours and low pay — 82.5p per hour. For many earnings were so low that they were entitled to family income supplement.

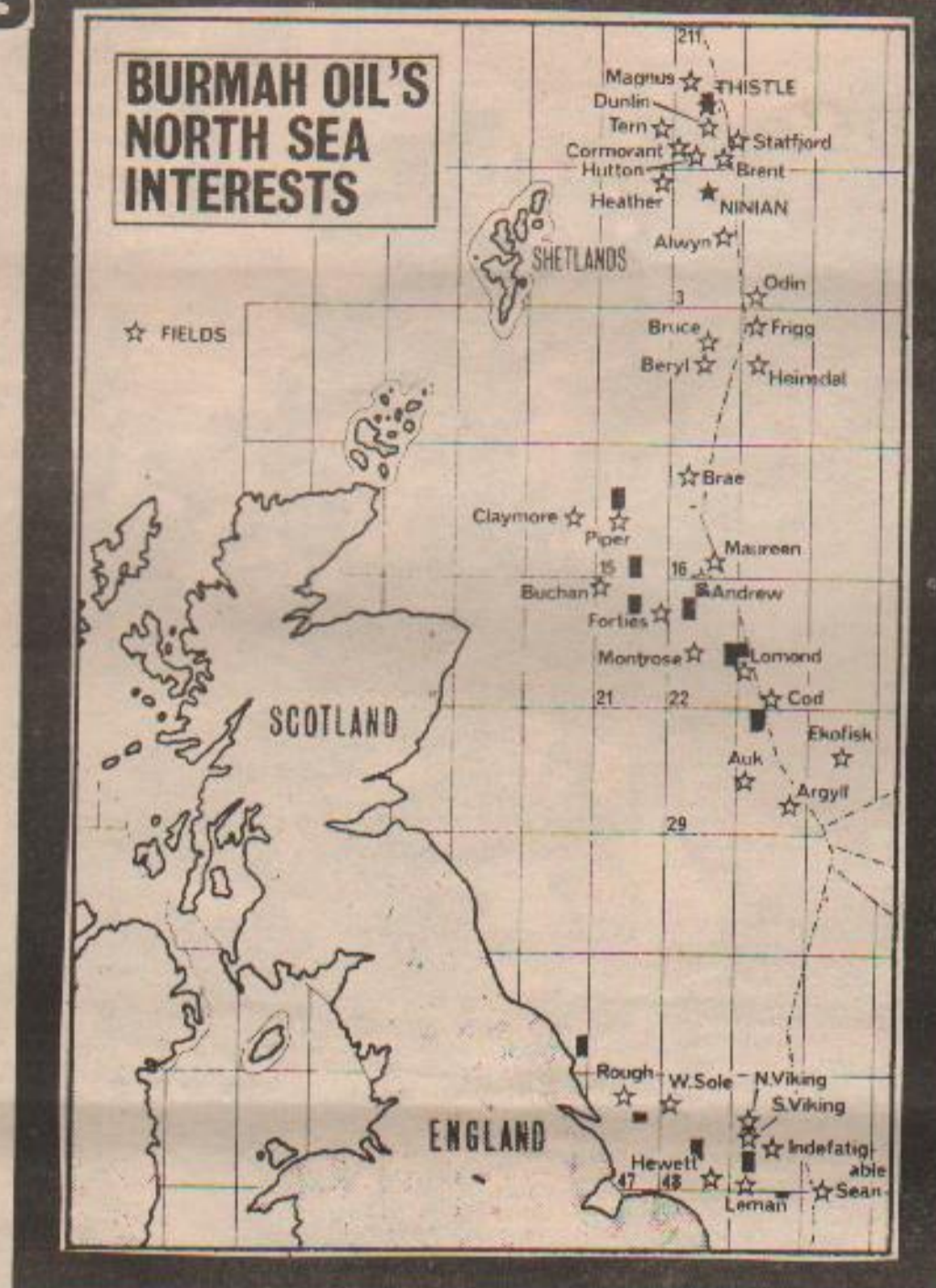
Their employer, Offshore Catering Services, is one of the hotch-potch of sub-contractors who make up the Joint Venture Management. The management refused to negotiate and tried to intimidate. They even threatened to bring in the Royal Navy. But the elected strike committee responsible to the two daily mass meetings countered their threats by attempting to shut everything on the platform complex.

SUBSTANTIAL

It remains to be seen whether the substantial gains won by the strike will be honoured by management. Despite the workers joining the National Union of Seamen on their return, management has gone back on the agreement which included no victimisation and trade union recognition by sacking the strike leadership on the most trivial of grounds.

The second blow was struck by the main workforce of 500 scaffolders, welders, electricians and pipefitters. The longest period of strike action was between 22-27 July. The stakes were high. The loss of money to the company is enormous. At one point the management moved to cut off food, hot water and the sole source of entertainment — movies.

Once again they were forced to retreat when the joint shop stewards committee formed at the first strike meeting threaten-



ed to black all essential work. The formation of the committee marked a break-through. Although every trade had the right to their own stewards, by themselves they had little weight. Recognition for the joint shop stewards committee was at the top of the list of demands.

Management feared that news of this exemplary strike would get out to the press and thus to other oil workers. Workers were told they would no longer be allowed to call home if they mentioned the strike; the telephone operator was told to secretly intercept such calls.

For the bosses the world probably does feel like a 'Global Village of instant communication'. The management Telex turned our reams of (internal) news on the two strikes. But to

During the strike a 30-year-old worker suffered a 'heart-attack'. He died during the 45 minutes it took for a doctor to get on the rig. On the rig itself there are only two 'medics'. These are people with a basic knowledge of drugs and first aid. It is almost certain the man's life would have been saved if oxygen equipment had been at hand. So one of the main demands of the strike was for a doctor to be aboard at all time.

oil-rig workers it is more like Gulag Archipelago. No word got out about the disputes until 26 July. Since then the coverage had been minimal for such an important strike. The right of strikers

to communicate has been, and will continue to be fought for.

Meantime in an attempt to break this blockade of information and to further rank and file coordination a few oil workers from various rigs, aided by militants with shore jobs in Aberdeen are setting up *Blow Out* and producing articles like this one. We rely on ourselves and on other rig workers who are willing to help for information, distribution and finances. We have already produced an introductory leaflet for using to unionise workers.

Organising against the oil companies makes us aware of the need for security, so until we establish a safe contact address, letters can be sent to: Blow Out, c/o Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.

Union flashpoints

Victory for NUPE left

THE REACTIONARY leadership of the Southampton branch of the public employees' union has suffered a major defeat. Five branch militants who are helping to organise the fightback against the cuts through a rank and file bulletin, *Challenge*, had been threatened with expulsion from NUPE.

But last week the union's district branch committee expressed full confidence in the five, and demanded the right of minorities to organise and express their opinions.

This was followed by a meeting of the branch, which instructed the union executive to take no further action. It went on to call for a democratically organised

bulletin to be produced by the branch as a whole.

Branch secretary Joe Hill is not alone in feeling dismayed at the outcome of this battle. Hill had sent a copy of *Challenge* to 'left' NUPE leader Alan Fisher, and received the following reply:

'Its contents are typical of the sort of stuff being turned out at the moment by people whose interests in the trade union movement is a political one and nothing more.'

'It is always very easy to stand on the sidelines and shout seemingly courageous slogans to those who have the task of carrying responsibility and my one comfort is that the sentiments expressed in the newsletter are those of a tiny, if vociferous, percentage of our membership.'

On 3 September, NUPE militants aiming to terminate Fisher's 'one comfort' are holding a meeting to begin to organise the left in the union. The South-

ampton victory, which strengthens the fight against the cuts, has set an excellent precedent.

Full details of the meeting from: Ron Pearson, 98 Stride Road, Portsmouth, Hants.

GOING FOR GRABS

JOURNALISTS: After a very brief discussion, the NUJ executive voted last weekend for an immediate policy of free collective bargaining with no 12-month rule.

PLAYWORKERS WIN

HAMMERSMITH: After being out for four days last week, Hammersmith playworkers in NALGO won their strike against the local council. As well as being put on an established grade for the first time, the assistant play-leaders won a London weighting payment backdated to 1 January.

Other gains were backdated. Phase One and Two Settlements, service recognition back-dated 2½ years, and a straight cash settlement ranging from £100-£300. Their weekly pay has increased by £18, to £56.

PAY RULE BROKEN

SHEFFIELD: Engineering workers have defeated the 12-month rule and secured a substantial pay rise. The Davy Lowry joint Stop Stewards' committee has succeeded in winning a new ten per cent rise, only ten weeks after their Stage Two settlement.

COACH & HORSES

LOCO-DRIVERS: The train drivers' union ASLEF has submitted a claim for immediate increases estimated at between £25 and £30 a week. The drivers received their last rise in April, so the claim is in direct breach of the 12-month rule.

The workers' way to save jobs and homes

More than a thousand Yorkshire building workers marched through Sheffield last week to protest against the attacks on direct labour and local government spending. The one-day strike which accompanied the march on 2 August was the last in a series of regional actions organised by the building workers' union UCATT.

But the only response by the Labour Government is to withdraw the Direct Labour Organisation Bill as part of the Lib-Lab deal. Socialist Challenge talked to John Brown, a UCATT shop steward in Birmingham Direct Works, about what he sees as the next stage in the campaign to save jobs and houses.

John Brown points to the national delegate conference of local authority workers to be held in Manchester on 20 August: 'At the last delegate conference of direct works representatives, a resolution was unanimously passed calling for a national delegate conference of local authority shop stewards in UCATT.'

'It was never implemented. We in Birmingham knew only too well the importance of such a conference. The Tory council is hiding behind the Labour Government's cuts policy in attacking direct works.'

CLOSURE

The official policy of the Midlands region of UCATT is total opposition to the run down or closure of direct works, Brown explains, but so far this commitment remains on paper only.

'The union has threatened to call out the members at the National Exhibition Centre if the local Tories continue their policy of closure. So far this threat has not been carried out. Our action committee has for months been asking for a decision on a date,

but no answer has been given.

'We are told this is our trump card. But if you don't play your trump card before the game's over it's no use to you'.

The Birmingham action committee, set up by council building workers, has received strong support from other union militants, and it played a major role in the strike in Birmingham on 5 July.

CONFERENCE

It was at a meeting called by the action committee that the idea of the Manchester conference was promoted. 'The inactivity of our executive means that, for a start we have to set up a national co-ordinating committee', says John Brown, giving his views on the conference's tasks.

'We need to discuss a national campaign of solidarity action should any one department be closed that means national strike action'.

On the policies of the conference, Brown advocates: 'An end to cash limits on direct works and automatic rises in social spending to compensate for rising costs.' He points out that 'there are no cash limits when it comes to private contractors doing the work we should be doing.'

'We cannot have the facilities or materials we need, and then the contractors are called in because of understaffing. That is what cuts are all about — increasing the profits of private enterprise.'

He argues that the same militant approach is needed on the wages front: 'There is no doubt that management will argue that a rise can only be made through productivity deals. They will try and get us to accept redundancies for more money. We must tell our executive that none of our jobs is for sale.'

Credentials for the 20 August Manchester delegate conference can be obtained from: J. Kelly, 17 Findon Road, Manchester 23. There is a fee of 25p per delegate.

Hospital working Marching against death

IN HOUNSLOW, West London, on 31 August a demonstration will take place the main purpose of which is to save lives. The demo and rally are in defence of Hounslow Hospital, which the area health authority — implementing the cuts policy of the Labour Government — has said must close by the end of this month.

The Hounslow Hospital Defence Committee realises the importance of this support. It comments: 'Our work-in has won wide support because staff made it clear they are defending the National Health Service, defending a vital public service, defending the social wage of every person.'

The defence committee also make the point: 'The closure of

Management plans to close 66 beds at Hounslow and use the space for storage. It plans to close and sell a nearby chest clinic and transfer it to what remains of Hounslow. 'One day, when the cash comes in', says the authority, it will re-open Hounslow Hospital as a community hospital.

But the staff at Hounslow and the local labour movement are not prepared to accept these pie in the sky promises. The staff have said the hospital must stay open and since 28 March have been staging a work-in. This action was made official in May by the unions concerned — NALGO and NUPE.

The local labour movement has responded to the hospital workers' pleas for solidarity. Hounslow Trades Council is backing the demo on 31 August; many local trade union branches have helped on the picket line, and local Labour MP Russell Kerr has given his backing to the campaign to keep the hospital open.



the hospital will open the door to private medicine. We believe the concept of the NHS is to have the best treatment free at the time of need, and not what you will have soon — an emergency-only service. Health cuts kill.'

It is not often that a demonstration occurs which at the same time aims to save lives and jobs, and fights for such a socialist principle as a free health service. But that is what is happening on 31 August in Hounslow. The march leaves from outside the hospital, Staines Road, Hounslow, Middlesex at 2pm.

The fight to lead the engineers

SEPTEMBER sees the ballot amongst the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers engineering section to decide a successor to Hugh Scanlon, President of the union. The engineering section of the AUEW has over 1,150,000 members, including those recently at the forefront of the fight against Phase 2 — the Leyland toolroom workers and the Heathrow maintenance engineers.

In May of this year the National Committee of the AUEW voted for an immediate return to free collective bargaining after having supported the Social Contract for two years running. But the vote also concealed the concern of the AUEW leadership, especially the right wing, to avoid any confrontation with the Labour Government. This was demonstrated in a vote to respect pay settlements under Phase 2.

A fortnight ago an attempt was made to recall the National Committee to bring the union's position on the 12 month rule into line with the rejection of incomes policy. This move to democratically decide on the engineers' vote at the TUC was blocked by a 5-2 vote on the executive.

In addition the executive, not noted for their quick thinking when it comes to making strikes official, have rushed round a circular to all District Committees instructing them to observe the 12 month rule in all negotiations, with the sole exception of 'self-financing' productivity deals. Another 'exception' would be the Leyland offer — an attempt to secure a bureaucratised method of wage bargaining and to isolate Jaguar and Triumph workers.

It will be this central issue — whether to fight now for the defence of living standards and jobs or to opt for one variety or another of collaboration with Messrs Healey and Callaghan — that will lie behind the campaigns of all the candidates in the elections.

Below, JOHN GRAHAM, a Birmingham shop steward and delegate to the AUEW youth conference, argues for a vote for Ian Morris in the first ballot in September. In a following issue of Socialist Challenge, the case will be made for a vote for Bob Wright. We agree with Graham's case. But we think that the issues should be debated out as thoroughly as possible. Correspondence is invited.

Vote for Ian Morris!

TWO YEARS of wage cuts under the Social Contract have passed. None of the promised advantages of the Social Contract having appeared, there is now a massive opposition to the Government's policies amongst engineering workers.

There is a real opportunity to reverse the advances made by the right wing in their attempt to capture the union leadership. Certainly the campaign of Duffy supporting the continuation of wage restraint, and openly backed by the employers' organisations and right-wing fronts like Truamid, Datum Line and Midland Worker, will repel many in the union.

Unfortunately however, the campaign of the Broad Left and Bob Wright is not likely to enthuse militants in the same way as the Scanlon election campaign did in the sixties. Then the Broad Left was able to organise broad layers of activists because that campaign, in the eyes of thousands of AUEW members, was about real and important issues — and out of which these same members expected many real changes. In particular they expected a growth in democracy, an end to the Carrone witch-hunts, a militant attitude on the wage front, and a growth of the AUEW to achieve the long established goal of one union for engineering workers.

SHATTERED

But these expectations have been shattered over the years — especially since the 1974 election of a Labour Government. After what could have been seen as equivocation on Scanlon's part in the fight against the Tory Government, open collaboration with Wilson and then Callaghan living standards became the order of the day. Hugh Scanlon, the 'darling of the left' as the press liked to describe him, openly deserted to the camp of the Social Contract.

While the Broad Left continued to be opposed to an incomes policy (and therefore the Social Contract) Scanlon was never openly criticised by the Broad Left — any criticism being kept to closed meetings of supporters amongst the full-time officers. Opposed to Scanlon's support for wage restraint, but unwilling to make a clear break with him and mount an all-out campaign against the Social Contract, the Broad Left leadership allowed their supporters to fall into inactivity.

This refusal to give a clear lead in opposition to the Social Contract not only resulted in gains for the right wing in many District Division and Executive Committee elections, but also in the unanimous vote by the Executive Committee to support British Leyland's threat to sack the toolmakers whose strike in practice challenged Phase 2.

Not only Bob Wright and the Broad Left but also the only representatives left of the Executive Committee who could be called 'left' — Les Dixon and Reg Birch — voted with the right wing to support the Leyland sacking of the toolmakers. During

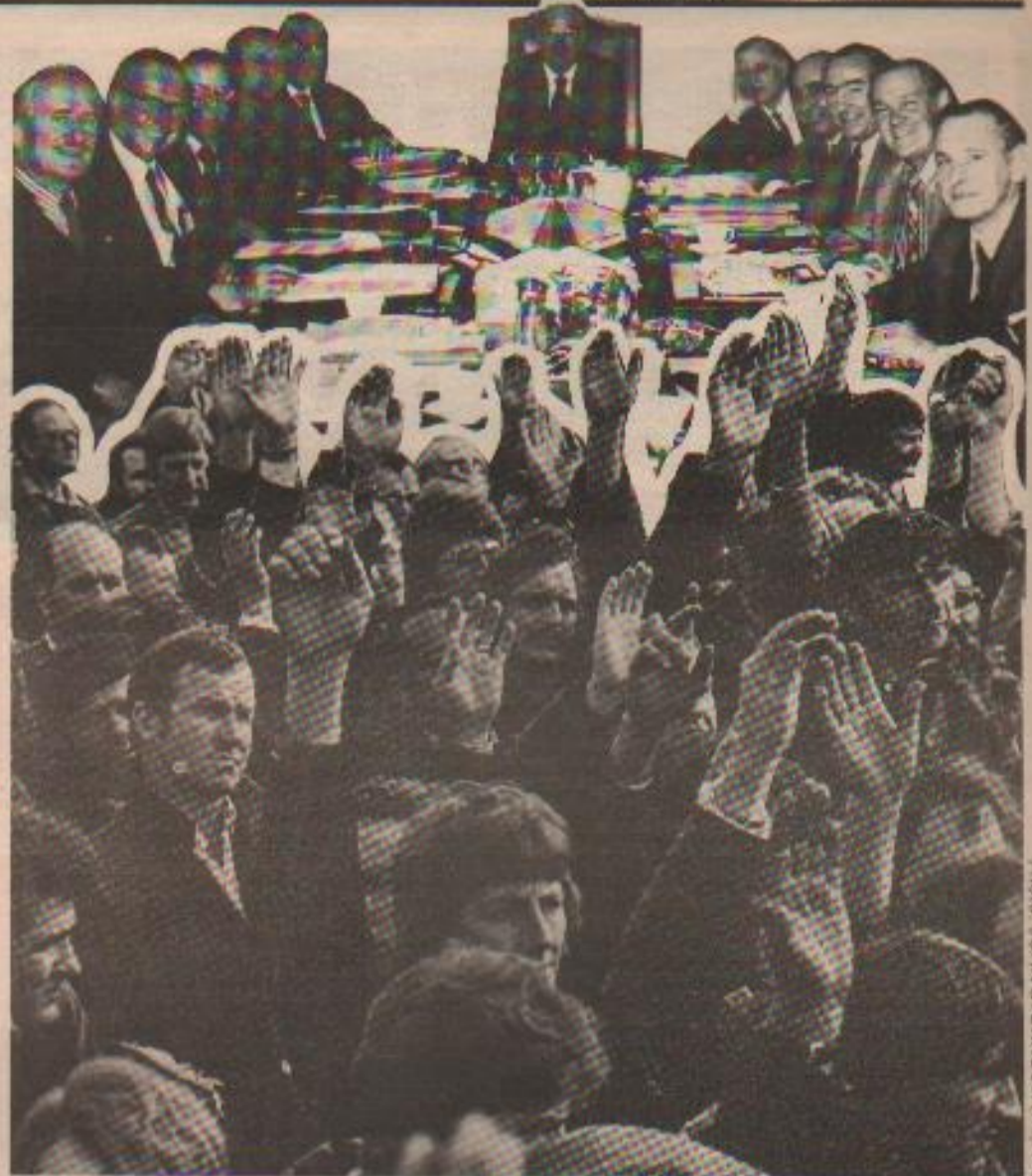


Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

the Heathrow dispute Bob Wright endorsed, through his silence, the Executive's scabbing on the maintenance workers' strike.

DEAFENING

That silence is just as deafening now, when the Executive Council is busily implementing the 12 month rule. There is no call from Bob Wright and the Broad Left leadership for a national conference of the left in the union. Such a conference, which could organise the massive opposition to the Executive's continued collaboration in pay restraint, could prepare for a national fight around the engineers' pay claim, and build campaigns of support for the Lucas toolmakers and Leyland toolmakers forced to confront Phase 2 now to defend their living standards.

The Broad Left leadership will argue that we must have unity of the left in these elections, and that those who do not support Wright are splitting the left. But this sort of 'unity' must be rejected. Unity can only be built by developing united action around the existing struggles of engineering workers. Those same people in the Broad Left, the Communist Party in particular, who attacked the Leyland toolroom strike as being divisive were

themselves the splitters — the only people to gain from the defeat of the toolroom strike were the bosses and the supporters of the Social Contract.

We reject the unity of relying upon Scanlon or Wright which in practice obstructs genuine united action. Instead of supporting a candidate who is all words and no action, we should support candidates who, both by their policies and their actions, fight for class struggle policies in the union against the class-collaboration of Scanlon.

RESPECT

Unfortunately Roy Frazer, whose uncompromising stand in the four-week Leyland toolroom strike earned him wide respect in the union, fails to offer a real alternative for all engineering workers. Frazer and his supporters, with their concentration on sectional issues, do not offer an alternative to the real enemy of all workers — the Social Contract.

That is why support must be given to Ian Morris in the election. Certainly the policies offered by Morris are not a sufficient alternative to the Social Contract. They reflect more a desire for militant struggle against the Contract than any coherent alternative to it. But he is the only candidate

who stands for a united fight now by all engineering workers against Labour's austerity policies.

Nor is it enough to simply point to the failures of the Broad Left and ask the militants organised in the Broad Left to leave it and join *Engineers Charter*. Instead a fight has to be made alongside those militants within the Broad Left demanding that the Broad Left leadership turn their words into action, while being prepared to act independently, working with the militants of *Engineers Charter*, where the Broad Left fails to act. Only in this way will it be possible to explain the need to end the Broad Left's total reliance on Scanlon and Wright.

This election is an occasion when we have to act independently of the Broad Left. The issues at stake are too great to be bound by 'majority votes' of the Broad Left.

CAMPAIGN

Socialists in the engineering union should campaign for Ian Morris, and by so doing explain the need for a complete break with class-collaboration. But just as firmly as Morris is supported in the first round ballot, so must Bob Wright be supported against Duffy in the inevitable second ballot when the other candidates are knocked out of the election.

The main contenders

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)



IAN MORRIS: One of the five leaders of the Heathrow engineers' strike, he is secretary of the joint stewards committee in British Airways Division. A member of the Socialist Workers Party, and a candidate for 'Engineers Charter', he will be campaigning for the right to work, against redundancies and against wage restraint, including the twelve month rule, for union democracy and for equal pay.



ROY FRASER: Chairperson of the Leyland Toolroom Committee, he led the strike which challenged Phase Two and which was met by the Executive Committee's instruction to return to work. He is also chairperson of the recently-formed engineering craftsmen's committee formed to fight for the interests of skilled workers in the union. His exact positions are unclear, as his election address has not yet been published.



TERRY DUFFY: The candidate for the right wing, currently Executive Committee member for the Midlands and Manchester (No. 4 Region). He is opposed to full amalgamation and supports continued wage restraint allowing for 'flexibility'.

His red-baiting and cold war ideology make him somewhat of an embarrassment to more astute right wingers like John Boyd, the current General Secretary. His election would see a return to the antics of Carron — a right wing President in the 1960s notorious for his attacks on shop stewards and union democracy.



BOB WRIGHT: Currently Assistant General Secretary of the union, Bob Wright is the candidate of the Broad Left, and previously was defeated by Duffy in the ballot for Executive Council member for No. 4 Region. He is in favour of amalgamation, of a 'return to free collective bargaining', condemns the Common Market as a 'disaster', and supports import controls and a 'return to the policies of Labour's Manifesto'.

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

No discrimination here

by DICK DAY, Deputy Chairperson, Joint Office Committee, Mather and Platt.

WHITE COLLAR engineering workers at the Mather and Platt factory in Manchester are fighting for an interim wage claim. They are also determined that in their annual wage claim there will be no discrimination against youth or women and that there will be full compensation for the effects of inflation on any wage claim reached.

The dispute on the interim wage claim, involving members of the Technical and Supervisory section of the AUEW, took a new turn six weeks ago when an intensive work to rule was implemented.

After about ten days the man-

agement threatened a lock-out. At a mass meeting we responded by bringing out on strike the Oil Rig Project engineers and the shop floor planning engineers and lifting the work to rule. It was agreed that the rest of the members would implement a levy to pay the strikers. These groups of workers were chosen because it was judged that they would cause the greatest disruption of production.

Whilst we continue to fight for the interim pay increase, members have begun formulating their annual wage claim which is due for implementation in September. The TASS Women's Committee has met and decided their claim and the Youth Committee decided that they wanted the abolition of the 'wage for age' scale which discriminates against young people under 25

years old. The office representative committee has been broadened out to include many more active members for the period of the dispute and whenever possible we try to meet in working hours.

At our last meeting we discussed how we would protect our wage increase, when we win it, against inflation. The Labour Research Department have been forecasting 17 per cent inflation over the next twelve months.

The committee has decided that either any agreement cannot be tied to a 12 month period or it must include a clause that will raise wage scales automatically to fully compensate for inflation.

As one recently recruited sales engineer put it, 'the company tries not to accept fixed price contracts these days, so why should we?'



And yet I have been met with courtesy by a number of NF leaders. I have lunched, dined, drunk and talked to the small hours with some of them. One or two I now count as personal friends, and I cannot find it in my heart or my conscience to call them 'Fascists'. To understand this... has to see the de-

'A JOURNALIST', writes journalist Martin Walker at the beginning of this book 'simply by describing and commenting on events as they happen, has the power to influence them'. If Martin Walker's book has the power to influence anything, it will substantially assist the advance of Britain's main fascist party into the political mainstream.

YET MARTIN WALKER has a reputation as a militant left-winger. When he joined the *Guardian* four years ago, his column rapidly became renowned for irreverence and exposé. Walker printed stuff which other people didn't print. He attacked corrupt councillors and Coal Board officials. He told stories about high society in a distinctly disrespectful style. Walker started to get inside information from all over the country. People began to take him seriously, with the usual grim result: that Martin Walker began to take himself seriously. And so his column deteriorated from sharply-worded muck-raking to sententious 'analysis' and 'reportage'.

In the course of this transformation, Walker decided to 'cover' the February 1974 General Election by following choice candidates around the hustings. These included Roy Painter, a racist small businessman in North London and National Front candidate in Tottenham. Martin Walker fans, including myself, were astonished at the sudden change in Walker's style when dealing with Painter's campaign. Cheeky aggression turned into apologetics and almost into sycophancy. Now we know why. Walker and Painter became pals. One result of their friendship is this book.

Where does Martin Walker stand on racialism and the National Front? He writes, on his first page: 'I oppose the National Front, the ideology they stand for, the policies they present and the poison they inject'. That seems absolutely clear, does it not? But then there are the buts.

'When John Kingsley Read tells me he is sick and tired of the British élite being apologetic for the empire, I have to agree,

because his and my grandparents were also victims of an imperial system'. (My italics — PF)

No-one has to agree with anyone because their common grandparents were victims of anything. The only reason John Kingsley Read, Chairman of the National Party, is 'sick and tired' of people being apologetic for the Empire is because he is proud of the Empire and wishes we had it back again. Does Walker agree with that? He should leave his grandparents alone and make up his mind. Again:

'When John Harrison-Broadley talks of the Second World War, and the Battle of Britain and fighting against the odds, I know what he means. My father and two uncles were in the RAF in the war, and when at the age of seventeen I took my private pilot's licence, my father solemnly gave me the log-book of the uncle who had died in the Pathfinder squadron over Turin. It was a key event after the confrontations of adolescence, in my learning to love him and it moved me deeply.' (My italics — PF)

Ah, blessed objectivity!

Before the reader is overcome with emotion, it's worth remembering that the people who died in the Pathfinder squadron over Turin were fighting (or believed they were fighting) against a system of society which most National Front leaders are striving to introduce in Britain today.

'I fear', writes Walker (in a paragraph which deserves to be prosecuted under the Obscene Publications (Conscience on Sleeves) Act), 'that I am polluted by the

racism of my society. I recall the sense of shock I felt in Rhodesia, after working six months in South Africa, when I turned round in a bar and saw a black face that was not serving me. I fear to analyse the sense of culture shock I feel in Southall and Brixton, although I have been in love and lived with black women and shared my home for eighteen months with a black friend from the Bahamas who first stunned and then intrigued my National Front friends as we all argued into the night.'

Some of his best friends, and even lovers, are black; but then some of his best friends are Fascists. And, so confused and culture-shocked by the sight of black people in the streets, Martin Walker has only one retreat: 'This book should speak for itself as a reasonably objective account...'

Ah, blessed objectivity! The haven of all writers who won't or can't make up their minds; dull, worthless, obsequious objectivity. Let's see how far we get when we are 'objective' about Fascism.

'To think of National Front members as Fascists in the classic sense of the 1930s', writes Walker, 'is silly'. No doubt. But the National Front leaders, as his book amply demonstrates, are fascists cast precisely in the mould of Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich. Here, for instance, are some objective comments from John Tyndall, the National Front leader:

'In our democratic society, the Jew is a poisonous maggot feeding off a body in an advanced state of decay.' 'Hitler roped off the riff-raff and put them in camps. Some of them may have died of starvation, but there was a food shortage.' 'While every race may have its particular skills and qualities, the capacity to govern and lead and sustain civilisation as we understand it lies essentially with the European.' 'I believe that most people have been won over to our movement in the most committed and active sense of the term by a deep compulsion to be involved in our work... which is mainly stimulated by some mystical emotive power within us that compels allegiance by an appeal to forces within the human character which defy rational analysis...' (My italics — PF)

'Enthusiasm has to be created and that can only be achieved by an appeal of dynamic forces which arouses the feelings of the masses just as electric shock waves arouse life, feeling and movement in an inert body...'

Martin Webster, the National Front No. 2, has rivalled his chairman in his objective support for the Nazis. 'In every white land', he wrote, 'Nazi movements have been formed, and we join them in the historic Nazi battle cry.' 'White man', he asked (not a long time ago, but in 1974), 'are you

ready to fight?'

These two and their acolytes (among them is Ron Tear, who keeps a Nazi shrine in his house and once fought a local election on the slogan 'Hitler was a genius') control the National Front. Martin Walker, of course, distances himself, sometimes sharply, from them, but he does so by way of a curious theory for which there is no substance whatever. He argues that the rise of the National Front has been a permanent battle between what he calls 'Neo-Nazis', like Tyndall and Webster, and 'Populists', like Painter and Kingsley-Read. The 'Populists' emerge as the 'goodies' as against the nasty neo-Nazis in 'the gutter of racist politics'. Walker mourns the eventual victory of the neo-Nazis and spells out how different things would have been if only his drinking pal Roy Painter had won the battle.

Despair and Barbarism

But who are these 'Populists', and what is their claim to be anything different than the Nazis? When the battle was over, the 'Populists' left the National Front to form the National Party. Walker's own account of this new organisation flies in the face of all his pro-populist bias.

'The new National Party constitution was an authoritarian statement, concentrating all power in the hands of the executive, which alone had the power to propose amendments to the statement of principles or to the constitution...'

'The policy was almost indistinguishable from that of the NF, although the statement of principles boasted "the NF takes a much harder line against immigration". This included the compulsory repatriation of all white spouses and children of mixed marriages. The British people must preserve their distinct racial character by preventing all further immigration by people of non-British stock and by organising the humane repatriation or resettlement abroad of all coloured and other racially incompatible immigrants...'

The policy of the 'Populists', then, was just as racist, just as brutish as that of the 'neo-Nazis'. Indeed, as Walker admits: 'To find a source for the ideology, one has to go back to the "soft" National Socialists of Rohm, and the SD, who were wiped out by Hitler in 1934.'

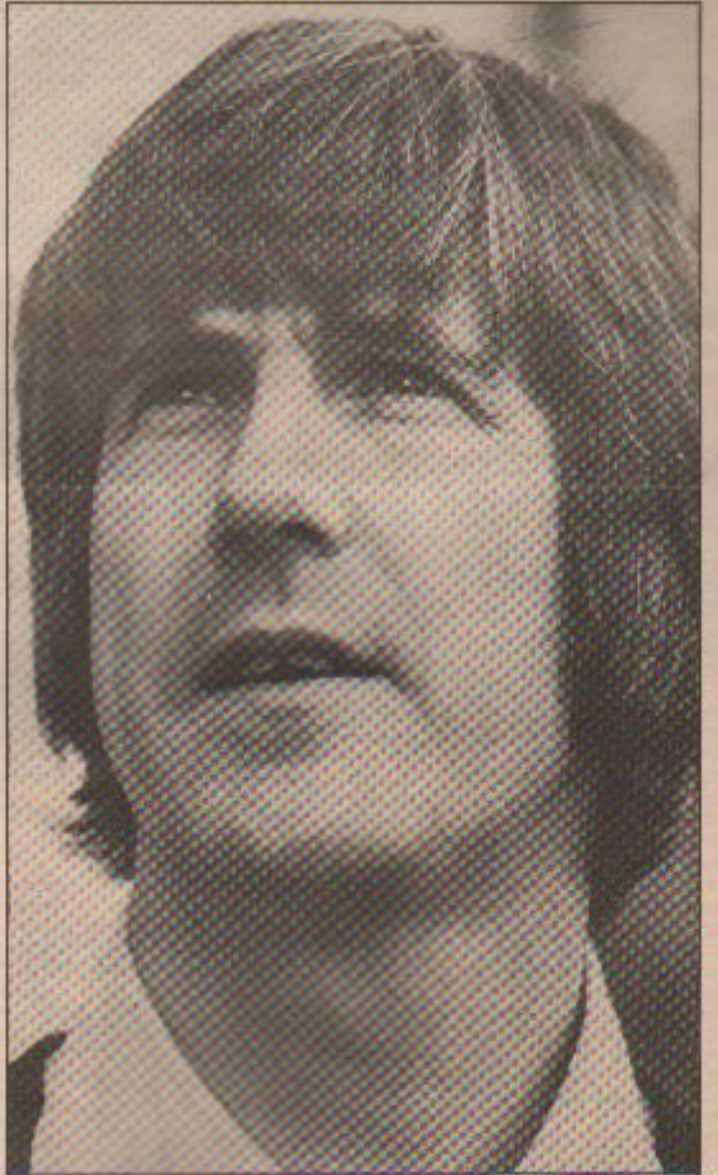
Precisely. There are different sorts of Fascists. There are Fascists who strut about in jackboots, and those who don't. There are Fascists who celebrate Hitler's birthday, and Fascists who chat to *Guardian* journalists about the great struggles of the 'few' in the Battle of Britain. But Fascists they remain. The 'Populists' want every other

black or other 'racially incompatible' grant removed by force from Britain. It is the centre-piece of their policy, just as with the neo-Nazis. John Kingsley-Read, the 'Populist' leader, is the man announced to a cheering crowd a black boy had been knifed to death in Southall: 'One down, a million to go'. Kingsley-Read is the man who organised a campaign in Blackburn to insult and humiliate an Indian woman doctor who was forced to leave the town. In the *World in Action* exposé of Read, supporters testified to the singing of songs and other racist ceremonies at Read's house. Yet these are the people whom Martin Walker lunched and sat up late into the night, flattered Bahaman friends, not to mention his lovers. These are the people whose names take in his interminable saga of the National Front and the National Party, and prospered.

And here is the great charge against the book. In telling, at inordinate length, the story of the tedious intrigues of gangsters and pervers, Walker imbues with the quality they most despise: respectability. Here is known and highly competent journalism faithfully chronicling the ludicrous hysterical details of the National Front directorate meetings, referring to speakers by the odd Tyndall as 'brilliant' or 'insightful' and describing men like Painter and Kingsley-Read and Martin Webster as though they were for all the important public figures who deserve respect and attention. Yet their message is the stuff of despair and barbarism. It is not because it appeals to people's imaginations, but to their feelings of inadequacy; because it makes men and women both proud and afraid of about which they cannot choose or — the colour of their skin and the place of their birth. It is barbarous because it invokes man, as Hitler once demanded, 'not like a wolf to his fellow man'; because it isolates, humiliates, and eventually attacks racial minorities. The rhetoric of people like Tyndall and Webster inevitably, as both have testified, leads to unspeakable atrocities of the Third Reich.

It is no use Walker saying that it is 'another' way of looking at the NF ('not that is, than 'a loathsome graveyard of Nazism') — 'an authoritarian party of solutions and demanding responses a time when the great anti-authoritarian parties are faltering and failing'. That is exactly Hitler's appeal. His constant cry of the 'old parties', the parties that betrayed Germany at Versailles, the parties playing at corrupt games in E-

When John Kingsley Read tells me that he is sick and tired of the British elite being apologetic for the Empire, I have to agree, because his and my grandparents were also victims of an imperial system. When Roy Painter expresses his fury at the councils



PAUL FOOT Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

T reviews could assist scists

ment, were an even more consistent part of his rhetoric than was his anti-semitism. The NF today are filling precisely the same role as Hitler's party was in the growing crisis of the 1920s. Further economic chaos and collapse could bring in the vital subsidies from propertied interests that can bring it to power.

Those are the people and those are their aims. The point, therefore, is not 'how did the NF grow?', or 'what chance has it of winning an election?' The point is: how to stop them.

Every successful National Front foray into an area — whether it's a march or a flurry of letters in a sympathetic local paper (and many, many local papers are sympathetic) or a *Spearhead* sale on a council estate — has one inevitable result: the black brown and yellow people in that area feel less safe. They are the ones who are frightened to walk alone at night, whose houses are petrol-bombed, whose children are victimised and isolated by other children at school. Walker whines that he was frightened to walk the streets of Moss Side, Manchester, but there is in his book not a single word of solidarity or even compassion for the racial minorities in Britain who watch the advance of the NF with nothing less than terror. During the great racist onslaught of the summer of 1976, so carefully orchestrated by the *Daily Mail*, the *Sun*, Enoch Powell and the National Front, racist outrages increased in every area where black people live. In literally hundreds of cases, many of them unreported, black people were attacked and their homes petrol-bombed. That is what the rise of the National Front means in practice and that is why the detailed chronicle of the in-fighting in the NF directorate, or page after page of percentages of votes won in different elections are of no significance compared with the question: how can they be stopped?

Dictators and Bullies

Martin Walker doesn't really want to stop them — at least not in public. He is 'enough of a democrat to accept that they (the NF) have a right to make their points to the electorate, to hire private halls, and to stand in elections'. Bravo! But the NF leaders, on their own admission, do not proceed by way of reasoned argument. They do not allow everyone into the argument. They proceed 'like electric shocks' to move people by 'irrational' appeals, and they exclude from the argument anyone with a black skin (or, in the case of Martin Walker's chum Painter, anyone of 'Levantine' birth as well). They do not want a society where argument and reason prevail. They want the

rule of the dictator and the bully. And their strength and influence, as Hitler well understood, is cut down if their opponents confront their demonstrations in the streets and make it hard, if not impossible, for them to hold public meetings.

But that, of course, is only the beginning of the stopping. Martin Walker accepts that the day-to-day job of countering racials and racist influence in council estates and factories 'rests with the labour movement' but that the local Labour Parties and councils are 'ill-equipped' to do the job. Why? No answer from Walker, perhaps in case it upsets his lifelong allegiance to Labour. The reason is that the Labour Party, devised as a machine for extracting votes from working people, is ill-equipped for any argument among those people, let alone a difficult argument such as the one against immigration controls. In many cases the official spokespeople for Labour — as in the instance Martin Walker mentions of the Imperial Typewriters strike in 1974 — are so besotted with their puny power that they stand side by side with the racials.

The day-to-day argument, the organisation against the National Front and the reactionary right will have to be sustained increasingly by the revolutionary left — that is, those socialists whose central belief is that working people can emancipate themselves and therefore can be swayed by rational argument and can be moved not by 'electric shock treatment' but by the hope of a society where people control their own destinies. That part of the 'Left' who, like Martin Walker, believe that politics is about peepology, half-baked sociology, objective reporting of Fascist faction-fighting and the like will end up, as the Labour Government and Walker have done, giving a 'fair deal' to the Fascists and thereby increasing their respectability. The people who believe that politics is about what working people think and how they organise can roll back racist influence. And if those people, as Walker rightly states, are too few, that is only a reason for converting more to their ranks.

Paul Foot's review of Martin Walker's book was first published in the July issue of Books and Bookmen[sic]. This journal is virtually unknown in the labour movement and anti-fascist circles. Socialist Challenge felt that the article was far too valuable to be left to a specialist magazine. We are therefore publishing it as a service to all militants.

8, 9, 10 & 11 September

The dates to remember for the first

MARXIST SYMPOSIUM



The Marxist Symposium has been organised to justify a Leninist political and theoretical alternative to the theory and practice of 'Eurocommunism'. What is intended is not a parrot-like repetition of quotes from Lenin, Trotsky or Gramsci, but a battle of ideas, a confrontation between counterposed strategies for socialism. For that reason a number of supporters of 'Eurocommunism' have been invited to formally participate in the symposium. Many others have indicated that they will attend and participate from the floor.

DEBATE ON SOCIALIST STRATEGY FOR W. EUROPE
David North (Editor, *Workers' Revolution*)
Mick Jackson (Representing the Workers' Committee of the Communist Party)
This debate will be held in St. James's Church, London, on the 10th September at 7.30pm. Free admission. Free will contributions for the 10th Sept.

DAY THREE

SATURDAY 10 SEPTEMBER
THEME: THE CAPITALIST CRISIS

Day Closures and Inflation 10.00pm-1.00pm
David North, Stuart Nelson, Ian Gough, Bob Rowthorn
Reply by James Meek

LUNCH

Overseas and European 2pm-4pm (Free)
Report: Quilley House
Film to be announced later at The Other Cinema 5.45pm.

DAY FOUR

SUNDAY 11 SEPTEMBER
THEME: THE LENINIST THEORY OF THE PARTY

Leah, Dorothy and the Party Norman Green

LUNCH

SEMINARS:
Chairmaned by Peter Lawrence, Secretary of the Party
Witnessed by Peter Quilley, David Hoyle
Quilley House
Norman Green
David Hoyle

Socialist Challenge benefit (groups to be announced later) 7.30pm-midnight
Dingwalls, Camden Lock. (Nearest tube: Chalk Farm)
I wish to register for the Marxist Symposium to be held at the LSE, Houghton Street, London WC1 between 8-11 September.

NAME
ADDRESS
Tel
Amount enclosed

Notes: Registration before 25 August is 2s.00, after that date 2s.30. The fee per day is 1s.30.
Post to: Symposium, c/o Socialist Challenge, 328 Upper Street, London N1.

DAY ONE

THURSDAY 8 SEPTEMBER
THEME: FEMINISM AND MARXISM

Registration... 10.00-12.00
After 12.00 tickets of admission: 12.00 / 3.00 (Free)

LUNCH

WOMEN AND THE FAMILY / THE FAMILY AND CAPITALISM

Food: Hanka Mays, Helen Walsby, Margaret Cusack, Elizabeth Wynn

DINNER

Presented by Dorothy, Dorothy and the Party. 'Problems of Feminism' by Dorothy and the Party. 7pm-12pm

DAY TWO

FRIDAY 9 SEPTEMBER
THEME: EUROCOMMUNISM, TROTSKYISM AND REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY

The Communist Party 10.00-12.00 (Free)
Report: Boba Babbitt

LUNCH

TROTSKYISM AND REVOLUTION

Geoff Roberts (CP), Geoff Hodgson (LP), Paul Thompson (RP) (Free)
All speakers and reports with Ernest Mandel or Trotskyist style and practice.

DINNER

Elizabeth II - Labour's Queen of Orange

This week Her Majesty paid a one-day visit to the North of Ireland as part of her jubilee celebrations. The violence, conflict, demonstrations and bitterness which accompanied it were inevitable. GEOFF BELL examines the background.

For the ruling class, it is the symbolism of the visit that is important. The Queen's writ still runs, the flag still flies; even if it doesn't fly in West Belfast and the Queen declines to visit Crossmaglen. Most of all it is a symbol that the north-eastern counties of Ireland are still British.

What makes the visit particularly contemptible is that the Queen flies to represent a British State in which a Labour Government is in office.

There is nothing particularly new in Labour emphasising Britain's hold on the North of Ireland. It was a Labour Government which sent the troops in to the streets of Derry and Belfast in August 1969. A lot of lies and distortion has come from the mouths of Labour Ministers about the role of those troops since then, but perhaps the best description of what those troops are about is indicated in the privately spoken words of William Orr in August 1969 when he said: 'We are getting the troops and we are getting them without strings.'

William Orr at the time was a Unionist MP and the Grand Master of the Grand Orange Council of the World. So the 'we' in question is obvious.

OBSCENITY

Since 1969 the Labour Government has more than justified Orr's optimism. But its present 'policy' in Ireland has reached such a level of obscenity that even a Labour MP such as Kevin McNamara — who supports the presence of British troops — has accused the Government of having 'sold out its principles' on Ireland.

The reason for McNamara's outburst was the Government's recent decision to investigate increasing the number of seats

Northern Ireland has at Westminster. 'We are playing Powell's game,' said McNamara. 'We are on the road to integration and not on the road to peace or to helping the Northern Ireland people solve their problems.'

McNamara's anger is understandable. As chairperson of the Labour Party backbench committee on the North of Ireland he has for years put forward the solution of a kindly British government 'reforming' the North of Ireland. Such notions are very far removed from the thinking of the Labour cabinet.

They prefer to toy with the policy of fully integrating the north of Ireland into Great Britain which, as McNamara pointed out, has long been the policy of Enoch Powell. Powell realises that such integration would tighten the link between Britain and Ireland, and would thereby reinforce the 'right' of British soldiers and politicians to impose their will on the inhabitants of the six northern counties.

One of the reasons for this surrender to Loyalism is the Government's precarious position in Parliament. It made a secret deal with the Loyalist MPs that in return for their votes they could gain extra seats.

In this — as in the jubilee visit — Labour confirms the past practice of British governments and Ireland — using the situation for its own squalid political games in the backyard of Westminster.

Tied with this policy is a surrender to the other main demand of Powell and his Loyalist friends — a massive increase in repression. This dates from the Loyalist strike last April, which — if you believe British propaganda — was a total flop, but which in terms of increased 'security' measures has been

shown to be very persuasive.

The RUC is being increased from 5,500 to 7,700; the Ulster Defence Regiment from 5 to 8 full-time platoons; SAS operations have been 'stepped up'; the already formidable powers of no-jury, single-judge courts have been increased; and sentences for various offences have been doubled.

Just to make sure there is no doubt about future intentions, two weeks ago Secretary of State Roy Mason announced plans to build new cell blocks in Long Kesh, an entirely new prison at Maghaberry, and a new closed borstal on the outskirts of Belfast. As Joan Maynard MP commented at the time: 'Building new prisons seems to be the only growth industry in Northern Ireland.'

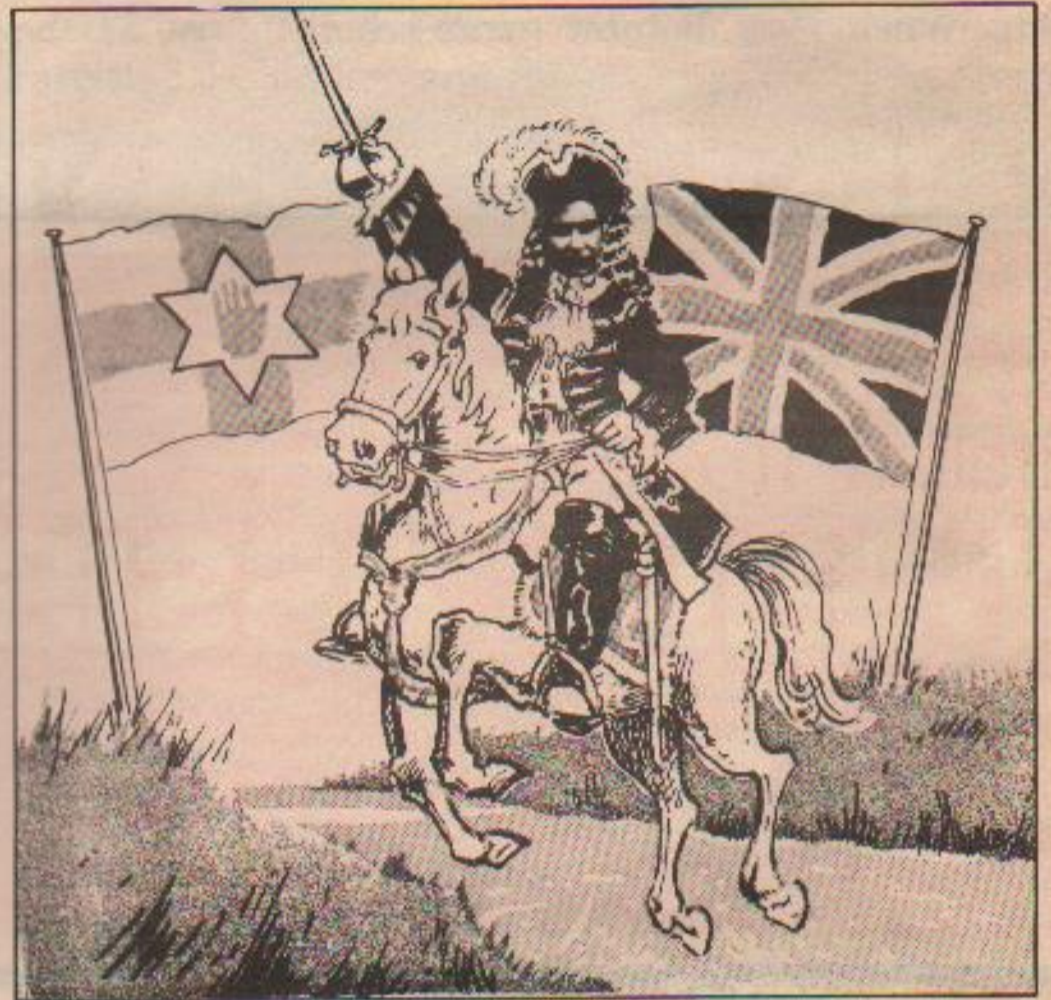
INTERMENT

The prisons are certainly necessary for the unofficial interment policy which the Labour Government now operates. It works in two different ways. Some prisoners are held on remand for up to two years and then, when the trial approaches, the charges are dropped. They have never been tried for anything, but they have been imprisoned for two years.

The more popular method is to extract 'confessions' from prisoners and produce them in court. According to the *Irish Times*, in murder cases 'around two thirds of the accused appear in court wholly or principally on the strength of their own confessions. One-judge courts being what they are, that almost inevitably means conviction.'

As the report comments: 'Does it ever occur to people why hard men sign the bulk of their lives away?' The article supplies the answer in noting that 'bruised suspects appear in courts with monotonous regularity', and in recording that 'within two weeks of each other recently, two men were taken to mental hospital from interrogation.'

Almost inevitably the Labour Party is on the brink of producing an ideological framework for



this repression, and that too is straight out of the Loyalist camp. It is contained in a Labour Party research document produced at the end of last year entitled 'The Irish Question'.

It is modelled on the 'two-nations theory', which supports the right of Loyalists to rule as they wish. Not surprisingly, therefore, the document puts over the view that even in the 19th century, 'the Irish question had little or nothing to do with imperialism'. The conclusion is outrageous even by Loyalist

standards: 'By 1906 the democratic revolution in Ireland was complete.'

EVIDENCE

The evidence of the mounting number of prisoners who have 'confessed'; the European Court judgement on Britain as torturers; the increasing repression in so many and different ways speaks volumes about the 'democratic revolution'. But the main point is just how warmly the Labour Government has em-

braced Loyalism's theories and tactics lock, stock and barrel.

What is going on today in Ireland, in celebration of the jubilee, is appropriate, for it represents what Britain has always done in Ireland: repressed, murdered and tortured.

That is why what happened in Ireland to mark Her Majesty's visit is a manifestation of ordinary people fighting back. The responsibility lies with a Government that occasionally still has the affrontery to call itself socialist.

The Birmingham Framework

SIX INNOCENT MEN FRAMED FOR THE BIRMINGHAM BOMBINGS

Price 50p

JUST PUBLISHED is an 80-page booklet, *The Birmingham Framework*, a study of the trial which followed the Birmingham bombings in November 1974. The booklet is written by two Northern Ireland priests, who argue convincingly that the six men convicted of the bombings were framed.

As Sandra Hunter, the wife of one of the men convicted, comments on the booklet: 'At the time of their trial the men and their families were surrounded by an atmosphere which can only be likened to that surrounding lips in the Middle Ages. Under cover of this atmos-

phere, and public hostility, grave damaging evidence was fabricated. And on the other side of the coin, much favourable evidence was simply not presented.'

The Birmingham Framework traces how the six men had 'confessions' beaten out of them by the police. It exposes the blatant prejudice of the judge at the trial. And it has a section on how the men were beaten up again in prison.

The Birmingham Framework, by Fr. Denis Paul and Fr. Raymond Murray, price 50p plus 25p p.p.s. can be ordered from: *The Other Bookshop*, 328 Upper Street, London N1.

7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES

Will Gerry Fitt ever visit H Block?

by MIKE PINTER

FOR GERRY FITT, leader of the Social and Democratic Labour Party, 9 August is a date that brings back unhappy memories. It was on 9 August 1971 that internment was re-introduced in the Six Counties, putting the final nail in the coffin of British propaganda that the British Army was on the streets of Belfast and Derry to protect the Catholic minority.

As the number of arrests mounted, as the reports of torture and brutality filtered out of the barracks of the Army and RUC, as hundreds of thousands marched in protest, the then recently-formed SDLP announced its withdrawal from the Stormont parliament.

The SDLP gave its support to the anti-Unionist community's rent and rates strike, and it vowed never to participate in 6 County parliamentary institutions so long as internment was in existence.

Just over a year later — a year which had seen Bloody Sunday's mass murder, the suspension of Stormont and the destruction of the no-go areas in Operation Motorman — the SDLP were still making the same noises, but saw no contradiction in holding

talks with William Whitelaw and Ted Heath. The purpose of these talks was to establish the conditions for SDLP support for British rule in Ireland.

Under mass pressures the SDLP urged a boycott in the border referendum in March 1973, but then they participated in the local government elections the following May; accepted the Government's White Paper outlining the 'power sharing' strategy, and in June they urged support for the elections to the power-sharing Assembly.

SELL-OUT

In October 1973 the SDLP confirmed its sell-out by participation in the power-sharing Executive. Gerry Fitt, as deputy leader of the Executive, served directly under the person responsible for the decision to introduce internment two years earlier, Brian Faulkner. The new Minister for Health and Social Services, Paddy Devlin of the SDLP, was responsible for the emergency legislation directed against thousands of rent and rates strikers.

So the unhappy saga of the 'Semi-Detached Labour Party' continued. When internment was phased out during the 1975 truce between the Provisionals and the British Government, the



GERRY FITT — SDLP leader

SDLP raised no objection to the fact that provisions for internment still remained on the statute books. More importantly, it saw nothing wrong with the British state's new mechanism to effectively continue internment under another name.

For the SDLP, the mass frame-ups of republicans and socialists

was fine in principle — as long as it was done 'legally'. Merlyn Rees, Minister for the 6 Counties, promptly obliged by instituting the Diplock Courts to try suspected 'terrorists'. These juryless courts, operating under the old Unionist judiciary, won full support from the SDLP as they sentenced hundreds of young men and women on the flimsiest of evidence, or no evidence at all.

LONG KESH

The best way to sum up Gerry Fitt's present stance is by reporting a conversation which occurred last week between Fitt and a prisoners' welfare representative. On being asked to go to Long Kesh to see the conditions for himself as the elected representative for West Belfast, Fitt replied that he had never been in Long Kesh before, and that he didn't intend to start now!

To regain some credibility among his constituents, Fitt has publicly declined an invitation to pay homage to the Queen on her state visit on 10 August. The attitude of the anti-Unionist population to this Royal tour is indicated by the latest slogan to appear on the Falls Road. It reads: 'Will Lizzie visit H block?' We should perhaps make one small change — 'Will Fitt ever visit H block?'



The Italian far left and the crisis

Italian Trotskyism Taking a self-critical look

'REVOLUTIONARY Marxists must recognise that they themselves have not succeeded in making a decisive contribution to the building of a revolutionary party in Italy, nor in building an organisation as strong and influential as other sections of the Fourth International in southern Europe.'

This is the openly self-critical view of the Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari (GCR — Italian section of the Fourth International) in a balance-sheet of their development drawn up in connection with their recent conference.

'In abbreviated fashion', they write, 'we can say that we understood only belatedly that, in view of the political context that began to take shape around 1966 or 1967, fairly broad forces would be set in motion outside the organisational framework and the sphere of hegemony of the traditional parties. In particular, we underestimated the possibility that this development could occur among sections of the working class, and we were slow to realise that important mass mobilisations though with a largely student composition, might develop through the initiative of newly formed movements and groups.'

As a result the Italian revolutionary Marxists waited too long to discontinue their tactic of entry into the traditional organisations. Because of this they lost the majority of their membership, and by the end of 1969 were in an extremely weak condition. 'If the main cause of our

setback can be found in the 1968-69 crisis, this does not mean that there are no grounds for self-criticism with respect to the reconstruction phase as well', our comrades explain.

They aimed, despite their extreme weakness, at 'building a big-scale organisation, capable of intervening in all sectors on a national scale', and were guilty of 'not having tried to achieve a larger concentration of our forces in priority areas of work, and in those areas where there were greater opportunities, even if this meant that for a whole period we would be mainly a local and sectoral organisation'. They further made the error of paying insufficient attention to the important developments on the far left.

PROGRESS

But these weaknesses should not overshadow the real progress made in those areas where a choice of priorities was really applied. In Turin, for example, our comrades were able through a policy of unity in action and discussion with the far left to permanently change the relationship of forces in their favour, to the point of becoming a recognised political force in the city.

The main document adopted by the GCR Congress points to the seriousness of the economic situation, the dangers this poses of divisions in the working class, and the effects of the opportunist line of the mass workers organisations.

In such a situation, it argues, the primary task is to mobilise a response to the policy of the Andreotti Government, around such struggles as defence of the sliding scale of wages, and

rejection of the other measures that the government and the employers have put on the agenda.

A further motion concretises this orientation, stating that it '... now requires more than ever the development of activity independent of the bureaucratic leadership, inside and outside the trade union structures, and of the goals established by the union. The basic tools for this are the *coordinamenti* (groupings of rank-and-file militants within a particular plant) or similar bodies that group together vanguard workers with the aim of mass intervention. The formation of the *coordinamenti* must take place on the basis of strengthening the ties between the vanguard and the masses; it thus implies ongoing work of implantation in the workplaces.'

'At the same time, precisely because they are involved in this task, the *coordinamenti* must play a role in helping the vanguard to mature, and in concrete political confrontation, as well as initiating and reinforcing work in the unions, whose goal should be to build, without inclinations to self-proclamation, a working class anti-bureaucratic tendency.'

Over and above the tasks outlined at their congress, the revolutionary Marxists must take part in the discussion that is being conducted today by the Italian revolutionary left. This discussion, which is relevant to the entire European far left should make it possible, after a long period of domination by the Maoists, to gain a hearing for the answers put forward by revolutionary Marxists.

We conclude our series on the Italian far left with two articles. In the first ANNA LIBERA takes a look at the views of the Italian Trotskyists. Then RICHARD CARVER discusses how the experiences of the far left in Italy can help clarify the debates and problems facing revolutionaries in this country.



Italian lessons for the British left

THE ITALIAN working class has within its collective memory experiences such as the wave of factory councils in 1920-21 and the struggles of 1969-71 which saw the emergence of all the far left groups, which have no parallel in Britain.

Similarly, it has no single mass reformist party, and its principal political expression is one whose evolution has been as much determined by international developments as its links with the Italian class struggle: the Communist Party (PCI).

The differences from Britain are clearest when one looks at the professed ideology of the major far left organisations. All three claim a theoretical heritage of Maoism.

But the Italian far left does confront many of the same problems as we do, in conditions of more advanced political and social crisis.

Perhaps the most critical is the question of the mass reformist parties and government. All the participants in the far left slate in the 1976 elections made a serious mistake on this count. They advanced the slogan of the 'left government', never specifying clearly what were to be its constituent parts (the way was thus left open for some of the small bourgeois parties), nor its relationship to the mass movement.

One common conception was that such a government would include the far left, and would be defined by a 'revolutionary' programme. It is particularly poignant that *Lotta Continua*, an organisation consciously making no attempt to go beyond the spontaneous mass movement, should be one of the main supporters of the idea of revolutionaries 'winning hegemony' within a left government.

BIG FLAME

It is, ironically, the same misunderstanding which makes Big Flame in this country fail to call for a Labour Government in a situation where there is no mass socialist alternative.

In outline, the comrades of Big Flame argue that the reformist programme of the Labour Party makes support for it purely tactical. This is only the other side of the coin from the conception of a 'left' government: it's 'leftness' is seen solely as a function of programme, not of social base.

On the contrary, the reason revolutionaries call for a Labour Government — or in Italy a government of the Communist and Socialist Parties — is that

despite their programme these parties, as independent organisations of the working class, mark an important gain for the working class. Any other approach leads to ultra-leftism or, as in the case of *Lotta Continua*, an adaptation to the politics of the reformist parties.

The relationship of the far left to the trade unions has also come under harsh scrutiny in recent months. In the early 1970s the trade union work of *Avanguardia Operaia* (AO) consisted of the establishment of 'united rank and file committees' (CUBs), which served to group 'revolutionary' workers sympathetic to their organisation, and exclusive of other militants. It is a project not so dissimilar from that of the SWP's Rank and File in Britain.

AO increasingly found itself unable to relate to struggles carried out by masses of workers beginning to challenge the reformist union leaderships, and could give its own members no lead on what to do inside their unions to provide alternative policies. So the CUBs were dropped.

But again a sectarian and ultra-left position found its mirror-image in a rightist tendency to tail-end the vacillations of the left union bureaucrats, in the absence of any programmatic alternative or perspective for a mass left-wing opposition in the union.

Nevertheless the lessons from the Italian unions are not all negative. There are now signs of the emergence of a current prepared to fight within the unions around defence of working class living standards and political opposition to the leadership.

COORDINAMENTI

The *coordinamenti* (coordinating committees) which grew up after 1969 have in many cases grouped the whole of the far left and many independent militants who do not see themselves as revolutionaries within the unions. The evolution of such left tendencies has frequently been set back by the retreat of certain of the far left groups and, in the case of the PdUP, their overt capitulation to the bureaucracy.

Even so, the halting advance of the *coordinamenti* is an experience we should take to heart. Their salient lesson is that the united action of the far left in the unions, on a limited programme of demands, not tied organisationally to any one party, is able to focus the activity of far larger numbers of workers in opposition to the leadership's policies. What the *coordinamenti* represent is the possible nucleus of a class struggle tendency which can reach those sections of the working class where the reformists think their dominance is unchallenged.



'We were slow to realise that important mass mobilisations though with a largely student composition, might develop...'

What's Left

Rates: 30p per word. Display: £1.50 per column inch. Deadline: 3pm Saturday before publication.

HOLLOWAY Housing Aid Centre. Established independent Housing Aid Centre requires workers. Emphasis on working with tenants groups particularly on public health and repairs, also some case work. Qualified Public Health Inspector preferred but applications also welcome from those with housing/community action experience. Salary £3-5,500. Further details from 386 Hornsey Road, N19 4HE or phone 01-272 8445 (closed for holidays 15-20 August). Closing date 9 September.

WANTED: Room in flat in Liverpool for Scottish comrade from anytime in September. Phone 0224 573949 before 13 August; 031-332 6431 after.

CONFERENCE on Women and the Unions, called by SE London Medical Branch of ASTMS, to be held on Saturday 22 October at 10am, at NUP Unity House, Euston Road, London NW1. Further information from: Janet Maguire, EDG Dept., Guys Hospital, London SE1. Tel: 01-407 7500, ext. 3152.

LEEDS Troops Out Movement. Meeting for those who want to form a Leeds branch. 8pm Tuesday 16 August at Trades Club, Saxtle Mount, Leeds 7.

SWEDISH comrade seeks room in London 27 September-26 October. Please reply with details of rent and location to Birgitta Sandström-Lagerqvist, Svartensgatan 6:11, S-116 20 Stockholm, Sweden.

LEFT without Marx? Libertarian study group on Marxism. Contact: Left without Marx, 15 Malcham Road, London E11 3LE.

VILLA ROAD Carnival in SW5. Sunday 14 August. 3pm onwards. Food, Games, Stalls and Street Theatre. All welcome.

HACKNEY Large and small room, shared kitchen and bathroom, 550 per month plus deposit. Phone 985 3858.

REPORT of Labour Movement Delegation to Ireland — detailed, comprehensive informative report of the Delegation. 22 pages, illustrated. Released to coincide with Queen's visit to Belfast. 30p plus 10p p&p (reductions for 10 or more copies) from LMDI, 1 North End Road, London W14.

BATTLE OF IDEAS Public Meeting, 'Eastern Europe — the Socialist Opposition'. Speakers from the socialist opposition movements and Labour Focus on Eastern Europe. Tuesday 16 August, 7.30pm in the Small Hall at Conwy Hall, Hed Lions Square (nearest tube Holborn). Organised by International Marxist Group.

Soweto struggle rocks racists

The popular struggle in the black township of Soweto for democratic local self-government is continuing with yet further attacks by the racist state's police.

On Tuesday police arrested 13 students involved in the school boycott and 'illegal' protest gatherings. In the process they shot and killed one student, bringing their murder toll for the past few weeks to a total of four.

The Government, through the mouth of the Deputy Minister for 'Bantu Affairs', then warned the students that unless they returned to their classes by the end of the week they would be liable to expulsion.

The police immediately took this as the green light for more 'get tough' measures, and on Thursday escalated their repression a step further. They organised a swoop on the homes of student militants, ransacking and beating in the process, and making 52 arrests. Elsewhere during the day the police used birdshot and unleashed police dogs to break up crowds of demonstrators, arresting a further 14.

COMMITTEE OF 10

The Soweto Committee of 10, the body which represents the movement for self-government, is demanding a genuinely democratic and autonomous local

authority, based upon a universal non-racial suffrage. This cuts right across the racist apartheid policies of the Vorster Government, which seek to deny the black population in the cities (which are reserved exclusively as 'white territory') and insist that political views be expressed via racially-based 'national' institutions.

They have steadfastly refused to meet the Committee of 10, denouncing them as 'stooges in the hands of the Student Representative Council'. But they are faced with determined opposition from the people of Soweto, that threatens to spread throughout the country. Already students in Pretoria have organised a nine-day boycott of classes in protest against the racist educational system, and in Uitenhage, in the Eastern Cape, another Urban Bantu Council (a powerless body that is allowed to 'advise' the white administration about 'black interests' in the urban areas) has resigned in *maoie* in 'total frustration' at the system.

It is therefore not surprising that the Johannesburg *Star* reports a split developing in the Government ranks, with Police

Minister Kruger leading the hard liners, and the Minister of Bantu Affairs seeking a softer line. It would appear that for the time being, the Government has resolved the problem by facing in both directions at once: Kruger's cops have been given a free hand to bash the student militants, while 'compromise' proposals have been put forward for a 'community council with advisory status' (in reality a face-lifted Urban Bantu Council) to woo the moderates on the Committee of 10.

DANGER

This points to danger in the present situation. Already some members of the Committee of 10 have tried to open up discussion with the Government, arguing that they can best 'control' the student militants.

But as long as the Student Representative Council, the mass of students under their leadership, and the people of Soweto are united in this struggle, and 'self-government' is seen as an *instrument of struggle*, the demand will remain a powerful one that the racist regime cannot swallow without undermining the foundations of their whole racist political order.

ROY ALEXANDER



IN BRIEF

ETHIOPIA: The Soviet policy of political and military support to the repressive Ethiopian military dictatorship has led to the Czechoslovak Government threatening to deport revolutionary student, Tadesse Abebe, back to the tender mercies of the Derg. A statement issued by the UK branch of the Ethiopian Students Union in Europe alleges that such harassment is becoming widespread and explains what this will mean:

'There must be no misunderstanding of this vicious and totally barbaric decision of your Government to deport democratic students to Ethiopia. It means, without any doubt at all, automatic torture and death at the fascists' hands.'

PERU: The Peruvian Government is attempting to smash trade union resistance to its austerity policies by mass victimisation of militants and the jailing of trade union leaders. In the wake of the 19 July general strike, a special decree was passed giving public and private firms two weeks in which to organise a mass purge. The now-underground strike organising committee has published a list of 3,056 militants sacked as a result. At the Bata shoe factory alone 450 were dismissed; and even in the state-owned steel factory, whose workers had been congratulated by the Government for their refusal to join the strike and who actually reached record production figures on the day of the strike, 40 workers were sacked.

At the same time, 30 national trade union leaders have been imprisoned for their role in the strike. Troops have been deployed to break a rash of miners' strikes that have spread across the Andes, with fifteen miners' leaders and 85 students assisting the strikers arrested. The Miners Federation General Secretary was exiled to France on 6 July.

ZIMBABWE: The External Affairs Minister of India, Atal Behari Vajpayee, told journalists after his return from a trip to Africa that India had been approached about the possibility of providing troops for a joint UN 'peace keeping' force for Zimbabwe. He indicated that the Indian Government was taking this proposal seriously, but that its final attitude depended upon talks with Britain, the US, and the African states.

FRANCE: Remember the French anti-nuclear demonstrator who died of a 'heart attack'? At least that was the story that the world's 'news' services carried. Their source was the French television network 'Antenna 1'. And where did their information come from? Not from the doctors who attended the dying man, who stated that they couldn't ascertain the cause of death and were insisting on an autopsy.

No, it was what they were told to say by the Ministry of the Interior in Paris. The post-mortem examination has turned up a different version. Vital Michalon died as a result of injuries of the sort that would be caused by an exploding percussion grenade — one designed to 'stun' demonstrators, not just release tear gas.

SPAIN: The American embassy in Madrid has opened 'diplomatic relations with the Spanish Communist Party. Jose Maria Mohamedano from the PCE recently lunched with embassy officials at their request. The current American ambassador to Spain, Wells Stabler, previously held posts in Paris and Rome, where his special responsibility was relations with the French and Italian CPs.

One hundred border violations Botswana: in the racists' vice

Events such as the Rhodesian army raids into Mozambique and the recent rocket attacks on the headquarters of the Joshua Nkomo's ZAPU in Lusaka, Zambia illustrates the unfettered arrogance of the white racists in their attempt to strike out at the liberation fighters. JIM ATKINSON examines the problems this produces for one of the most exposed of the 'front line' states — Botswana — and how this affects its political role in the current struggle in southern Africa.

According to government officials here, the Rhodesian white settler regime has violated Botswana's borders over 100 times since its unilateral declaration of independence in 1965. The vast majority of incidents have been in the last year. Now, border violations are almost a weekly fixture.

Botswana here also place the blame on Rhodesia for a deadly grenade attack against the Mophane Club, Francistown's most popular nightspot, on 6 May. Two people were killed and scores injured when unknown

assailants lobbed a hand grenade onto the club's packed dance-floor.

Evidence has also come to light that members of the Selous Scouts, Rhodesia's elite counter-insurgency unit, have been operating inside Botswana. Their main assignments here, it seems, are to kidnap opponents of the Smith regime and abduct them across the border.

SELOUS SCOUTS

On 15 June a member of the Selous Scouts, Amon Nyathi, was sentenced to four years' imprisonment by Gaborone Magistrates' Court for his part in

the abduction of four people from Botswana into Rhodesia at the end of last year. Nyathi, who admitted in court that he was a Selous Scout, was arrested when he pitched up at a police station posing as a refugee.

There is a widespread mood of anxiety here about the Rhodesian raids. Some villagers in the border areas have decided to abandon their homes and resettle further from the frontier. And, after the succession of much more serious Rhodesian incursions into Mozambique, many Botswana fear stepped-up aggression by the settler regime's troops in the months to come.

At the same time, thousands of Zimbabweans are streaming across the Botswana border — to escape the Smith regime's terrorist assaults against the civilian population and to enrol with the nationalist insurgents.

According to official sources here, about 800 Zimbabweans — mainly teenagers — have been arriving in Botswana every week since the beginning of March. At least 11,000 have arrived here since 1 March — and probably

more than 15,000 since the beginning of the year. The majority — about 600-700 a week — are being flown to camps in Zambia within days of their arrival here.

Conditions in the Francistown refugee camp — where there are about 2,000 refugees — are appalling. The camp, which was built in 1975, was designed to accommodate a maximum of 250. Now, there are hundreds sleeping outside — many under makeshift cardboard shelters — and there are not enough blankets to go around. Temperatures here (on the edge of the Kalahari desert) drop to freezing point during the southern hemisphere winter; and there is a real danger that an epidemic could sweep the camp if the refugees' resistance falls.

South African refugees here are also unsafe. In 1974 Abraham Tiro, a leader of the South African Students' Organisation (SASO), was blown up by a parcel bomb in Khale. There are between 500 and 550 South African refugees here, and about 50 more are arriving each month.

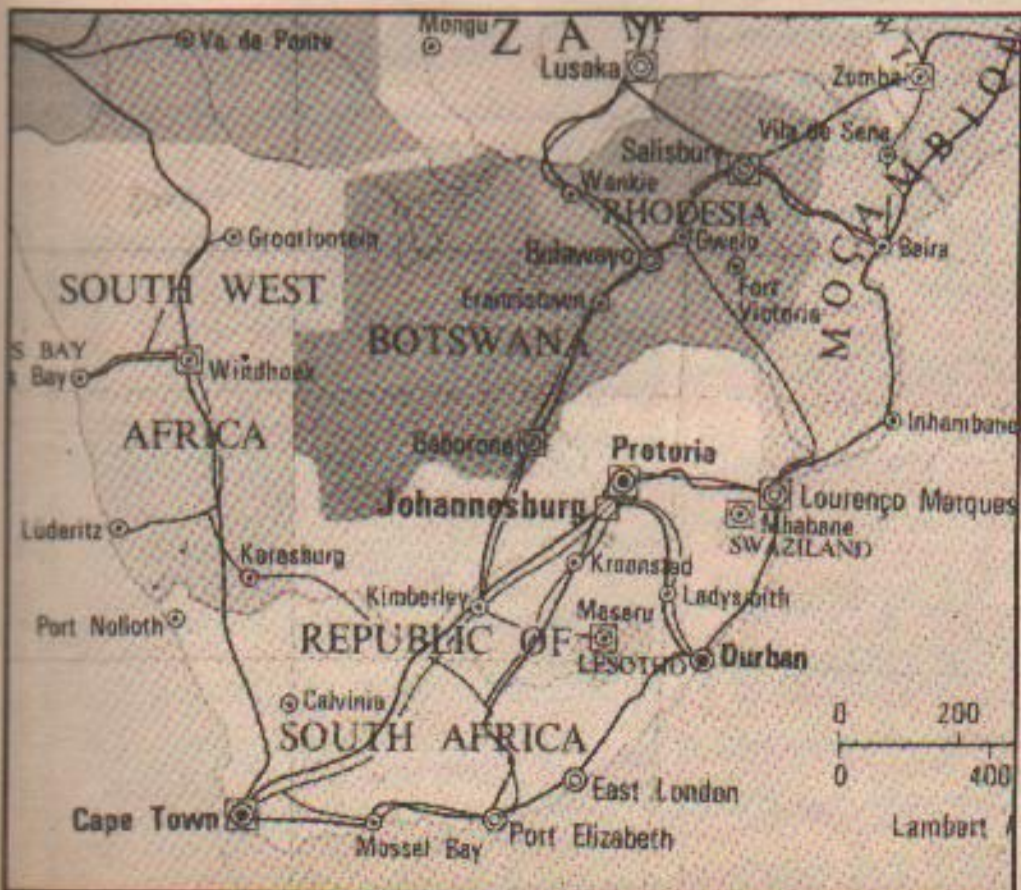
What is perhaps most striking about the mounting tension between the Smith regime and Botswana is that the neo-colonial government in Gaborone is proving incapable of defending the Botswana people against the settler forces.

The most effective way to defend the country's borders would be to train and arm the masses in the border regions. But Botswana's bourgeois government is not prepared to run the risks of placing the workers of Francistown or the rural poor under arms.

SPIRAL

President Seretse Khama's Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) is being dragged by events beyond its control into the spiralling conflagration in Zimbabwe. The problem facing Khama is that the Zimbabwean revolution is a destabilising factor throughout southern Africa, including capitalist Botswana itself. To defend its own interests, the Botswana ruling class wants a swift removal of the Smith regime and the installation of a neo-colonial administration.

The Botswana regime is also a partner to the 'frontline states' policy of encouraging the divisions in the Zimbabwean nationalist movement by giving one-sided support to the Patriotic Front, the bloc between Joshua



A tribute to Isaac Deutscher

ISAAC DEUTSCHER died ten years ago this month. It is not possible to assess his work in the space of a brief article written for a weekly newspaper. That is a task which needs to be carried out in the pages of a theoretical journal. A tribute to Deutscher is, however, long overdue. Many comrades who have been won to revolutionary politics over the last six years or thereabouts need to be reminded once again that Isaac Deutscher was one of us.

His work in the Fifties and Sixties did more to lay the basis for a lasting and viable anti-Stalinist tradition than all the empty rhetoric of his sectarian villifiers. He was, in our opinion, wrong on a number of important questions. But that in no way detracts from his stature as an outstanding Marxist historian, a writer of flawless English prose, and a farsighted political analyst.

The fact that Trotsky's leading role in the October Revolution is today almost universally acknowledged by Communist Party intellectuals in capitalist Europe is history's own tribute to the achievements of Isaac Deutscher.

Deutscher was born in Cracow, Poland in 1907. He came from a strong rabbinical background. Some of his early conflicts with Judaism are recorded with both honesty and wit in *A Non-Jewish Jew and Other Essays*.

He was a militant of the Polish Communist Party, but was expelled in the Thirties for his opposition to the suicidal policies of the Comintern in Germany at the height of the 'third period'. His positions on Germany brought him close to the Left Opposition. While he became a member of the International Left Opposition and remained implacably hostile to Stalin, he was nonetheless unconvinced of the need for a Fourth International. The Polish delegates to the Founding Conference of the FI in 1938, heavily influenced by Deutscher, voted against its formation.

Several months before the Nazi invasion of Poland, Deutscher left his native country and sought exile in Britain. He was seconded into the Polish army-in-exile, but spent most of the war as a journalist. Having read references in Marx's *Capital* to *The Economist*, Deutscher submitted his first article to the journal: it was published and thenceforward he wrote extensively on Eastern Europe both for *The Economist* and *The Observer*.

It was a stimulating discipline and it brought out all his talents as a contemporary political analyst. He had learnt English only in exile. He was to develop an amazing mastery of the language, displaying skills not dissimilar to those acquired by a fellow-Pole of the preceding generation — Joseph Conrad.

TROTSKY'S EXILE

Deutscher's main project was begun in the post-war period, at the start of the cold war. His monumental Trotsky trilogy began the Herculean task of replying to the mountains of slander heaped on the shoulders of the founder of the Red Army: an accumulated product of the Stalinist propaganda machine, which functioned on a world scale. The completion of the three volumes was a remarkable feat. They were written during a bleak period in international politics. The audience for them was almost limited to semi-academic circles. They represented a powerful assault both on the crude anti-communism of cold war historians and the disgusting apologetics of CP writers who justified every Stalinist atrocity. The trilogy soon became widely recognised, though this was not acknowledged at the time, as a political and literary classic.



At the age of four in Cracow



In the Twenties



Isaac & Tamara Deutscher in the Sixties

At War Crimes Tribunal with (l to r) Sartre, Dedijer and Matarasso.

by Tariq Ali

It is not easy today to evoke the conditions under which Deutscher worked. The British intelligentsia was uniformly hostile to him. He received no grants from academic bodies, no university professorships from the educational establishment, no regular appearances on television as an authority on the Soviet Union. The British academic intelligentsia was dominated by reactionary emigres from the East: Berlin, Popper and their associates held complete sway. They were envious of Deutscher's achievements.

They were enraged because this particular emigre from the East was the odd person out from their generation. He spoke a different language — the language of Marxism. His intellectual prowess threatened to break their monopoly of politics and history on the campus. They accordingly preferred to treat him as an outcast. Isaiah Berlin sabotaged the offer of a post to Deutscher at Sussex University. Legend has it that this great believer in democracy said: 'We can't have a Marxist teaching Russian history', while blackballing Deutscher's appointment. The sole and honourable exception was the

noted historian E.H. Carr, who openly acknowledged Deutscher's merits.

As a result, Deutscher had to sacrifice some of his time in writing articles for the press to earn a living. This meant less work on more vital projects. The CP intellectuals were closely tied to Moscow and regarded him as a heretic. Those who had left the CP viewed Deutscher's expressed loyalty to the tenets of classical marxism as a sign of his 'dogmatism'. This is what makes his achievement all the more courageous and worthy of our unremitting respect.

THE TRILOGY

In a sense it is analogous to the first period of Trotsky's own exile on the island of Prinkipo, where he wrote the *History of the Russian Revolution* in a state of enforced solitude. Two decades later his biographer would write from a similar position of isolation induced by the objective political situation. Both Trotsky's *History* and Deutscher's trilogy must rank as the two finest examples of contemporary historical writing within the tradition of classical marxism. It is not a pure accident that

over the last five decades the tradition which has scrupulously furnished the international working class movement with a historical analysis of the present has been the tradition of Trotsky.

Deutscher's last years were spent on researching his projected biography of Lenin. We are convinced that this work would have been a powerful counterblast to the traditions of Stalinism. Deutscher would have written a critical biography (which, incidentally, is still needed) and not used the method of vulgar quotation-mongering so characteristic of the Stalinists who in this way justified their tactics and policies of the day. His work on Lenin was initially halted by his commitment to the Vietnamese struggle. He threw himself with great fervour into the anti-war movement. He addressed teach-ins in the United States. He enthused his audiences and they enthused him.

He served as a judge on the International War Crimes Tribunal initiated by Bertrand Russell. He was also excited by the possibilities opened up by the Cuban revolution. Before he could return to his biography of Lenin, death struck. He was sixty years of age. The

international working class was deprived of its most gifted historian.

The death was doubly tragic because Deutscher's audience was to be enlarged by tens of thousands in under a year. He died before the General Strike of May '68 in France, before the invasion of Czechoslovakia and before the Tet military offensive of the Vietnamese decisively shifted the balance of forces in February '68. He would have been deeply affected by all these developments. It is very likely that his views on the USSR and East Europe would have undergone a change as the young communists who were serialising his *The Unfinished Revolution* in the pages of *Literaire Liszt* were crushed by Soviet tanks.

One of their 'crimes' was to be, in the words of *Pravda*, publishing works by the notorious 'anti-communist' Deutscher! He would have seen many of his aspirations fulfilled as tens of thousands of young students and workers flocked to join the Trotskyist movement, thus projecting it onto the stage of national and international politics. Many of them had come to Trotsky through Deutscher.

UNFINISHED PROJECTS

The Unfinished Revolution was published in 20 languages (including Bengali, Serbo-Croat, Polish and Czech); it was circulated in *Samizdat* in the USSR itself. The Trotsky trilogy has been translated into most of the major languages. His essays have been read by hundreds of thousands of people. Deutscher reached his peak as a historian when there were two strong reputations for non-Stalinist Marxists: either to adapt to cold war pressures, or to capitulate abjectly to Stalinism. Deutscher avoided both pitfalls.

However given his views on the USSR, namely that self-reform was possible (a belief enhanced by the 20th Party Congress and the Polish events of 1957) it is hardly surprising that he overestimated the political health of the Stalinist movement. He was singularly unsympathetic, for instance, to the workers' uprising in East Berlin in 1953, seeing it as weakening the workers states vis à vis imperialism. Here his position was in marked contrast to that of Bertolt Brecht who, from the inside, saw why the masses were rebelling and saved his irony for the bureaucrats.

Nonetheless, many of Deutscher's writings of that period display a perspicacity which constantly eluded most of his sectarian opponents. Some even refused to recognise genuine social revolutions because they did not fit into pre-established schemas. On the Chinese Cultural Revolution, in particular, Deutscher's political assessment was far more balanced than that of the Fourth International.

As we have already indicated, Deutscher's thought was anything but static. 1968 would have exercised a powerful pressure in helping him to reassess a number of important questions, not least the strategy for overthrowing the bureaucracies and liberating the masses from their stranglehold in the USSR, China and the Eastern European countries.

Deutscher never joined the Fourth International. But he was very important for it. He took a conscious decision to devote his time to producing history because he regarded the period in which he lived to be unfriendly to the growth of new revolutionary parties. Trotsky had been involved in the tremendous revolutionary upsurge of 1905-18 in Europe. From it he went into the 'hell-black night' of the Thirties. Deutscher emerged from that night and just as the light of a new sun became visible on the horizon, he died.

Most comrades over the last decade have come to revolutionary politics through activity of one sort or another. This is very positive, but organisation without political education is totally insufficient. Therefore our conclusion is very simple. The best way we can pay tribute to Deutscher is by studying his writings in the same critical Marxist way in which he studied Lenin and Trotsky. For we still have a lot to learn and Deutscher still has a lot to teach us.

Watch it!

READING your editorial of 28 July. The strange case of comrade Jones, I found myself checking to make sure I hadn't bought the Morning Star by mistake. For while it correctly took up most of the main issues surrounding the Maurice Jones case, it failed totally to relate these to any policies by which the working class could combat the Special Branch and British Intelligence repression.

Instead of elaborating the steps which workers in the telephone and postal services could take to sabotage phone-tapping and the opening of the mail, and calling for a campaign in the Labour Party to open the secret files and end these practices, the editor concentrated solely on what Labour MPs (presumably right as well as 'left') should do in Parliament.

And the article ends with the call for a 'full enquiry', without mentioning the inevitable biased nature of any Government or police inquiry, and without putting forward the real need for a labour movement enquiry. The political line of the whole column was that of reliance on the labour bureaucracy and state institutions. To put it plainly, this is pure reformism.

Usually Socialist Challenge puts forward the correct policy that revolutionaries should follow towards the bureaucracy based on the need to unite the working class and its allies around policies meeting the objective needs of the situation. Thus on this political basis the syndicalist and sectarian errors of Socialist Worker are avoided. Their line on, for example, the Grunwicks July 11th picket, was

that of opposing the bureaucracy regardless of whether they act in the interests of the working class. Unfortunately Socialist Challenge missed this opportunity for political clarification.

Revolutionaries must always guard against the penetration of bourgeois ideology, especially reformism, into our movement. We must constantly counterpose revolutionary politics to all shades of centrism and reformism. The 28 July editorial was obviously an exception in Socialist Challenge's generally correct revolutionary politics. But the fact that it appeared at all means that the comrades must be specially vigilant in future.

IAN CHOWCAT (Manchester)

That poem again

YOUR DECISION TO PUBLISH the poem at the centre of the Gay News trial seems to have sparked off quite a controversy. Already a number of people have described it as reactionary & 'sexist'. Aside from placing Socialist Challenge on the line of support of gay rights, because that was what was at

stake in the trial, printing the poem also raised some other issues.

Many people who regularly read the paper seemed quite shocked. Many saying the poem was in itself 'sexist' in the way it presented sex. Behind that sort of comment lies the type of bigotry that brought Mary Whitehouse to prosecute. For socialists there is a world of difference between pornography and the description of a form of sexuality so suppressed within our society. Such a description of gay sex is a real challenge to the ideology of capitalist society and the fact that it produces strong reactions amongst the left only reveals the work that has to be done on fighting genuine sexism.

Unfortunately, though, the poem does need some comment which was sadly lacking in Socialist Challenge. It contained a number of genuine reactionary ideas and not just because of its

attitude to Christianity as Socialist Worker pointed out. Within it lies the idea that somehow Jesus Christ might have been gay. That if people can be shown that "he" was one then everything will be alright for gays. It's a common attitude amongst oppressed minorities. If you show you're respectable and you've various personalities among your ranks then your ok. Such ideas do nothing to challenge the real reasons behind gay oppression, the sexism inherent within the capitalist family.

While Socialist Challenge can be congratulated for printing the poem your coverage of the Gay News trial wasn't satisfactory. This was both an attack on gays & on hard won democratic rights affecting all the labour movement. You didn't try and organise the kind of campaign needed in reply. Lets hope now you can correct that.

CHRIS BAMBERRY (Edinburgh)

Socialist Challenge

WEST AND WALES

CARDIFF: Public Forum. 'The Labour Party'. Speaker Adrian Jones (NUPE official). Friday 19 August, 7.30pm. Rhythmye pub, Adam Street Cardiff (opp. prison).

MIDLANDS

For details of activities of local supporters contact Socialist Challenge Centre, 760 Digbeth High Street, Birmingham. (021-643 9209).

YORKSHIRE

SHEFFIELD readers meet fortnightly, 7.30pm, the Lion Hotel, 3 Nursery Street (off the Wicker), Sheffield. YORK: Fortnightly readers' meetings. Next meeting Sunday 20 August, 7.30pm Spread Eagle pub, Walmgate, York.

NORTH EAST

DARLINGTON Fortnightly Forums. Next Meeting Tuesday 16 August, 7.30pm. Public Library, Darlington.

SOUTHAMPTON readers meet fortnightly on Thursday in the Anchor pub, East Street, Southampton. Next meeting Thursday 11 August. For further details ring Paul at 0703 551132.

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 2362.

Open Tuesday 6-8pm, Thursday 6-8pm, Saturday 10-1pm. Room available for meetings. Duplicating services.

MANCHESTER. Series of educational for readers.

Thursday 18 August. 'Racism'. Thursday 1 September. 'Need for a Revolutionary Party'.

All at the Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre at 7.30pm.

WARRINGTON Socialist Challenge discussion and action group meets every Tuesday 8pm at Bowling Green, Liverpool Road, Warrington.

SHEFFIELD readers meet fortnightly, 7.30pm, the Lion Hotel, 3 Nursery Street (off the Wicker), Sheffield. Next meeting Thursday 11 August.

LEEDS readers meet fortnightly. Next meeting Tuesday 23 August, 8pm, Leeds Trades Club, Saville Mount, Leeds 7.

WIGAN Discussion Group. Next meeting Thursday 15 August, 7.30pm, Market Hotel, Measns St, Wigan.

LONDON

SOUTHALL. Supporters group meets fortnightly. For details phone 01-573 5096.

BRENT: Readers Group. Meets every other Monday at Willesden Junction Hotel, Station Road, NW 10. Next meeting Monday 22 August.

HOME COUNTIES

READING Readers meeting. Every Thursday evening, 7.30pm, 89 Amitt, Road, Reading.

SOUTHAMPTON Readers meet fortnightly on Thursday in the Anchor pub, East Street from Thursday 25 July. For further details phone Paul at 0703-551132.

BRIGHTON Summer Forums. Thursday 11 August 'Revolutionaries and elections'. Thursday 25 August 'The Working Women's Charter'. Thursday 3 September 'Save the EGA'. All at the Springfield pub (near London Road SR station), Brighton at 8pm.

"Forging an effective practice"

WE ARE VERY interested in doing some research and analysis on the history, development and function of political demonstrations, particularly in Britain (but with reference to different traditions in other countries). We feel that the left in Britain in particular ought to re-assess and question the usefulness of many of the demonstrations it mounts on a routine, week-to-week basis. But to do that, and to forge a more effective practice, we have to have some understanding of the origins and historical development of the demo phenomenon.

Therefore we would be very pleased to hear from people who can help us in this project, by sending us clippings, photos, anecdotes, reports, source references and ideas on the subject. Our findings will probably be published as a long article in Wedge magazine, sometime next year. Thank you.

Lindsay Cooper, Carl Gardner, Mandy Merck, 29A Hemstal Road, London NW6



Don't deny them a platform

WE HAVE BEEN following the correspondence regarding the banning of Zionists from Union facilities and would like to express our opinion on the matter.

Zionism inculcates into Jews and many non-Jews as well the idea that it is impossible for Jews to do safe in Gentile societies due to an inherent anti-semitic tendency within each non-Jew. Consequently, according to Zionism, people of a Jewish background will only be safe in a society where there are only (or mainly) Jews. And this society has to be built within the frontiers of a Zionist Israel.

Any phenomenon which can be taken, however wrongly, to show the correctness of the above Zionist thesis is trumpeted as far and wide as the Zionists are able to. Thus every Zionist newspaper carries one or preferably more than one, 'example' of anti-semitic activity, and if the example can be made to last a few issues more all the better. It is in this regard that the No Platform for Zionists issue has been distorted. Tai Mechover (28 July) in TBC's Corner when she points out that Zionism brooks no anti-semitism or an anything which can be taken to speak, in the eyes of an officially immature youngster

WANTED - FOR MURDER!

MENAHEM BEGIN
of Polish origin. Age 64 years. Prime Minister of Israel. TERRORIST; in connection with the Yassan massacre, the King David Hotel bombing and membership of the Irgun Zvi Leumi terrorist organisation.

Responsible for the deaths of 236 persons.
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF PUBLIC SAFETY & CONCERN BY: BAZO

who have been raised in a claustrophobic Zionist atmosphere, so anti-semitism.

There is not the slightest doubt that however well-intentioned were those anti-Zionists who were pushing the No Platform line, lack of understanding of Zionism and how it operates (especially outside Israel) has probably led to a temporary strengthening of Zionist identification in the minds of some Jewish youth.

We for our part, are (and have been for a number of months) opposed to applying administrative measures against Jewish or Israel societies because they have a Zionist line, as it only allows the members of these societies to avoid the real political debate about the nature of Zionism. Since these people have no real answer they look for any opportunity to avoid the subject and those pushing the No Platform line have given them the chance to shout 'Anti-semitism!' — even when it isn't.

As part of the political, rather than administrative, struggle against Zionism we are circulating the enclosed advert and hope you have space to subsidise it for your paper.

GEORGE MITCHELL, National Secretary, British Anti-Zionist Organisation.

Welsh nationalism

A SUCCESSFUL Socialist Challenge meeting on 'Welsh Nationalism and Socialism', held in Cardiff in June, with speakers from the International Marxist Group and Plaid Cymru, prompts me to write this letter.

Unlike the question of Scottish nationalism, the situation in Wales was not, as far as I can remember, been treated in any depth in the pages of 'British' revolutionary left journals. In the debate around devolution, the tendency seems to have been to incorporate Wales into political formulations derived from the debate around Scotland, thus leading (for example) to a simplistic equation of Plaid Cymru with the SNP. The fact that members of the Plaid are prepared to debate with the revolutionary left, as in the meeting I refer to above, should be enough to show that the political situation in Wales is a distinct one.

A number of currents in Wales are working around various formulations of the national question, cultural considerations (particularly the Welsh language), and their links with the struggle for socialism. That generation of radical youth which, in England, became politically active around anti-imperialist struggles, manifested itself in Wales largely through the actions of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymnag (Welsh Language Society). The left wing of the national movement is beginning to discuss the large number of issues pertaining to the national question in Wales, part of this process being a con-

Trespass laws

THE CRIMINAL Trespass Laws pose the greatest threat ever to squatters, are probably a more serious attack for the working class than the Industrial Relations Act, and will curtail student activities.

Without doubt these vicious laws greatly extend State powers of oppression.

There is no doubt that squatters will be the first target of attack; indeed it has started with a number of recent police evictions and landlord break-ins and lock-outs. It will not be long before these laws are used on workers who will face heavy fines or imprisonment for occupying their workplace or conducting certain forms of picketing.

In view of the seriousness of these new legal devices to criminalise the homeless and crush militancy in the Labour Movement, I fail to understand why Socialist Challenge (28 July) gave such a miserable coverage to the implications of the Criminal Trespass Laws — in contrast to a full-page ad for a Symposium to be held in mid-September.

It has never been more important for the Left to take up the issue of the Trespass Laws in the Labour Movement. Squatters are in the forefront of the struggle to fight their implementation, but we need the active involvement of the left and the Labour Movement in a united counteroffensive campaign.

The newly formed London Squatters Union would appreciate the opportunity to be allocated reasonable space in Socialist Challenge to offer analysis and concrete proposals for a campaign of united action to fight the Criminal Trespass Laws.

EMMA TAIT (London)

Our policy is to allow all groups in struggle the use of our Spacout columns. CACTL have already used this facility and London squatters should do so as well. Maximum length: 500 words — EOS.

reference on 'Socialism and the National Question' held in Aberystwyth last November.

The only 'British' political organisation which is seen to be intervening in this field is the Communist Party, whose quarterly bilingual journal 'Cyffro' devoted much of its most recent issue to the question of devolution, including a detailed statement of the CP's position. Where is the revolutionary left? The SWP/IS has made a few interventions around a crude 'Nationalism or Socialism?' counterposition, and that appears to be all. With the experience of the French and Spanish sections of the Fourth International to draw upon, the former regarding the Breton, Occitan and Corsican questions, and the latter those of Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque country, I feel that the IMG has much that it could offer to the debate in Wales.

G. Roberts (Swansea)

How Heartfield cut up Fascism

by CARL GARDNER

Currently at the Institute of Contemporary Arts gallery on the Mall in London (until 15 September) is a retrospective exhibition of one of the most political and original artists of the revolutionary movement — the German communist, John Heartfield. Along with artist-comrade George Grosz — both heavily influenced by the Dadaists — he virtually invented the art of photo-montage. This form has been commonplace since 1968 in contexts varying from the front pages of revolutionary newspapers like Black Dwarf and Socialist Challenge, to the sumptuous ads in the Sunday Times supplement.

Heartfield was in a position to use his developing techniques for mass revolutionary purposes, in the communist press of the 20s and 30s, first against the Weimar Republic and to chart the rise of fascism and Hitler's dictatorship.

But Heartfield's carefully constructed satirical montages, directed principally at the various forms of fascism and their backers, were revolutionary not only in content. They were based on the latest technology of photo-reproduction and were in turn well-suited for mass reproduction.

No reverential idealisation of the 'original' art-object for Heartfield. No 'ivory tower' separation from everyday, political life. It is only in the last few years that the bourgeois art world has been able to appropriate him into the pantheon of artistic wizards — a minor 'genius'.

Unfortunately for them Heartfield's art belies them. For although he was particularly adept at the technique, and sometimes had photographs specially posed and models constructed, photo-montage can be employed by anybody. In essence

it consists of cutting up already existing images, in newspapers, magazines, etc, and juxtaposing them to create a new meaning which dislocates ordinary associations and helps people see the relations between things in a new, radical way.

Unlike painting or poetry or the theatre, there is no 'mystery' in the way photo-montage is produced. The exhibition helps in this understanding, by showing Heartfield's simple tools — the means of production — and the stages through which some of his 'pictures' progressed.

But another breakthrough that Heartfield's work made was the total destruction of the false bourgeois distinction between 'objectivity' and 'manipulation' in the media. His pictures, though derived from 'objective' constituent elements, are clearly and honestly 'manipulated'. Yet which is more 'truthful', Heartfield's montage of Hitler being slipped a fistful of bank-notes by the looming figure of German capitalism, or the literal, 'un-manipulated' photos of mass Nazi rallies, glorifying the purity and omnipotence of the Führer.

BUBBLE

Critical questions such as these bubble to the surface after only a cursory glance at Heartfield's creations. The dirty word 'manipulation' here becomes an asset and a virtue, because he was never misled by untenable liberal-artistic notions of 'objectivity'.

Indispensable, too, is the display of contemporary German political posters — many directed at the repressive anti-communist legislation of Herr Schmidt's social democracy. These serve to show the legacy that not just the left but the whole visual media owe to Heartfield.

The John Heartfield exhibition is at the ICA main gallery, 12 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1 until 15 September.

Photomontage, by Dawn Ades, illustrates the work of major exponents of photomontage, including Heartfield. Published by Thames and Hudson at £2.50.



33 John Heartfield, Millions Stand Behind Me (14 October 1932)

Sealing the gates of Saltley

by RONAN BRADY

THEATRE SOMETIMES acts to clarify political consciousness in a way that no other 'art form' can. This is especially true of agitational drama like *Saltley Gates*. This production by the Banner Theatre Co, which I saw in Willesden, manages to pinpoint the political issues and the tactical problems raised by the 1974 miners' strike and to make some telling points about Grunwick at the same time.

Banner employs a blend of agitprop which is geared towards the maximum identification of the audience with the miners in their struggle. This was extremely effective in bringing out the importance of the closing of the gates.

The early days at Saltley are presented as a test match between the MCC (Midlands County Constabulary) and the 'lads from down under'. This builds up tension to a fine melodramatic conclusion.

SUSPENSE

A local worker describes the suspense of waiting for the delegation from a nearby factory with whom his comrades were to join. Another notes the disquiet among the police as they see the streets totally empty. As the massed delegations appear, the audience is urged up onto the stage — then the slide projectors switch to scenes of the Grunwick picket.

But what galvanised the production for the militant audience of three hundred was the consistent support for the mass pickets. When the Scargill figure denounces the diversionary marches, the audience gave rousing support. This underlines the main function of the Banner production — to show how the success at Saltley could show the way for such struggles in the future.

There is a danger in this way of approaching Saltley — as a myth rather than a concrete reality, ridden with the contradictions we meet in daily political life. Every discussion of the action on stage resolved itself without great problem in direct active support for the pickets. No time was given to the serious contradictions within working class ideology. The impression given was that solidarity actions just happen.

But more seriously the failings of this type of drama are seen when it fails to confront bourgeois ideology. Throughout the play women are predominantly regarded as appendages of the (male) miners struggle. Hardly on any occasion are women seen outside the family situation. One incident of crude male chauvinism was presented without any criticism.

These criticisms are put in a positive spirit. The commitment which the theatre company showed in offering all the proceeds to the Grunwick strike fund, despite their own lack of support from bodies such as the Arts Council, testified to their dedication to the class struggle.

The Banner Theatre Co, based in Birmingham, can be contacted on: 021 454 4684.

THE LAMPS in Parliament Square shimmer across the Thames, the camera moves to Big Ben, a close-up, it's ten o'clock — Bong! — The familiar voice of Reginald Bosanquet — 'MP's pay rise endangers the Social Contract' — Bong! — 'Royal Family squares up for a massive wage claim' — Bong! — 'British Leyland's future threatened by huge dividend payouts'.

Why ITN's News at Ten has never begun like that may seem obvious, just as obvious as the distortions in the versions of the news that we do see on TV and in the press. Yet the most obvious are often the most dangerous. They make us arrogant ('We don't believe that crap') and passive ('Nothing we can do about it, at least till the proletariat storms Bush House and the barricades go up in Fleet Street').

Knowing that most news items are grossly biased doesn't give us any immunity from their influence. We still watch TV news, even if we watch little else (audience research shows that TV is the main source of news for the majority of the population).

Over the last few years debates on the media have at last extended their frame of reference beyond Marshal McLuhan or whether watching Bionic Man makes kids jump out of windows. Media studies departments have been set up in a number of universities, the TUC has begun discussing anti-trade union bias

Screening us out

by MALCOLM IMRIE

In news broadcasts, NALGO has correctly argued for trade unions to monitor the news.

At the same time volumes of muddled liberalism (at best) have been churned out by committees — the Annan report on the Future of Broadcasting, the Wilson working party report on the Film Industry, the Royal Commission on the Press, and so on. And, most significantly, various campaigns are starting to challenge the racism and sexism of the media and to fight for an end to the censorship of coverage of the war in Ireland.

BAD NEWS

Trade Unions and the Media is a good introduction to these debates. It contains ten essays by writers who are either academics working in media studies (particularly the Glasgow Media Group, who produced *Bad News* — a study of media bias that ITN tried to ban) or members of unions with experience of attacks by the media (local government workers, students, agriculture workers).

The most useful parts of the book are those summarising detailed studies of TV and press coverage of industrial news based on monitoring over a fixed period. The figures alone are fascinating. TV news in the first six months of 1975 gave 24.1 per cent of its general industrial coverage to strikes in the car industry (which employs 2.1 per cent of the workforce). Most of

this was on Leyland.

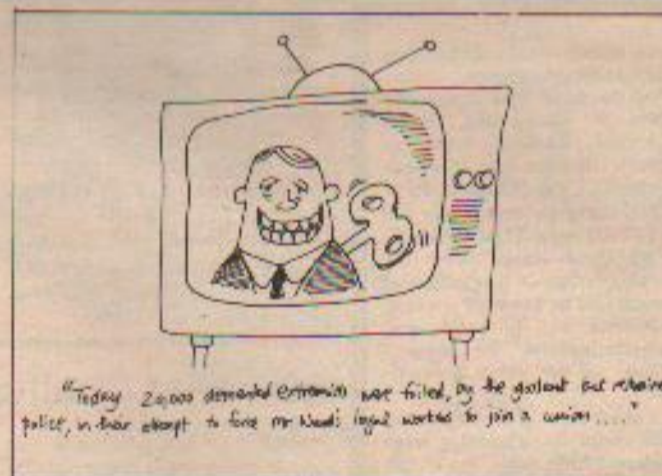
In the same period, 94 references to inflation gave wage-rises as the main cause; 33 suggested investment. In 21 interviews covering the Glasgow dustcart drivers' strike on TV none of those on strike was interviewed. Out of the 843 named interviewees on TV in the first three months of 1975 only 7.7 per cent were women — and these were almost all from sports or entertainment.

Most importantly, the essays make it clear that the regular distortion of events (and a lack of coverage of events not deemed important) is not the main problem. It is more the way in which the media fits events into a given structure in which 'consensus' opinions and Government policies are always rational, and workers' struggles are acts of inexplicable madness.

News is organised and coded within this structure — by the vocabulary used, where interviews take place — boss behind a desk, shop steward shouting above the noise of machinery — even by the camera angles. Given this, simply complaining about the content of news is inadequate — it is the framework itself that does the damage and which will remain intact in spite of all calls for independent control bodies.

POWERFUL

The book also examines the increasing monopolisation of the media, the financial links



between different sectors, and the powerful control over the press exercised by advertising revenues. One example: 'In 1956 *The Guardian* alone among national newspapers opposed the British invasion of Suez. Overnight, 40 per cent of its advertising revenue disappeared.' How control works through editors and producers 'internalising' censorship through 'knowing what makes good news

stories' is also covered, though not in nearly enough detail.

The sections on strategies for fighting media bias are very weak. This isn't really surprising. We are only just beginning to realise the ways the media exercise power. How to neutralise that power is the next problem.

Trade Unions and the Media (ed. Peter Beharrell and Greg Philo.) Macmillan, £2.95.

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NAMIBIA ARMED and ALL WE WANT IS FREEDOM: The British premiere of *Namibia Armed*, clandestinely made early this year in Namibia, by SWAPO. *All We Want is Freedom*, also shot clandestinely, documents the resistance of the Zimbabwean people. At 6.30 daily from Mon 15 August to Fri 19 August, with discussions following on Tues, Weds, Thurs and Fri.

THE BATTLE OF CHILE: Not only the best films about Allende and the coup, but two of the best documentary films ever made (*Time Out*). Part 1, Fri 2 August at 6.30, and Sat 13 August at 4.30. Part 2, 13 August at 6.30 and Sun 19 August at 9pm.

SUMMER IN THE CITY: 'Women and Rock' — with the film *Janis*, documentary on the music of Janis Joplin and performance by Carol Grimes, followed by a discussion. Sun 14 August at 6pm. The film *Janis* daily from Sun 14 August to Wed 17 August at 8.45.

Ena Sharples Watch Out!
In the next issue, *Under Review* will be paying a visit to Coronation Street. Reviews of other television series are welcome.

Socialist Challenge

Broad support for Socialist Unity appeal

VOTE AHSAN

* A Socialist Unity meeting to discuss an election candidate in Moss Side, Manchester, is being held on Monday 15 August, 7.30pm, at the Moss Side Sports and Social Club.

This appeal for Raghib Ahsan, the Socialist Unity candidate in the Ladywood by-election, has been endorsed by the signatories below.

Ahsan is a shop steward at Rovers, Solihull. He is active in the Birmingham labour movement where he has fought against wage restraint, opposed

cuts in the social services and has always urged working class unity in order to defeat racism. Last May in the local elections he stood in the Salfley Ward, where he polled 620 votes against the 320 polled by the fascist National Front.

We want you to vote for and work for Ahsan in this election. We are asking you to do this because we think that it is vital that ordinary working people reject the policies of the Labour Government. This Government's policies have cut your living standards.

They have made sure that you have less houses. They have cut back on hospitals and nurseries. Every worker is now worse off — prices are sky high, and the old, the sick and the unemployed are being squeezed so that the rich can get richer.

Ahsan and Socialist Unity will fight all that. He is for an immediate wage increase that will compensate every worker for any cut they have suffered in living standards because of the Social Contract. He is for a freeze on all prices now. He is against cuts in education,

health etc. He rejects all immigration laws and insists that there is room for everyone but the bosses. He is for full and equal rights for women.

Most of us who have signed this letter are not members of any organisation. We do, however, welcome the decision of Socialist Unity to fight this by-election. We think that it shows how people can come together and organise for policies which will make sure that they are not driven into poverty and insecurity. We know that when this by-election is over Socialist Unity and Ahsan will not pack their bags and leave Ladywood.

The supporters of Socialist Unity pledge that they will remain in Ladywood to carry on the fight for the interests of all working people. We are pleased that Socialist Unity has brought together people from different socialist organisations and socialists who are not in any organisation. This shows that working class unity is not just a good idea but is possible in practice. It is for these reasons we say: Vote Ahsan! Support Socialist Unity! This is in your interests.



- Chris Adamson (NUPE Area Officer, West Midlands)
- Ken Allen (Dy. Convenor, AUCW, Rover, Solihull)
- Jenny Allen (Shop-steward, NUPE, Moseley Hall Hospital)
- Kathy Ambrose (Shop-steward, NUPE, Moseley Hall Hospital)
- Sandy Amber (Women's Liberation Movement — WLM — B'ham)
- Mick Archer (Chairperson, B'ham Poly SU)
- John Brown (Chairperson, Direct Works Action Cttee, UCATT)
- Charlotte Bronslee (WLM, B'ham)
- Mohd Bashir (Asian Socialist League)
- Eve Brook (WWC)
- B.C. Barber (Shop-steward, Rover, Solihull)
- Billie Campbell (Shop-steward, NUPE, All-Saints Hospital)
- Tim Commish (Shop-steward, AUEW)
- Mary Crawford (Dy. President, B'ham Poly SU)
- Martin Cumella (NUPE Branch Sec. and member CPGB)
- Fred Castel (Nat. Exec. Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Union)
- A. Durran (Shop-steward, Rover, Solihull)
- Penny Duncombe (WLM, B'ham)
- Terry O'Donnell (NATFHE, Womens Rights Panel)
- Dave Edger (Playwright)
- Lorna Edy (WLM, B'ham)
- C.C. Gallagher (Shop-steward, Rover, Solihull)
- John Graham (Shop-steward, Wilmot Broadon)
- Roger Griffiths (Sec. Joint Shop-stewards Cttee, Lucas BW3)
- Steve Griffiths (AUEW Branch Sec.)
- Ric Hatcher (Walsall Trades Council delegate)
- M. Hardy (AUEW Branch Officer)
- Allx Holt (Sec. B'ham NAC)
- Pat Hickey (Shop-steward, Rover, Solihull)
- M. O'Hara (Shop-steward, Rover, Solihull)
- Iqbal Jehangir (T.G.W.U., Asian Soc. League)
- Terry Mandrell (NATFHE, Branch Sec.)
- Tim McGuire (Gay Lib, B'ham)
- Rolain McDonough (Troops Out Movement)
- Phil Rooke (AUEW Convenor, Forman Rd Works)
- Pauline Roe (Dy. President, B'ham Poly SU)
- Mick Rice (Chairperson, Joint Shop-stewards Cttee, Lucas BW3)
- Sue Rushworth (NUPE, Summerfield Hospital)
- Carole Smith (B'ham Women's Aid)
- Steve Smith (Gay Lib, B'ham)
- Adrian Simpson (Chairperson, B'ham Area NUS)
- Martin Tolman (NUPE Membership Sec.)
- Peter Try (AUEW Branch Sec.)
- R. West (Shop-steward, Rover, Solihull)
- Jonathan Woodbridge (Science for People)
- Alan York (NUPE Branch Sec.)

How YOU can help

Throughout the working class streets, the industrial districts and the immigrant areas of Ladywood, the walls and empty shop fronts are plastered with Socialist Unity posters.

Teams of Socialist Unity supporters are busy in the streets, the shopping precincts and in the pubs arguing the case for a united working class campaign to fight back against the attacks of the employers and the Labour Government. **report ALISON ROBERTS and BOB PENNINGTON:**

Vivid red and yellow posters demand: 'Smash racism — No immigration laws and end police harassment.' Another poster reads: 'Ahsan, Leyland worker says: "For the right to work — No wage controls — Freeze prices".' Three thousand posters have also been produced calling for the building of a 'socialist alternative'.

Each of Ladywood's 36,000 voters will receive the Socialist Unity manifesto. A special manifesto in Punjabi and Urdu is being mailed to all the Asian voters. Posters are also being produced in these two languages.

The campaign is gaining ground among militants in other left organisations and among independent trade unionists, as

the letter of support published on this page indicates.

There are many people who right now do not want to join a revolutionary organisation. They will, however, fight with socialists: against the wage freeze, against racism, for women's rights. They want a better life than this Government can offer. This fight does not end on 18 August — polling day.

The struggle for socialism means getting people thinking about and active on all these issues. Socialist Unity can bring together people with left-wing views. It can also show working people that they are not isolated and that by using their strength they can defeat the employers.

Come to Ladywood and help this work. We need people and we need money. Anyone who wants to help will be welcome — you can come out canvassing, address envelopes, design and produce posters and leaflets, speak at street corner meetings. There are lots of jobs you could do.

The campaign has got off the a flying start. To keep it going, people and money are vital. We are depending on you. Helpers please ring Clive Turnbull, Alison Roberts or Bob Pennington at 021-643 9209. Money should be sent to: Raghib Ahsan, 76B Digbeth, Birmingham 5. Or report to: Socialist Unity Election HQ, 347 Soho Road, Handsworth.

Car workers in front line

own claim to make up for their fall in living standards.

At the same time representatives of more than 20,000 Chrysler workers voted to smash through the Government/TUC 10 per cent limit. Their claim was nearly two and a half times the TUC dictate.

All these moves offer the same message — a rejection of any limits in pay and a determination not to hand over negotiations to the slippery hands of the union bureaucracy.

CARWORKERS at Leyland and at Chrysler are striding to the front line of the fight against the Labour Government and TUC's plans for further wage cuts.

On Monday 2,000 Leyland toolmakers, on strike for the day, voted to negotiate their

Carworkers can follow up this revolt by submitting wage claims which make up in full for the losses they have suffered under the Social Contract. They should insist that any future drop in real wages is avoided by automatic increases in line with inflation.

Socialist Challenge hits Japan — A Yen for the dragon

MONEY CAME pouring in for the Socialist Unity campaign in Ladywood last week. Within 48 hours London Socialist Challenge supporters had sent in £205 and a reader on holiday in Austria sent £500. That will help to cover some of the expenses of the campaign.

Socialist Challenge didn't do too well. But given the commitment to Ladywood we're not too unhappy. We realise that many readers find this section of the paper 'boring', 'dull' etc. All we can say is that for us it is a matter of existence. In any case — compared to Zelda Curtis in the

Morning Star this column sparkles with wit and originality.

Now that we've come to our summer break your support is needed more than ever before. Our subs have crossed the £650 mark. We had aimed to make £600 by the end of next month! Special thanks this week to Chris Pitts in Tokyo for his donation. He finds the paper vital reading and proves it in practice. The grand total is now £844.93p. Study the example of Chris Pitts and emulate his heroic sacrifice. Make sure the dragon dies on schedule, OK! By the time issue 11 hits the streets we must receive

another £355.07p.

M. Coad 1.25
B. Sachs 2.50
J. Peerson 1.50
Chris Pitts 47.50
Middlesbro readers 0.70

E. London reader 0.75
Pia and David (Oxford) 1.50
Cambridge readers 5.00
London Buddhist 5.00
J.S. (Solon) 2.50
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