

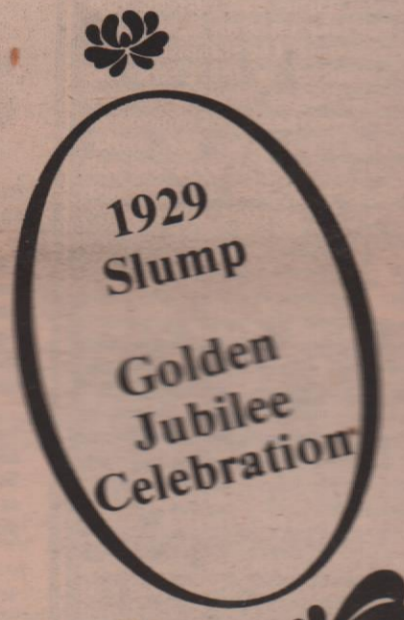
Socialist Challenge

An Invitation to a New Slump

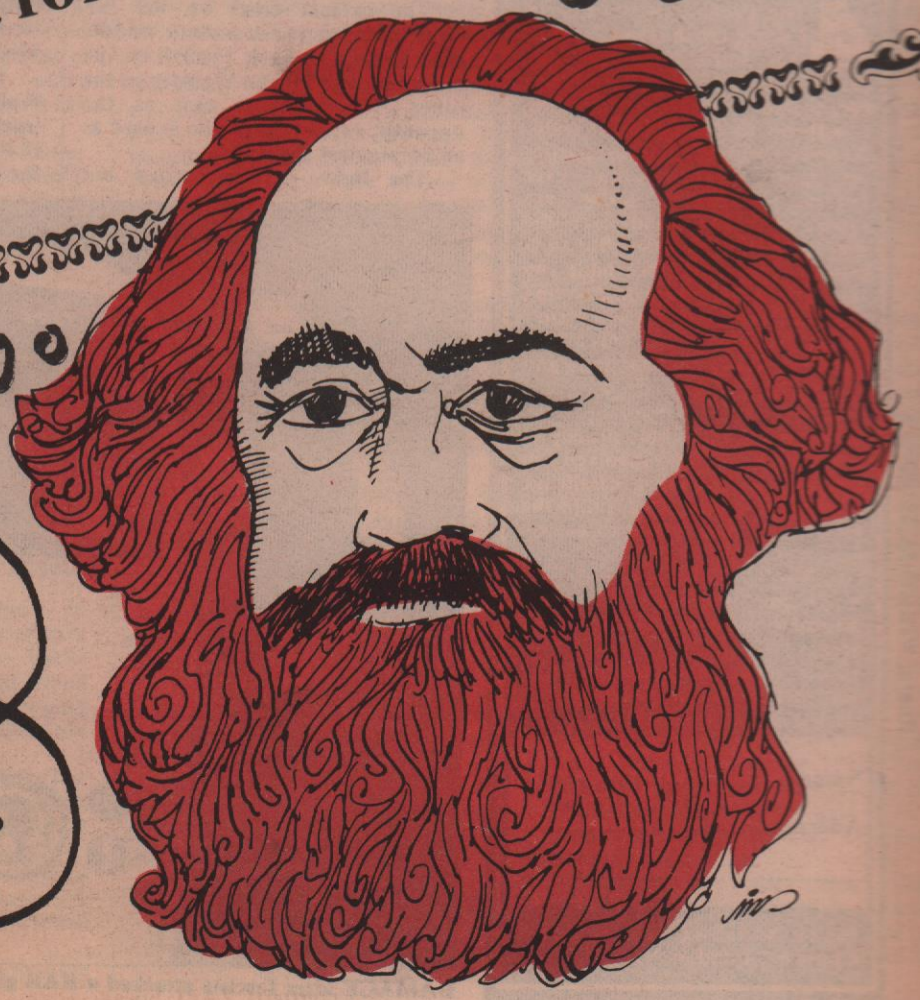
Margaret Thatcher, Geoffrey Howe, Keith Joseph and other members of Her Majesty's Government request the pleasure of your company for the next few years

SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS:

- * Over 2million unemployed
- * Hospital closures
- * Sale of council houses
- * More and more scapegoats [blacks, gays, women, etc.]
- * Capital punishment for secondary pickets



What they don't know is that my supporters will be there...



OUR POLICIES

Capitalism is in crisis. The leaders of the Labour Party and the trade 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 workers against the bosses with that of other oppressed layers of society — women, black people, gays — struggling for their liberation. This socialism can only be achieved by creating new organs of power and defeating with all necessary means the power of the capitalist state.

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

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

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

4 The Communist parties in Europe are in crisis. Neither the 'Eurocommunist' 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.

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, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1 2XQ.

Protect us from 'our' leaders

'WHEN SENSIBLE AND RATIONAL trades unionists make sensible and rational speeches, newspapers of a broadly Conservative outlook hesitate to praise for fear of the injury they may do to the advocate of sense and reason.

'Ancient and nameless fears may be conjured up simply by our name. Very well, then, Mr Joe Gormley will have to endure the scorching impact of our hand upon his shoulder. For Mr Gormley in his address to the National Union of Mineworkers yesterday spoke very good sense indeed.'

Thus wrote the Daily Telegraph in its lead editorial on Tuesday. What appealed to this extreme right-wing Tory paper was Gormley's attacks on the left and his declaration that the unions should lie down and offer no resistance to the Tory offensive.

The form which Gormley's attack took is the familiar social-democratic refusal to see the inter-relationship between industrial and political struggles. There must be no 'use of industrial muscle for political reasons'.

Any attempts to remove the Tories would, according to Joe Gormley, 'inevitably bring about a right-wing backlash to fascism'.

Gormley and his friends in the trade union

movement fail to understand that every union struggle to defend living standards, every strike to defend union rights, is automatically political. Especially in a period of grave economic crisis when capitalist governments seek to protect their class there is no other way of resistance but a fightback all along the line.

As for the notion that the thin line defending British society from fascism is the Conservative government ... all one can say is that old Uncle Joe must have been a good deal less than politically sober to make wild assertions of this sort.

The day that the miners' conference began there was published a report by the Independent Treasury Economic Model Club (ITEM). This semi-official report boldly stated that Britain was heading for a worse slump than in 1974-75 (thus confirming Ernest Mandel's analysis published in the Guardian in May) that this slump had nothing to do with the oil crisis and that it would necessitate a massive confrontation with the unions.

The ideologues of the Tory Party are clearly hoping that the rise in unemployment will frighten the unions as it did in the '30s, but this could turn out to be a totally false hope.

In reality, of far greater use to the Tories will be

union leaders like Gormley who argue against any action on the grounds that it is a 'challenge to democracy'. It is this that makes a struggle against the union leaders advocating collaboration with the Tories a vital necessity at the present time.

The Rank and File conference to 'Defend the Unions' was therefore a politically vital initiative. The Code of Practice which emerged from the conference must be taken into the heart of the labour movement.

The Tories are not playing games. They realise perfectly well that with a new slump looming on the horizon they have to 'sort out' the unions. An offensive on the powers of pickets and other union rights can be expected fairly soon.

Thus the Code of Practice is not just a piece of paper. It should become a vital part of every militant's armoury.

If the only obstacle which confronted the British working class was the Tories, the solution would be relatively easier. It is the leaders of the labour movement who make the fight really difficult. They are 'sensible and rational' to the needs of capitalism. For its victims they show nothing but contempt.

ANL prepares conference as split threatens NF

By Andrew Jenkins, Oliver New, and Clara Howard

THE PACE of the political crisis inside the National Front quickens. The ANL on one side and the rightward lurch of the Tories on the other have narrowed the base of the fascists' support.

The long-term project of the NF becoming a mass 'British' fascism is also under threat as the British Movement fascists are nibbling away at the Front's base by embarking on a policy of blatant thuggery.

But these new problems merely serve to highlight the old dilemmas confronting the NF, which were last resolved by the departure of the National Party in 1975.

The present crisis on the NF directorate is between smooth, middle class Nazis who back Tyndall on the one hand, and Martin Webster on the other. The latter is cast as the uncouth, gay, ex-Nazi who is used as an ideological scapegoat.

The fight — one carried out

through secret factions, anonymous letters, and the like — now takes place in the pages of Spearhead.

Webster argued that the Marxist contention that 'fascist' groups (Webster's sole stylistic fig leaf these days is the use of quotation marks round the word fascist) were used as the goon squads of Capital had 'some element of justification'.

Webster has been re-asserting the plebeian basis of fascism, the 'socialism' of the fools. He argues that a turn is necessary as the 'NF won't be built on middle-class foundations'.

In reply, Tyndall announces that he has no intention of turning the NF into a 'debating society'. What is required is an active, disciplined movement which accepts the line. 'So long as I lead this party I do not intend to allow it to dissolve again into ideological factions,' Tyndall wrote.

It might not be long before Webster finds himself dubbed a 'racial Bolshevik' and is booted out. If this happens he will take some of the roughnecks with him ...

SPG cover-up

THE cover-up seems to be in full swing. Blair Peach's brother, Roy, has gone back to New Zealand expressing the fear that we might never find out the name of the SPG killer. The national press is simply not interested, and the far left remains weak.

Nonetheless it should be possible to launch a concerted and co-ordinated campaign against the SPG at the present time.

The fact that Labour is now in opposition might make it easier to get about a dozen MPs committed to campaigning on this question. Moreover the campaign could bring together all the victims of the SPG: blacks, gays, pickets, unemployed, etc., etc.

While campaigning against the SPG is sorely needed, it must not be forgotten that this police unit is merely one arm of the paraphernalia of repression.

The magistrates courts in this

country are an absolute scandal. The undemocratic method by which magistrates are appointed in this country is now utilised even by fascist legal experts in Spain to defend the status quo in the Spanish judiciary ...

ANL conference

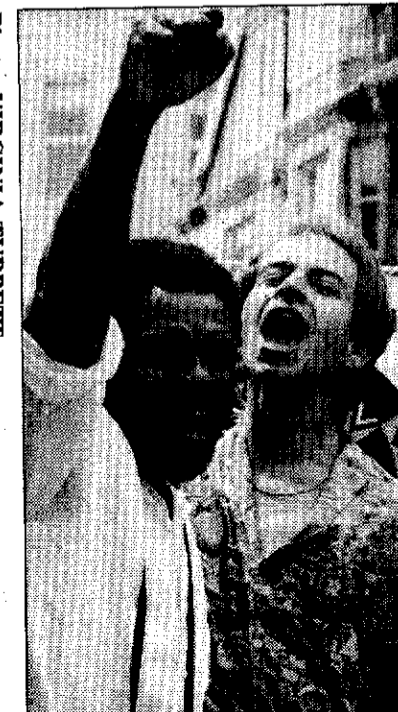
THE Anti Nazi League conference scheduled for 14 July will be a timely opportunity to discuss many of these questions.

The main aim of the ANL was to combat the growth of Nazi influence. It has done that fairly effectively, in the process weaning away tens of thousands of white youths from racism and racist influence. Now the ANL has to build itself in the localities, develop alliances with local black organisations, and fight against the most pernicious aspects of state racism.

The blatant attacks on the left by the British Movement fascists would also indicate that the question of self-defence acquires an immediate relevance.



DAMAGE after fascists attacked a RAR gig last week — see page 4 for report



BLACK and white gays together on the 10,000-strong Gay Pride demo in London last Saturday.

Photo: VIRGINIA TURBETT

Photo: VIRGINIA TURBETT

Photo: G. M. COOKSON [Socialist Challenge]

Fightback against the cuts

It's good for your health

By Geoffrey Sheridan

THE ELIZABETH Garrett Anderson hospital became something of a symbol at last Saturday's Fightback conference against the health cuts.

As Candy Udwin from the Save the EGA campaign pointed out, the work-in against the closure of the women's hospital began just two days after the 80,000-strong demonstration against public sector cuts in November 1976.

'Now,' she said, 'I don't feel the strength of a movement to counter the cuts which could keep the hospital open. This is the situation in most of the country,' she added. 'The fight for our health has been left to local activists.'

There were exceptions, she considered. Last summer in Aberdare, a campaign to stop health cuts in the Welsh mining valley involved pit and factory workers, who supported an occupation of the area health authority offices. The AHA rapidly backed down.

But Wales had a history of militancy, and the Welsh working class had lent its muscle to the formation of the National Health Service. Now the EGA was facing the Tories, whose plan for the hospital was that it should become a charitable organisation, raising money from jumble sales and the like.

Fertility

'A prestigious hospital for prestigious women,' as another speaker put it.

The experience of local campaigns was certainly not lacking at the conference. With 223 delegates — from 17 trades councils, and from unions which included the CPSA, TGWU, NUM, NATFHE, AUEW, NUPE, COHSE, NALGO, and ASTMS — many had been involved in actions to stop cuts and closures.

The defence of the NHS was one of the themes of the conference. Confronting its inadequacies and the social causes of ill-health was another.

Delegates were told of the racism in the health service, with, for example, two-thirds of the women in East London who had been prescribed the dangerous contracep-



NOTING the cuts at a workshop during Fightback's conference in London. Right: Janet Maguire, who argued that the Tories aim to dismantle the welfare state.

tive drug Depo-Provera being Asian; and of the way the NHS discriminates against women, with those of post-child rearing age at the end of the waiting lists, while young women with fertility problems are dealt with at once.

Again, the EGA represented a symbol of the struggle, with demands for a well-woman clinic and an out-patient abortion clinic linked to

the campaign to save the hospital.

But it is the Tory government which has now picked up the health axe sharpened by its Labour predecessor, and as Janet Maguire of ASTMS's South-east London medical branch explained:

'We talked about the Labour government's Tory policies, but a Tory government implementing Tory policies is a very different matter.'

Their objective, she argued, was to crush trade union rights and take us back to the pre-NHS days of a dismantled welfare state for the poor and private medicine for those who could afford it.

It was the fact that the trade union leadership would respond to this — while they colluded in Labour cuts — which had to determine how

Fightback went forward.

The first speaker at the conference, NALGO official Andrew Jack, who is chairperson of the South-east Regional TUC's anti-cuts campaign, had revealed SERTUC's plan.

He said that SERTUC would be calling on the TUC for a one-day national strike against the public sector cuts in the autumn. If the TUC failed to respond, SERTUC would organise a one-day strike in the South-east.

'I'm glad to hear of that,' said Carl Brecker, speaking for the Fightback co-ordinating committee. 'But while the TUC leadership remains in the backrooms talking to the Tories, we have to defend ourselves.'

'We have to develop in a practical way and prepare for industrial action against the Tories. We cannot delay on this,' he added.

Swamped

While the conference voted for a plan of opposition to all cuts in public expenditure, it narrowly defeated a resolution proposed by Janet Maguire which included demands for the removal of right-wing union leaders, for a 35-hour week, and a £70 minimum wage, and a campaign by Fightback for the implementation of NUPE's policy against pay beds.

'When the opposition to the cuts comes,' argued Ray Varnes of ILEA NUPE, seconding the resolution, 'it won't be Fightback in the leadership of that struggle. We have to regard ourselves as a left current within that movement, building activity and with clear alternative policies. Otherwise we will be swamped.'

It will be Fightback's annual general meeting in September which considers the policies to adopt.

Both the geographical spread of the 223 delegates at Saturday's conference and the political spectrum represented — including the Militant group, Hospital Worker, Women's Voice, the International Marxist Group, and members of the Communist Party and Labour Party — showed that Fightback is in a position to make a strong impact on the shape of the anti-cuts battle.

Further information and Fightback bulletins, c/o 30 Camden Road, London NW1.

News from nowhere

Whose freedom

ON 4-6 July there is a Book Fair being organised at Caxton Hall, Westminster. So what? Well, it's a book fair with a difference. Its organisers are those well-known lovers of books, AIMS (formerly Aims of Industry).

The fair was to be opened by Sir Keith Joseph, but he has withdrawn. He was replaced by that other freedom-fighter William Rees-Mogg, editor of The Times (RIP). Left publishers have been excluded, but by some accident Merlin Press received an invitation.

So Merlin decided to accept the offer of a free stall. However, it also decided to exhibit only one of its books at the stall and will be distributing a leaflet to explain its choice. The book in question: Marxist Economic Theory by Ernest Mandel.

Glove transfer

WHEN the well-known Marxist economist David Yaffe was expelled many, many years ago from the Brighton branch of the International Socialists he claimed that he had been punched during a dispute preceding

his expulsion. This was roundly condemned by all and sundry (including many members of the IS).

David then left and set up the Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG). This suffered a split several months later and the Revolutionary Communist Tendency (RCT) was born.

Now the RCT has alleged that at a recent RCG meeting one of its members 'was punched in the face by the chair, David Yaffe, before being assaulted by half a dozen RCG members'. The RCG says that the RCT had embarked on a policy of 'deliberately provocative disruptions' and was out to destroy its meetings.

Nonetheless physical attacks can in no way be justified. Given the proliferation of sects, an agreement can surely be reached on the conduct of meetings, without fisticuffs or disruptions. When a member of the public accidentally turns up to such a meeting s/he must be utterly traumatised.

CARMuppance

THE wretched BBC, fresh from doing a deal with the Metropolitan Police to allow the cops to veto material dealing with police matters, and refusing to repeat or sell overseas the excellent Law and Order series, has now been put to shame by the Norwegian government.

The BBC management hates the Open Door programme exposing TV's racism made by the Campaign Against Racism in the Media. After its broadcast in February, every television producer and presenter

criticised in the programme duly protested.

Among them were current affairs super-stars Robin Day and Ludovic Kennedy, who two weeks ago received the unusual accolade from the Beeb of a transmitted apology which dissociated the corporation from any suggestion that they were racist.

The Norwegian government takes a different view of its responsibilities. Its Secretariat of Immigrant Affairs has asked to purchase a copy of the programme to show at a seminar for journalists.

The Secretariat writes: 'We have conferences with the press and other media on how to handle immigrant questions, questions of racism, discrimination, minority groups and so on.'

Readers who would like to hire the 30-minute programme to show at meetings should write to CARM, PO Box 50, London N1.

Gaddafi's new friends

AFTER the general election in Britain was over, a lull descended over Clapham High Street. The hacks waited to hear what their old friend and patron, Colonel Gaddafi, would think of the Workers' Revolutionary Party's vote.

They needn't have worried. The Libyan leader didn't waste too much time on them. Instead he greeted the Tory victory:

'We think the Tories are closer to us in matters of social values and religion' (interview in the French paper Le Matin, 25 May).

The fact that the daily News Line

now devotes more space to Iraq indicates their new turn. They appear to have transferred their loyalties to the Iraqi BloodBaath party. Motto of the year: No loyalties without royalties.

DURING the recent European elections, the British Communist Party organised a day-trip for members and friends to Calais. The French port has a PCF mayor who promised to organise a banquet, booze-up, and a joint demo against the Common Market. A good idea? Certainly, but wait ...

Several dozen trade unionists and CP members led by dynamic London CP leader Gerry Cohen crossed the water. The food and drink was excellent, but Gerry got a bit carried away. In his speech at the banquet he blamed French farmers for high food prices in Britain.

Now, Gerry didn't know that the French party has lots of farmers in it. Moreover, many of them are very militant and some were even 'ultra left' in 1968. More to the point a few were present at the lunch. They didn't appreciate these 'fraternal' comments. The lunch ended in disaster. The evening booze-up was cancelled, much to the chagrin of trade unionists, and there was no joint demo!

Gerry Cohen returned with his dispirited band of followers somewhat crestfallen. Worth a Comment?

Usage and abuse

THERE are lies, damned lies, and newspaper headlines. Such, with

unseemly regularity, is the case with statistics concerning Britain's black population. It is the game that Powell perfected, and now the government's Office of Population Censuses and Surveys is churning out grist to the racists' mill.

Last month's issue of Population Trends projected what the black population would be in 1991, and by contrasting this with the estimated black population in 1976 arrived at a growth rate approaching a hundred per cent over that period.

This supposed statistic can, of course, be used to drum up racist fear. The numbers game would be irrelevant if Britain were not a racist society, but since it is, anti-racist organisations are quite right to point out how such figures are concocted.

The British Society for Social Responsibility in Science points out that the report is dotted with phrases such as 'assumptions', 'arbitrary assumptions', and even 'speculative' assumptions for 'illustrative purposes only'.

But it's the tendentious conclusions which grab the headline writers, and papers such as the Southend Evening Echo duly obliged with 'One in 20 blacks by 1991'. The Echo did, in fact, mention several of BSSRS's criticisms, but this didn't prompt a headline such as 'Dubious statistics aid racists'.

Suffice to add that the commitment to publish these projections was given in Parliament in response to a question from Enoch Powell.

**CORRIE'S
LAW
Forced
childbirth**

20 weeks limit NAC - ready to create 'a public outrage'

Montage: ALAN LENTON

Photos: TOM MALOWE, ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFL)



JEANNE Saint (top left) and Jan McKenly (top centre), NAC office workers: 'We want a broad-based pro-abortion campaign'

By Geoff Bell

JOHN Corrie's Bill to 'amend' the 1967 Abortion Act had its first reading in Parliament last week. The second reading is scheduled for 13 July.

Details of the proposed legislation have yet to be made public, but among those who have seen it is the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child — the leading opponents of a woman's right to choose.

And last week SPUC's reaction to Corrie's proposals was little short of ecstatic. Its spokesperson, Phyllis Bowman, was quoted in the Catholic Church journal Universe as saying: 'The Bill provides as much as is humanly possible, given the short time available.'

Universe went on to report that Corrie's Bill would include the reduction of the time limit on abortion from 28 weeks to 20, but in practice, should the Bill become law, the time limit will be even lower.

Pregnant

Jeanne Saint, voluntary worker for the National Abortion Campaign, explains: 'It is very difficult to say exactly how pregnant a woman is, and doctors who perform abortions are always worried that if they assess the time wrongly they will be prosecuted.'

'A time limit of 20 weeks will mean, in effect, 16 weeks, for this way doctors will be making sure there is no danger of prosecution.'

Jeanne is one of two voluntary workers who service the National Abortion Campaign from its London office. The other, Jan McKenly, agrees that the legal time limit is often not the real one.

'Today, although the limit is 28 weeks, it's very difficult to get an abortion any time after 22 weeks,' she says. 'Usually, the only method used for assessing time is the size of a woman's belly.'

The National Abortion Campaign, or NAC as it is commonly known, is now four years old, and it is fair to say that with the publication of

the Corrie Bill, the campaign faces its greatest challenge to date.

One reason is the composition of the present parliament, in which, according to one estimate, there are only 190 MPs who will vote against Corrie's Bill.

For this reason, says Jan, 'It's really important to stress that we have to have extra-parliamentary activities. So much depends on the public outrage. The truth is that if it were all decided on a parliamentary level we'd give up now.'

NAC has now the prime responsibility in organising this 'public outrage'. Both campaign workers stressed that NAC, in Jan's words, 'will be working with the other pro-abortion groups. We want a broad-based pro-abortion campaign.' But the central organisational role will be played out at Jan's and Jeanne's King's Cross offices.

At present there are approximately 80 local NAC groups across the country. As with other 'single issue' campaigns, activity tends to decline when the issue in question isn't to the fore.

But now the Corrie Bill is underway, NAC is expecting a spectacular growth in activity and support. One indication is that last week three new NAC groups were formed.

To these groups can be added the near 500 affiliates to the campaign, which include individuals, trade unions, union branches, student unions, and women's organisations. All these NAC will be calling on to defeat the Corrie Bill, but special attention will be paid to the labour movement.

Reading

Jan explains: 'We're trying to get people in trade unions to work through their branches and executives. We want the demonstration in October, planned around the time of the third reading, to be organised by the TUC.'

The reference to the TUC is important because both it and the women's TUC are pledged to organise in the event of restrictive legislation. By any standards, Corrie's Bill is restrictive.

The report in last week's Universe stated: 'Several clauses in the original Bill have been omitted: those referring to the rights of the father, police powers of entry to clinics to check records, and the licensing of clinics and referral agencies.'

But simply because these clauses are left out at present is no guarantee that they won't find their way in again once the Bill reaches its committee stage.

What can definitely be ruled out is any clause in Corrie's Bill aimed at improving abortion facilities for those under 16 weeks' pregnant.

Affiliates

As Jeanne points out: 'Corrie's done nothing to improve the situation, which presently obliges about 50 per cent of women to have abortions outside the National Health Service.'

'NAC has always had an offensive approach to its campaign; for instance the many local campaigns we have run to demand day-care clinics. The best way to lessen the number of late abortions is to provide better facilities for early ones.'

On paper, NAC has a lot of support behind it. Five unions are affiliated to the organisation nationally, and 500 people attended its trade union conference last November. These included delegates from the TGWU, NUM, NUJ, NUT, UPW, GMWU, UCATT, the POEU and many others.

The aim is now to mobilise this support and the first test is a rally in Caxton Hall, Westminster, at 6.30pm on 13 July. Jeanne admits: 'It's going to be a terrific fight'. But she adds: 'I don't feel negative about it.'

The aim is to use the summer to organise a 20,000 plus demonstration in October. As the NAC press statement says, there is too much at stake to give up now:

'Women should not be forced to bear children they do not want. We are expected to love and care for them throughout their lives.'

'Surely we should have the right to decide whether and when we want them. This Bill is designed to limit that choice and we will fight it with all the support we can muster.'

Nazis attack RAR gig

By Andy Bateman and Pete Cannell

THE ROCK Against Racism gig at the Acklam Hall, Notting Hill, last Friday was going well. Everyone was enjoying the music. And then 30 Nazis from the British Movement turned up to attack us.

Some of us who were isolated outside the building were badly beaten up by the racist hoodlums. Two were still in hospital on Sunday. Those of us inside were subjected to a siege.

The Nazis were armed with sticks, pick handles and iron bars, and we could not hold the doors against them because the doors themselves disintegrated.

At this point the tense atmosphere became one of panic. There were people who were vomiting and fainting. However the RAR stewards and some of the audience began to organise.

We hurled chairs into the lobbies, making them impossible to run across, and anyone who tried was pelted with bottles, cans, and the bricks that had been flung in at us.

Police

One of the lobbies was eventually barricaded completely. In this way we held our attackers at bay for three quarters of an hour.

The police had been called immediately. Over half an hour later they arrived, strutting in like the US cavalry, truncheons drawn and ready to fight us. They arrested only two Nazis and searched one of our friends, who was lying there badly injured.

Question: Why are the police always late in defending anti-racists and blacks against fascist attacks and always early in defending Nazis? Answer: Because they don't like us and lots of them sympathise with the Nazis.

The fascists won't scare us away, but as of now they've broken our bank, and we need at least £500 to pay for the smashed up vans, hall and equipment.

Already the labour movement is rallying round. Delegates at the Fightback conference on Saturday donated £30, and Hammersmith and Kensington Trades Council have promised help. But we need some money from you.

The lesson that comes through is obvious: we can only rely on ourselves, our organisations, our solidarity, our fightback. Self-defence precautions will have to be undertaken for every gig. The police have revealed their colours once again.

Donations to: N.Kensington RAR Support, c/o Box 82, London E2.

Gigs

Postscriptum: This is not the first gig to be attacked. A RAR gig was attacked recently in Ealing, with similar results. A Young Communist League gig held several weeks ago at Ealing Technical College was also wrecked by the Nazis.

And recently in West London a multi-racial school festival was attacked: the black children had to be taken out in special vans. In all cases the police waited till the Nazi thugs had done their worst before intervening.

NCCL victimisation claim

Taking uncivil liberties

By Geoff Bell

THE NATIONAL Council for Civil Liberties has told its Northern Ireland Officer, Pat McCarthy, that she will not be allowed to work out the notice she had given from her full-time position in the NCCL.

McCarthy has also been prohibited from entering the NCCL's London headquarters.

Both these moves are a consequence of McCarthy's support for the International Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland, to be held this weekend in London's Conway Hall, and her sponsorship of the 12 August London demonstration calling on Britain to declare its intention to withdraw from Ireland.

In addition, the NCCL general secretary, Patricia Hewitt, confirmed to Socialist Challenge on Monday that her organisation had adopted a policy of not employing 'Trots' or those who support an immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

The story behind these worrying developments began earlier this year when McCarthy handed in her notice to the NCCL because of policy differences over the council's position on Ireland.

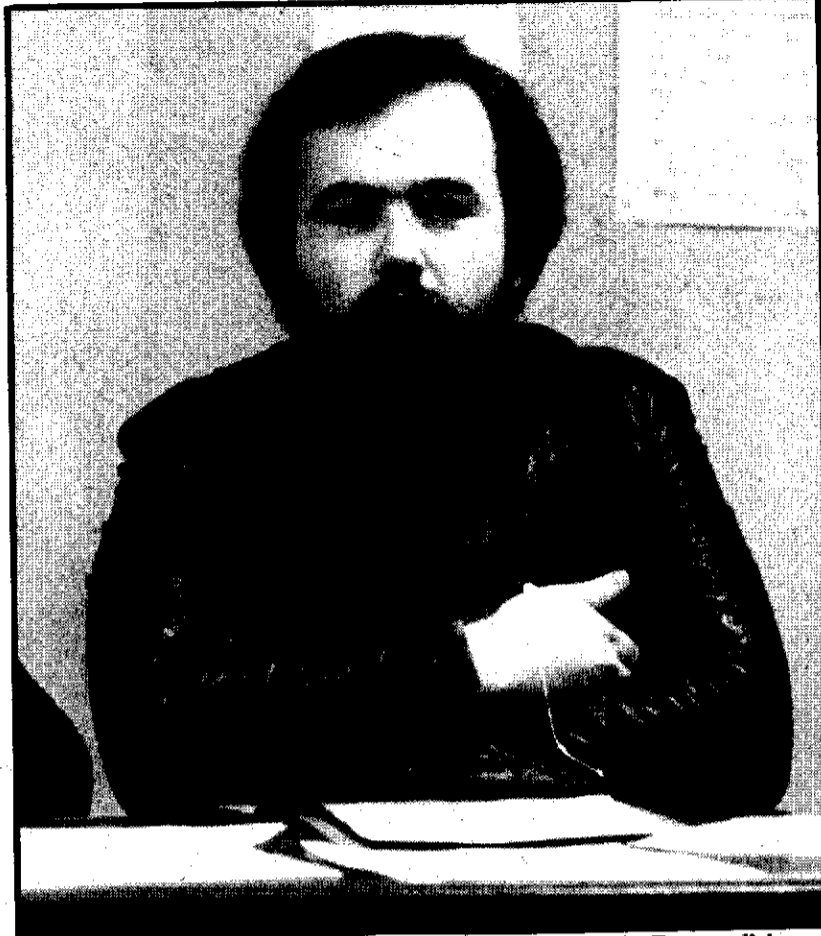
Status

McCarthy is a supporter of immediate withdrawal of British troops and of political status for Republican prisoners. The NCCL opposes both these demands.

Despite her personal opinions, McCarthy never publicly associated the NCCL with them. For instance, her sponsorship of 12 August was for a demonstration which is simply called on the basis that Britain should 'commit itself to a policy of withdrawal from Ireland'.

On the other hand, McCarthy has publicly associated herself with the NCCL's position on Republican prisoners — despite her disagreement with it.

For example, she signed a letter to



JACK DROMEY, architect of the NCCL's pro-Communist Party policies on Ireland

the *Morning Star*, published on 7 August 1978, which by implication rejected the political status demand. The letter, initiated by others in the NCCL, was signed 'Pat McCarthy (Northern Ireland Officer NCCL)'.

And yet Patricia Hewitt now claims that McCarthy never had this title and it was its inclusion in McCarthy's sponsorship for 12 August which led to her being prohibited from working out her notice.

As a letter from McCarthy to Hewitt replying to the allegations put it: 'I find it somewhat strange that it

was perfectly in order to sign a letter to the *Morning Star* arguing the NCCL's position ... as Northern Ireland officer, but not when it does not suit.'

In the letter to Hewitt, McCarthy further reveals the NCCL policy of selective employment. She wrote: 'I remember fairly well the meeting when you (Hewitt) stated that if we were to have a placement student to work in the office we must make sure that the person was not a supporter of the Troops Out movement or a "Trot".'

Patricia Hewitt agreed with Socialist Challenge that such a decision had indeed been made.

The whole attitude of the leadership of the NCCL towards Ireland has disturbed interested observers for some time.

An example was a delegation of the NCCL to the North of Ireland towards the end of last year. This delegation was headed by Jack Dromey, former chairperson of the NCCL, and the figure generally responsible for the formulation of the NCCL's Irish policy.

During the course of the delegation, the NCCL members met a host of organisations, including the Official Unionist Party, the Communist Party of Ireland, and Sinn Fein, the Workers Party. However it did not meet Provisional Sinn Fein, despite, it is understood, a request from one member of the delegation to do so.

Penalise

Such an attitude corresponds to Dromey's personal antagonism towards the Provisional Republican Movement and his support for Sinn Fein, the Workers Party.

Dromey is also a backer of the Better Life For All Campaign, an initiative launched by the Communist parties of Ireland and Great Britain and supported by a number of trade union leaders. Hewitt agreed that support for 'Better Life' was indeed NCCL policy.

What all this suggests is that as far as the NCCL is concerned the attitudes of its policy-makers on Ireland is to back the initiatives of the Communist Party and SFWP and oppose all others; to the extent of penalising its own staff members who, even privately, do not toe the line.

But now at least, thanks to the decision of Pat McCarthy to make public her correspondence with Hewitt, the NCCL's policies are out in the open. It is a depressingly familiar policy, summed up in the phrase 'No Trots need apply'.

Communist University to debate 'troops out'

THE Communist Party-sponsored Communist University (CUL) has organised a debate on troops out of Ireland — thanks to pressure from Socialist Challenge.

It will take place on Monday 9 July at the University of London Union, Malet Street at 6.30pm.

Originally the debate was scheduled for 8 July but when Socialist Challenge phoned the CUL's organisers to check final details we were told that the debate had been cancelled because of late confirmation of a speaker from Cuba.

Apparently the only time this speaker was available was when the troops out debate was scheduled.

Socialist Challenge then pointed out that the proposed cancellation

would be added to a rather long list of previous occasions when the CP had declined to discuss the issue of troops out, and that the CUL's decision would be interpreted as a further evasion.

Then, just as Socialist Challenge was about to go to press, CUL organiser Jackie Rushforth phoned to tell us that it had been decided to re-arrange the debate for the following day. We were also asked to arrange a speaker on behalf of the troops out argument.

After hurried consultation with a number of members of the United Troops Out Movement it was agreed that Geoff Bell from the Socialist Challenge editorial board would speak.

International Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland 7/8 July, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, London 10am — 5pm, each day. Entrance £1 Evening social and film, 7 July. Showing of 'The Patriot Game', followed by social with bar. Starts 7pm. £1.50 for film and social, £1 for each. Conway Hall.

Dirty Books Sale

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PDC is a distributor of a wide range of radical, socialist, feminist and alternative books, pamphlets and periodicals. Recently we had a fire and a large amount of our stock was water damaged. We will be selling off that stock which was slightly affected at greatly reduced prices, some as low as 10% of cover price. We have over 8,000 books and pamphlets to get rid of. Food and entertainment will be available.

For further details phone 01-251 4976 and ask for Mildred. For details of Dirty Book Sales outside London phone the above number, or Hebden Bridge (042284) 3315, or Edinburgh (031) 557 0133.

Saturday July 7th
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ACTION SPACE
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WHAT'S LEFT

BIG FLAME, the IMG and the ISA are holding a joint school for women on 'The Women's Movement and the left' 14 July, 10am-5pm, YWCA, Great Russell St, London WC1. Creche facilities. If you are interested in being invited write c/o Women's School, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Organised under the auspices of the London World Affairs Group.

SMASH all immigration controls! Mass picket of Harmondsworth Detention Centre, 21 July at 2pm. Planning meeting 2 July, Club Room, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, 7pm. All welcome. Organised by RCT.

SOCIALIST-feminist, 23, urgently needs own room in friendly household, lowish rent. Susan: 01-340 5493.

BROADSIDE Theatre, a London based socialist touring group requires: 1. a second administrator (graphic design skill an advantage); 2. a versatile female performer (including singing). Both full-time. Long term commitment. Write giving details of experience, skills, politics, approach to theatre and reasons for wanting to work with Broadside to 58 Holbein House, Holbein Place, London SW1. For further details phone 01-470 2581.

INTERNATIONAL Contraception Abortion and Sterilisation Campaign public meeting. 'Who controls your body — you or your parents?' Fri 6 July, Small Hall, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Holborn tube. 7.30pm.

ROOM available in North West London from 13 August to 28 August inclusive. Box No 101, c/o Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1.

BOOKS for Southern African comrades — money desperately needed for this vital field of internationalist activity. Or send any books you can spare. Books for Southern Africa, Box No 102, c/o Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1.

WORKING class strategies and the transition to socialism is the theme of the Annual Conference of the CSE (Conference of Socialist Economists) at Leeds University, 13-16 July. Send for details to Hugo Radice, School of Economics, University, Leeds LS2 9JT.

WHO KILLED Blair Peach? Disband the SPG. Tower Hamlets ANL public meeting, Thurs 5 July, 7.30pm. Speakers include: Paul Holborow, Angie Coulthard (ELNUT, Phoenix School) and from Southall Action Committee, Fairholt House, City Poly SU, Whitechapel High St. Aldgate East tube.

BRISTOL — Spartacist League Day School. Sat 7 July, Baptist Mills Community Centre, Horley Rd, St Werburghs. 10am: What is the Soviet Union? 2pm: The Leninist vanguard party. Registration 50p. Readings/details from: Spartacist, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE.

BRENT BOOKSHOP benefits: 12 July, films *Blacks Britannica* and *With Babies and Banners*; 17 July, cabaret with Broadside, Clapperclaw, Leon Rosselson. Brent Trades Hall, 375 High Road, Willesden. Events start 8pm. Admission £1.20.

ROYAL COURT Theatre, Sloane Square, SW1. Sunday 15 July, 7.30pm. Who Killed Blair Peach? — A Political Answer. Benefit organised by Blair Peach Memorial Fund. Proceeds to be shared with the Southall Defence Fund. Contributors will include Edward Bond, Trevor Griffiths, John Hurt, Alex Glasgow, Misty, Paul Foot. Tickets: £2 from Blair Peach Memorial Fund, c/o Phoenix School, Bow Road, London E3.

LONDON. Revolutionary Communist Group public meeting 'Racism, Imperialism and the working class'. To launch the journal *Revolutionary Communist* 9. Speaker Maxine Williams. Monday 9 July 7.30, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., London WC2. Holborn Tube. Admission 20p.



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From: Badges, PO Box 50,

London N1. **REVOLUTIONARY Communist Tendency** Public Meeting. 'No to all state attacks on the working class! No Nationality Act! Smash Immigration Laws!' Speaker Mike Freeman. Friday 13 July, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC2. Holborn tube.

MANCHESTER Revolutionary Communist Group. Public meeting: 'Racism, Imperialism and the Working Class'. Thursday 12 July. 7.30pm. Basement Theatre, Albert Square. Admission 25p.

LIFE Opportunity Scheme. SPANNER believes that the power of imagination of our class can be a weapon in the class struggle. Come and help us sharpen our spears. No experience necessary just the will to win. Write: North West Spanner, Drill Hall, Manchester Rd, Mossley, Ashton-U-Lyne, Lancs or phone 061-881 7845.

WOMEN in Eastern Europe Newsletter, Issue No 3 is now available. Includes abortion petition in Hungary; interview with Russian dissident and more. In bookshops or send 44p to E. Holland, CREES, University of Birmingham.

Charter trial looms

ALMOST EXACTLY three years ago, a Czech revolutionary Marxist called Petr Uhl set off across Prague to visit the apartment of a former Czechoslovak CP Central Committee secretary and Politburo member by the name of Zdenek Mlynar. This was to be the first of a wide range of discussions from which came the alliance that launched Charter 77 at the beginning of 1977.

Petr Uhl made his journey in response to a casual act of bureaucratic violence: the jailing of some nonconformist musicians by a Prague court on 6 July 1976. Uhl and his friends on the radical left had good contact with the Czech musical underground.

On the day in 1973 when he had completed his four-year prison sentence for his role in the political struggle against the Soviet invasion, Uhl had been greeted by a concert laid on to celebrate his release.

Zdenek Mlynar inhabited another world. For many years a shadowy presence in the upper reaches of the bureaucracy, he was a key figure in the Dubcekite leadership in 1968, though more cautious than some others at that time.

With a reputation for astuteness and flexibility he had voluntarily retired into the background after the Soviet invasion. And in 1976 he was the undisputed leader of the Prague Club of Dubcekite former party leaders in opposition to the Husak regime.

Takeover

For a long time, relations between the radical left and the Dubcekites in opposition had been bad. Many of the latter had supported Husak's takeover in 1969, hoping for an alliance with him against the open opponents of the Prague Spring.

In the early '70s, they had swung round to seeking an alliance with the Russians against the Husak regime, and during the run-up to the European Communist Party summit in July 1976 they had tried to use the Western CPs as a lever to pressurise the Russians into intervening against Husak.

Such moves, all aimed at restoring the Dubcekites to leading positions in the party, evoked deep suspicions among other sectors of the opposition. After all, the Dubcekites in opposition had maintained contact with the Soviet military mission in Prague for some time, and had also had intermittent contact with the party leadership.

Where, some people asked, would information gained by certain Dubcekites about other sectors of the opposition end up?

But the efforts of Petr Uhl and others to achieve united action with the former Dubcekites eventually paid off. Mlynar himself was already breaking from ideas of any short-term re-integration of the Prague Spring leaders, and he saw the value of linking up with the younger generation of oppositionists. The alliance thus formed in defence of the musical underground laid the basis for launching Charter 77 in January 1977.

Extended

The general situation in Czechoslovakia in 1976-77 was not especially favourable for any attempt to engage in an open political struggle. Unlike Poland, there was no acute economic crisis. Though the economy suffered from long-term structural problems, the living standards of the population had been rising steadily in the first half of the 1970s.

And as East European regimes go, the Husak team was strongly entrenched. It had shown the masses its capacity to crush all resistance in the early '70s, and the bureaucracy, replenished by people who had gained a lot from the purges of 1970-71, was firmly united against any moves for political reform.

As for the half million purged party members, 99 per cent of them had long since given up any thought of political opposition despite myths in the West to the contrary. The one social group which showed signs of incipient revolt was the young people, especially working class youth in the industrial cities of the Czech part of the country.

But the Husak regime faced a delicate international situation on the eve of the Charter's foundation. Universally recognised as the product of the 1968 invasion, its existence and repressive policies remained a bone of contention between Moscow and the Western CPs. And the latter had indeed been focusing attention on Czechoslovakia in their growing dispute with Moscow in the mid-1970s.

Socialist Challenge 5 July 1979 Page 6

ALL TEN of the Charter 77 activists arrested in Czechoslovakia at the end of May now face sentences of three to ten years on charges of subversion 'on a large scale'.

The ten are: Otka Bednarova, Jarmila Belikova, Vaclav Benda and Jiri Dienstbier [both Charter spokespersons], Vaclav Havel, Ladislav Lis, Vaclav Maly, Dana Nemcova, Jiri Nemecek, and Petr Uhl [editor of the Charter information bulletin].

The need to build solidarity is now very urgent, as their trial—the biggest in Eastern Europe since the 1950s—could take place at any time after the second week in July.

Below OLIVER MACDONALD looks at the significance of Charter 77 and the first steps which have been taken in building a solidarity campaign.



At the same time, the Helsinki review conference was due to open in Belgrade in the autumn of 1977 and some of the East European regimes, notably the Hungarian and Polish governments, would be very unhappy to see their painstaking efforts to improve relations with the capitalist world jeopardised on the eve of that conference by a new crackdown against the opposition in Czechoslovakia.

The Charter movement was launched as a campaign to obtain signatures for a short document, the Charter, demanding that the Czechoslovak authorities observe basic civil and political rights which were already enshrined in Czechoslovak law.

Such demands as freedom of information, of speech, and assembly are, of course, fundamental working class demands in the bureaucratised workers' states. The Stalinist bureaucracy, lacking the independent class base in the economic field enjoyed by capitalism, can maintain its power only through denying all political rights to other

sections of the population.

Any attempt to mobilise sections of the masses in a political struggle to win these rights must be unconditionally supported by socialists.

The issue of civil rights gave the Chartists two levers for their attempt to prise open the lid of repression. By linking up with the burning concerns of a large number of young people, especially those involved in the cultural underground, the Chartists could hope to cut a path for the opposition into broader layers of the population and thereby gain a base from which the movement could withstand bureaucratic violence.

Secondly, the Chartists could use the international conjuncture before the Belgrade conference and the various elections in Western Europe to protect themselves in the short term against the regime.

The slogan of human rights had grown, like a great inflatable balloon, until it had become an apparently dominating feature of the political landscape in Europe. Despite all the hot air which they blew into it, neither the

imperialist bourgeoisies nor the Stalinist leaders cared a damn about this human rights balloon.

But they cared even less to be the ones who would be seen throughout the world to be responsible for bursting it. This gave the Chartists an opening for political action.

Some Marxists and socialists in the West have been disoriented by the use which some imperialist leaders, notably Carter, have made of human and civil rights. Living in a world of simple schemas they have had difficulty in grasping that at any given moment absolutely heterogeneous class forces in different parts of the world simultaneously make use of the same political issue.

Thus working class interests in Eastern Europe have involved a struggle for the same rights that were being used for quite different propagandistic and diplomatic reasons by the Carter administration.

And because, for a limited time, some of the imperialist powers could harness the struggle in Czechoslovakia to their own propaganda offensive, these socialists lose sight of the basic

in Czechoslovakia



International appeal launched

LABOUR movement protests against the recent arrest of 10 prominent Charter 77 supporters are rapidly gaining momentum.

A model of the sort of local protest that is required came from the labour and student movements in York. A protest letter demanding the release of all the jailed Chartists and the re-instatement of the Charter 77 lawyer, Dr. Josef Danisz, has been sent to the Czechoslovak Embassy.

The letter has been signed by local Labour MP Alex Lyon, well-known for his anti-racist stand in this country; Ken Cooper, the leader of the Labour Group on York City Council; Joanna de Groot, secretary of the York and District Trades Council; local trade unionists, including a NUPE senior steward, an ASTMS branch chairperson and a CPSA branch secretary; and the executive of York University Students Union.

This sort of action should be repeated throughout the country.

An international appeal for the release of the 10 is now circulating in the labour movements of Western Europe and North America. In this country it has already won support from the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation and from more than 40 Labour MPs. It is hoped that the appeal will be supported officially by the Communist Party of Great Britain.

Copies of the appeal can be obtained from the Charter 77 Defence Committee — formed by the Committee to Defend Czechoslovak Socialists with the support of the Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign and the journal Labour Focus on Eastern Europe. The Charter 77 Defence Committee is co-ordinating all aspects of the defence campaign in the British labour movement and its address is: 14 Elgin Court, Montpelier Road, London W5.

needs of the working masses in Eastern Europe.

The Charter in Czechoslovakia has never for one moment attempted to turn the masses in Czechoslovakia towards the imperialist powers as supposedly liberating influences in the struggle against Stalinism. The class character of movements for working class rights in Eastern Europe cannot be decided by the propaganda use made of them at this or that moment by bourgeois forces in the West.

When the Charter appeared in January 1977, the first reflex of the regime was to try to crush it. A plan was drawn up to jail some, expel others from the country, and deport most of the rest to the countryside. There was an unprecedented campaign of intimidation and press hysteria in preparation for these measures.

But the movement held firm until the international campaign of support and solidarity reached a crescendo in early February. All the social-democratic parties, together with 13 Western CPs, supported the Charter's right to operate and denounced the

repressive measures of the regime.

Then, in early February, almost certainly under pressure from Moscow, which was worried about the fate of the Helsinki review conference, the regime drew back and limited itself to jailing half a dozen Chartists and sacking many others from their jobs. It simultaneously declared that it contemplated no repressive measures against people for signing the Charter!

The terroristic campaign during the first weeks of the movement was sufficient to limit its scope, and only about a thousand people actually signed Charter 77. Nevertheless, Charter 77's achievements have been impressive.

The regime was forced to relax a number of the restrictions on the families of those purged in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion. The movement has also exerted great pressure on the legal institutions of the country, especially through the off-shoot Committee in Defence of Unjustly Prosecuted Persons (VONS), which has systematically exposed attempts by the regime to stage-manage political trials.

Most recently, the Charter has forced the government to acknowledge a nuclear power scandal that it had tried to cover up, and has also made possible a considerable development of the cultural underground in Czechoslovakia, throwing back the regime's attempts to extinguish the movement in the mid-1970s.

But the Charter's greatest achievement has been to create a new centre of open political life in Czechoslovakia. Within and around the movement a wide range of activities, working groups, and discussion circles has emerged. General political journals have been started, as well as special magazines on cultural life, world politics, Polish affairs, theoretical and philosophical problems, and economic and social issues.

Working groups have produced detailed studies of issues ranging from nuclear power to discrimination against gypsies; from problems of consumption to the country's prison system. Unofficial educational courses have been started in the so-called 'Jan Patocka Free University.'

Most precious of all, the movement has

provided a framework within which various ideological and political currents could debate with each other and define themselves. There has been the emergence of various strands of reformist Dubcekite currents, democrats, reformist socialists, revolutionary Marxists and libertarians as well as Christian socialists.

The large majority of the Chartists do not necessarily identify themselves with any one strand of political thinking, and many within the movement see themselves purely as human rights campaigners. Nevertheless, the Charter has brought a new generation of activists to political awareness and experience, making possible the continuity and development of the anti-Stalinist movement in Czechoslovakia.

Survival

However, the basic tenet for the Charter since its foundation has been its ability to sink firm enough roots in the society and to operate in a clear enough direction to ensure its survival in the face of the regime's desire to crush it.

It has been these questions of orientation which have caused the most intense debate within the movement.

The radical left has sought to strengthen the movement's organisation and the pluralism within it, directing its efforts towards voicing the real grievances and concerns of the broad masses of the Czechoslovak population.

Others, notably some of the ex-Dubcekites, have sought to limit the movement to the role of a loose protest campaign over civil liberties and the strict application of legal norms. Last year, the more radical and socially oriented wing of the movement won ascendancy, but the debate continued and on occasions took very sharp forms.

Meanwhile hundreds of pairs of political police officers' eyes have been peering into the movement, watching every nuance and development within it.

Who should be beaten up anonymously on the street? Who should be arrested for 48 hours? Who should be bombarded with anonymous phone calls? What provocations should be staged within the movement? Who should be blackmailed into turning informer? And above all, when should a crack-down be attempted and in what stages?

The international conjuncture changed, as it was bound to. The Helsinki conference was wrapped up, and the United States administration wanted to create the right atmosphere for SALT 2.

In March 1979, the *New York Times*' main East European correspondent wrote off the Charter as a bunch of leftists. Against a background of electoral defeats and retrenchment, some of the Western CPs drew back from making much fuss about the rights of workers in Eastern Europe. The international climate became much more favourable for a round-up.

Roots

But by now Charter 77 has managed to sink much deeper roots in Czechoslovak society, especially among working class youth in the cities.

When the 10 leading Chartists were seized Beria-style at 5am on 29 May, the pattern of response was the reverse of what happened in January 1977. International reaction in the press and from the main political forces was minimal. But inside the country, the movement reacted vigorously and resolutely.

Two new spokespersons immediately came forward and 13 new members of VONS, the Committee in Defence of Unjustly Prosecuted Persons, filled the gap left by the 10 jailed members. VONS issued a statement on the affair which was cold and devastating. There was not a trace of disarray within the movement.

This reaction indicates that the round-up of 29 May has been totally insufficient to break the movement. Much more will be required from the police to achieve that objective. But it remains to be seen whether the labour movement in the West is concerned to see the survival and strengthening of the socialist opposition to Stalinism in Czechoslovakia.

If Western socialists stand aside, it is of course possible for the regime to eventually break the Charter.

This will not mean an end to oppositional activity in Czechoslovakia. But it could mean a serious defeat for the left within that opposition. And that would be a terrible blow to the really fundamental cause of the workers of Europe: the struggle for a really united, genuinely socialist and democratic continent.

The Marxist who helped to trace the origins of women's oppression

By Connie Harris

EVELYN Reed, a long-time leader of the Socialist Workers Party (USA) and one of the foremost Marxist writers on the origins of women's oppression, died of cancer in New York City on 22 March. She was aged 73.

At a meeting held in New York on 8 April, five hundred people paid tribute to Evelyn's life and work. Messages were received from all parts of the world; from sections of the Fourth International, and individuals who valued Evelyn's outstanding work as a Marxist, feminist, and a fighter for the working class.

At the meeting \$7,591 was pledged and contributed to the Evelyn Reed Scholarship Fund, a special fund to help establish a school where selected SWP(USA) members can engage in an intensive study of Marxism.

As a young woman in the 1920s, Evelyn — a promising artist — sought to live on her own terms and not those imposed by society, adopting a way of life that she thought would give her the freedom to make her own way.

She learned that in a myriad of ways society was structured to destroy her as an individual rebel, and force her into the assigned role of her class in her generation. She came to realise that there are no personal solutions; no utopian life-styles that can liberate an individual.

Convinced that it was impossible for humankind to be free under capitalism, Evelyn became a Marxist and gave her strength, energy, talents, intelligence and her personal wealth to building the revolutionary workers' party in the USA. For forty years Evelyn was a tireless activist and builder of the SWP(USA).

Evelyn was specially concerned for women, particularly new women recruits to the revolutionary party, and helped the party to orient to the growing struggles of working class women. She helped them develop as leaders, as thinkers, speakers, writers, organisers, and theoreticians.

Tour

It was through her contributions to the struggle for women's liberation, together with her publications and speaking tours during the past decade, that Evelyn was primarily known internationally. Just two years before her death she made a successful tour in Britain to promote *Women's Evolution: From Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family*, and to discuss the struggle for women's liberation.

In 17 jampacked days she held press conferences, gave press, radio, and TV interviews and talk-ins, and appeared live on BBC's *Nationwide* on International Women's Day.

Evelyn addressed public meetings, lectured to university and college classes, discussed with anthropologists, and lectured at a day school organised by the International Marxist Group.

At a meeting in London on International Women's Day, Evelyn, alongside other feminists, spoke to over 600 women's liberationists and their supporters on 'Why Women Are Oppressed'. One of the speakers was Irene Brennan, a leader of the British Communist Party, who valued Evelyn's work on the matriarchy.

Selfless

The tour extended from London to several major cities in England and Wales, and Evelyn carried out the heavy schedule enthusiastically and vigorously in a disciplined and selfless way. She presented her ideas very clearly.

Her aim was to convince everyone she spoke to of the necessity for a materialist approach to women's oppression. This was because Evelyn was convinced that it was only in this way that women would understand that the fight for women's liberation is an integral part of the struggle for socialism, and that it was necessary to build a powerful women's movement — allied to the struggles of the working class — in order to bring about an end to sex oppression.

Evelyn was always genuinely interested in individual feminists and she was deeply concerned to recruit them to the revolutionary party. She knew this to be the way they would get the understanding and perspective to carry the fight for women's liberation through to a victorious end.

Internationalist

Through her tour in Britain, and similar tours in Australia, Canada, Ireland, Japan, and New Zealand, Evelyn demonstrated her internationalist understanding and commitment.



Evelyn Reed 1906-79

ment to the struggle for women's liberation and socialism, as well as her responsibility as a leader of the world Trotskyist party, the Fourth International.

Her work on an international level has helped revolutionary Marxists gain a better understanding of the roots of women's oppression and the way forward in the struggle for women's liberation.

In 1969, in response to the demand from the new feminist movement for scientific explanations of the social and economic roots of women's oppression, Evelyn assembled some of her articles and published them in *Problems of Women's Liberation*.

In these articles she polemicised against a whole series of false ideas and self-defeating strategies — that biology has been women's destiny; that men, not class society, are the enemy; that women form a social class or a caste, whose role in reproduction is comparable to that of the working class in production; that humanity can be liberated through a women's revolution against patriarchy rather than through the overthrow of capitalism. Evelyn also contrasted male/female roles today with the leading part played by women in ancient societies.

Evelyn Reed's work on the origins and evolution of women's oppression is based on the historical materialist approach of Marx and Engels. Evelyn was convinced that for women to know how to bring an end to the economic, cultural, and political oppression they suffer, it was necessary for them to understand the roots of this oppression.

To this end, Evelyn takes us on a million-year expedition through pre-history, from cannibalism to culture, and uncovers the world of the ancient matriarchy. In *Woman's Evolution*, she explains that women played an essential role in the development of human society.

She explains how it was through the collective labour of men and women as a group that human society evolved; and because of their responsibilities in caring for children, the interests of the early 'feminids' went beyond concern for themselves as individuals. This enabled women's ancestors to lead the way towards group or communal living, in which tasks were shared equally and every task was essential to the preservation of the group.

Evelyn explains that women were responsible not only for the care of children, but were also largely responsible for the tasks which were to lead to basic advances in human society. They developed the skills that eventually led to the development of agriculture, medicine, science, teaching, engineering, building, and so on.

During this period there was no private property system — it was communal and classless, and within this system the maternal clan developed. This was a genuine collective in which every individual was provided for and protected by the entire community from the cradle to the grave.

The matriarchal clan was the direct opposite of the father-family (patriarchy) that requires women to work for a husband, home and children and not for society as a whole.

There was no concept of male dominance until the rise of class society, which divided humanity into property owners and workers.

Evelyn's work follows the evolutionary approach of most of the founders of the then newly-formed science of anthropology in the mid-19th century.

Two of their most important discoveries were that primitive society was collectivist and egalitarian; that it was matriarchal, and that women occupied positions of leadership in productive and social life and were held in high esteem. The sharp contrast with present-day patriarchal society brought about a deep division in anthropological circles between evolutionists and anti-evolutionists.

In her last book, *Sexism and Science*, which is a supplement to *Woman's Evolution*, Evelyn goes into these questions and exposes the anti-woman bias that permeates the sciences closest to human life — biology, sociology, anthropology, and the new sciences of socio-biology and primatology.

She reveals that the social pressures which breed prejudice against women today lead anthropologists such as Claude Levi-Strauss and Lionel Tiger to male supremacist conclusions.

Evelyn points out that in the field of anthropology, as in other scientific fields, a consistently evolutionist and materialist method of thought has revolutionary implications. She notes how Marx and Engels drew upon the materials provided by the 19th century anthropologists to extend and substantiate their materialist interpretation of history. She concluded that just as primitive collectivism had been destroyed by class society so, in turn, would class society be replaced by the new higher stage of socialism.

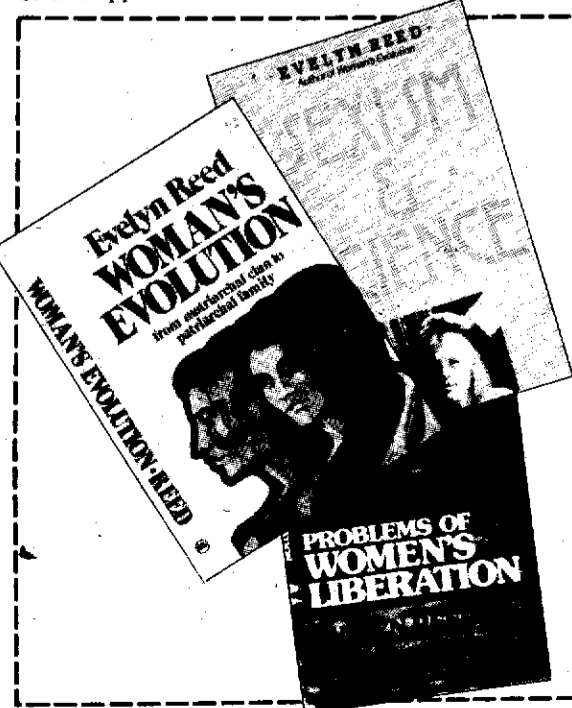
Unwilling to accept these conclusions, reactionary anthropologists were obliged not only to oppose Marxism but to reject the findings and the theoretical heritage of the 19th century anthropologists on the important questions of social origins.

Evelyn explains how these anti-evolutionists and anti-materialists have reduced their science to a patchwork of unrelated facts and false data, which has not only retarded its growth but also reduced it to an infantile theoretical level.

Evelyn Reed has made a major contribution to a scientific understanding of humanity's passage to class society. She establishes that women's inferiority is the product of a social system that also produces and fosters innumerable other inequalities, inferiorities, discriminations and degradations, and she projects a perspective for the women's liberation struggle.

By her writings and her example, Evelyn gives women confidence and has inspired them to join the struggle for a world without exploitation and oppression, and so help to create a new society in which everyone is equal.

Evelyn was not able to complete the work she had undertaken on women's evolution. She knew that it was essential and urgent for women to discover their own hidden history, and was convinced that women will continue their own intellectual course and explorations until they find what they are looking for — the truth about women's evolution. Evelyn Reed's work is a vital contribution to this end.



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Sandinistas regroup for new attack

By Dave Kellaway

CONTINUOUS bombing of Sandinista-held popular areas in the Nicaraguan capital of Managua finally paid off for President Somoza last week. Newspaper reports spoke of places where babies and small children were piled like broken dolls outside bombed-out shacks.

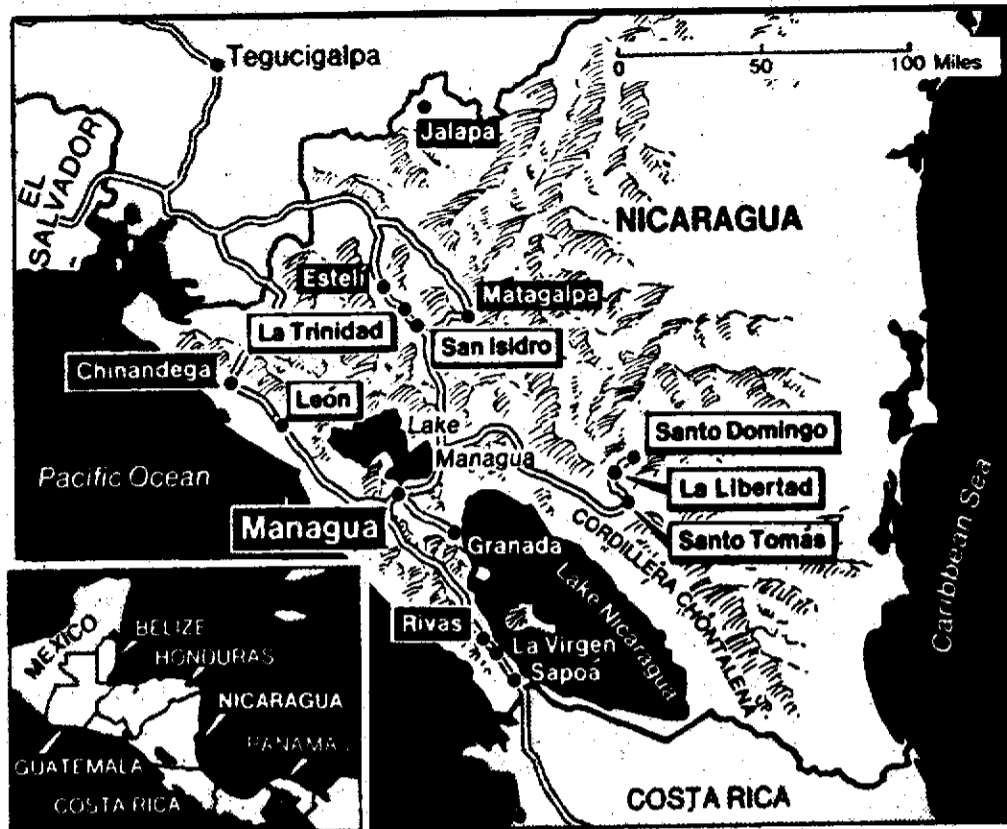
The Sandinistas have been forced to withdraw from Managua and regroup in Masaya and other towns. Meanwhile 100,000 refugees have abandoned the cities and 10,000 more are dead. This setback for the people's struggle won't save Somoza, but it could make imperialism's plan to replace him with a stable bourgeois government a lot easier.

Latest military reports suggest that the Sandinistas are concentrating on liberating Rivas, on the border with Costa Rica. The National Guard is pinned down in its barracks there, and the Sandinistas' aim seems to be to consolidate their hold on the northern towns, establish the provisional government in Leon, and regroup for a pincer attack from north and south on Managua once Rivas is taken.

Provisional

What will finally decide the situation is politics. The US, anxious to contain the situation before it becomes completely unmanageable, has already sent one ambassador to demand Somoza's unconditional resignation. A US envoy has also had discussions in Panama with the provisional government — though Washington has stopped short of fully recognising the latter.

Leading figures from the provisional



government have been anxious to deny Cuban involvement (which has indeed been limited and discreet) and to reassure imperialism and its Latin American allies that private property will be safeguarded in any 'new Nicaragua'.

There is immense political pressure for the reconstruction of a stable bourgeois state apparatus to protect non-Somoza capital. But at the same time Sandinista-led committees in the streets of Leon are organising the

distribution of food, security, and propaganda, and holding discussions about what they're fighting for. Just how easy will it be for any provisional government to halt the growth of such self-organisation?

The anti-Somoza forces are proposing a new national army composed of fighters from the Sandinistas and 'honest, patriotic' (sic) National Guard officers. The alternative call from the small Trotskyist forces of the Liga Marxista Revolucionaria is for the total destruction of the Guard and the formation of militias based on the popular committees and militias which already exist.

Decisive will be the outcome of the political struggle within the Sandinista movement, which straddles this social contradiction — leading the mass struggle, but part of a bourgeois-dominated provisional government.

Column

Solidarity with the anti-Somoza struggle is going on worldwide but is strongest in Latin America, where it appears like a beacon of hope after a series of defeats. Students in Chile have organised solidarity meetings under Pinochet's nose, while several international columns have been formed to go to Nicaragua. The Trotskyists of the Colombian PST have just sent 40 comrades to the Simon Bolivar column.

Here in Britain the Central American Human Rights Committee (59a Church Street, Old Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 6BE) are coordinating solidarity and relief and have an informative film on the recent Sandinista offensive. Why not book this and a speaker for your organisation?

Kurds and Arabs challenge Khomeini manoeuvres

By John Leadbetter

A MONTH of 'public debate' on the draft of the new Constitution for an Islamic Republic is under way in Iran. But the regime is already moving to silence the many voices raised in opposition.

Khomeini himself opened the debate on radio and television. Describing the call for a Constituent Assembly as a 'deep conspiracy against the revolution', he said that, 'Only Iran's enemies would want to delay the implementation of the Constitution, thus gaining time to undermine the achievements of the Islamic revolution'.

It is the Constitution, however, which is undermining the revolutionary achievements of the Iranian people. The draft is an attempt to put a straitjacket on the powerful movement which toppled the Shah in February.

Commander

Almost unlimited powers are assigned to the president, who is also supreme commander of the armed forces, with authority to declare war and choose the prime minister. The regime would thus be removed as far as possible from any accountability to the masses.

Its ultimate mandate would come not from the elected Majlis (parliament) but from the supervisory Council of Guardians, whose brief will be to ensure that 'all political,

social and economic affairs are based on the spirit and ethics of Islam'.

'The spirit and ethics of Islam' have already been used to disrupt the 'public' debate. A few days after Khomeini appeared on television, a rally called by the National Democratic Front in the grounds of Tehran University was attacked and broken up by Islamic thugs.

Lackeys

But the regime's constitutional manoeuvring is being challenged by the peoples of Kurdistan and Khuzestan. The draft effectively denies Iran's national minorities any degree of self-determination; 'all provincial affairs', it says, 'will be run by local councils' — which will be dominated by Persian lackeys of the Imam Committee.

Thousands of Arabs demonstrated against the draft last week in the city of Abadan in Khuzestan. They demanded the removal of governor-general Admiral Madani for his role in attacks on Arab demonstrators.

Other slogans raised included an end to censorship of the state-run radio and TV stations, for the introduction of more Arabs into local and provincial government structures, and for the release of the prisoners held since the clashes with the army at the end of May. Among the prisoners are three members of the Ahwaz oil workers' council and sixteen Iranian Trotskyists of the HKS (Socialist Workers Party), who



THIS picket of the Iranian Consulate in New York on 22 June was part of an international solidarity campaign to win the release of those held in Khuzestan.

face possible execution on trumped up charges of sedition.

In Saqqez, a town in western Kurdistan, 5,000 Kurds also demonstrated against article 15 of the draft, which makes Shi'ism the state religion. Most Kurds are Sunni Moslems, and fear that the clause is designed to make them second class citizens.

In Mahabad, local Kurds stormed

the city police station after clashes over land ownership rights outside the city in which ten young Kurds were killed. After the raid the Kurds announced that they had arrested an officer of the disbanded Javidan Guards who had been operating with the local police and Imam Committees.

This, coupled with rumours that

the government is secretly distributing large quantities of arms to the Persian landlords in Kurdistan, suggests that Khomeini-Bazargan are preparing another large offensive in the near future.

Freeze

Bazargan, however, is not waiting for the ratification of the Constitution before moving to take central control of the country's economy. Already he has announced the nationalisation of the private banks and insurance companies, thus putting a freeze on the flight of capital from the country.

The government's budget, to be announced this week, will seek to impose austerity measures on working people throughout Iran by massive cuts in public spending and an effort to push up productivity — especially in the oil sector, which will provide 75 per cent of Iran's income.

The call for a Constituent Assembly is a key response to the constitutional manipulations of Khomeini and the ruling class. Elected representatives of all sectors and groups in Iran must meet to discuss and debate fully before the whole country the problems and needs of the whole Iranian people. Only then will the need for a government of workers and peasants become clear in the minds of those who still put their faith in the bankrupt notion of an Islamic Republic.

Chile

THE Tories are being urged to normalise Britain's relations with the Chilean junta by the pro-Pinochet organisations and press — particularly the British Chilean Council, the Sunday Telegraph, Lord Montgomery and Canning House. Thatcher isn't likely to want to resist such pressure, so the left must make it abundantly clear that any such moves will be met by greater opposition than support.

The Chile Solidarity Campaign has launched a national petition urging that no British Ambassador should be sent to Chile and that the supply of arms from Britain to the Chilean armed forces be banned. The

petition will be handed in on 11 September, the anniversary of the coup, and followed by a national demonstration on Sunday 16 September. Petition forms and details of the demonstration are obtainable from Chile Solidarity Campaign, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7 7QG.

Iranian Women's Group

THE Iranian Women's Solidarity Group is organising a meeting next Wednesday, 11 July, in the Grand Council Chamber, Westminster Hall at 7.30pm. The meeting will be chaired by Oonagh McDonald MP, and speakers will include MPs Stan

Newens and Jo Richardson and a representative of the solidarity group. Its purpose will be to build support and raise money for a delegation of British women to go to Iran towards the end of the summer.

The repression meted out to women along with all other oppressed sections of the population by Iran's religious leaders has led to a decline in the organised women's movement since the March demonstrations, which makes international solidarity even more vital than before. Organise a collection and either bring it to the meeting or send it to: Iranian Women's Solidarity Group, 45 North Street, London SW4.

Apartheid tour

LLANELLI Rugby Football Club fly off for a tour of South Africa next week. Just to show how sport is to be kept free from politics, their send-off dinner on 28 June was addressed by Edward Heath and Dawie de Villiers, South Africa's ambassador in Britain.

But outside were about 300 anti-racists mobilised through six weeks of active campaigning by the South Wales Campaign Against Racism in Sport. Players and officials were greeted by shouts of 'no support for racist sport' and reminders that Muldergate money had been at the heart of attempts to make South Africa internationally respectable.

Jones on Cuba

'THE Character of the Cuban Leadership' by Alan Jones is a major feature in the latest issue of Intercontinental Press/Inprecor (Vol. 17, No. 25), which also includes much material on the oil crisis and the situation in Iran.

Single copies of the journal cost 30p plus 10p p&p, but subscriptions work out much cheaper at £2.50 for an introductory offer of 10 issues, £5 for six months (24 issues), and £9 for a year (48 issues). Please make out cheques to 'Intercontinental Press' and send to: IP/1, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

Media and unions

By Geoffrey Sheridan

AT LAST the TUC has begun to do something useful about the mass media's routine attacks on trade unionists. Two booklets just published by the TUC analyse strike coverage and give advice about dealing with journalists.

A cause for concern examines the way the media covered the lorry driver and public sector strikes at the beginning of this year, employing the kind of analytical techniques pioneered in the Glasgow University Media Group's Bad News.

How to handle the media outlines the way journalists work, explains how to put out press releases and hold press conferences, suggests broadcasting techniques, and lists media phone numbers and addresses.

It also deals with ways of complaining, including a mention of the NUJ's code of conduct, but stopping short of such offensive measures as pickets and occupations of the press to demand a right of reply.

Nevertheless, both publications will be helpful to trades councils, union branches, and shop stewards committees. They cost 60p each, from: TUC, Great Russel St, London WC1.

Radio

THINKING of challenging the way your local radio or TV station operates its franchise, or perhaps getting together a community bid for a franchise? A new Broadcasting Rights and Information Project aims to help you do that.

The project is funded by the Gulbenkian Foundation, and organised by Simon Partridge. It can be contacted at: 92 Huddleston Road, London N7. Tel. 01-272 5327.

Cuts, limbs and gangrene

By Janet Maguire, Secretary, Campaign Against Health Cuts

PEOPLE who have worked all their lives and cannot afford to go to Harley Street private consultants will suffer pain and even premature death because of the government's health cuts — a financial axe that is being swung in order to give big tax cuts to the rich.

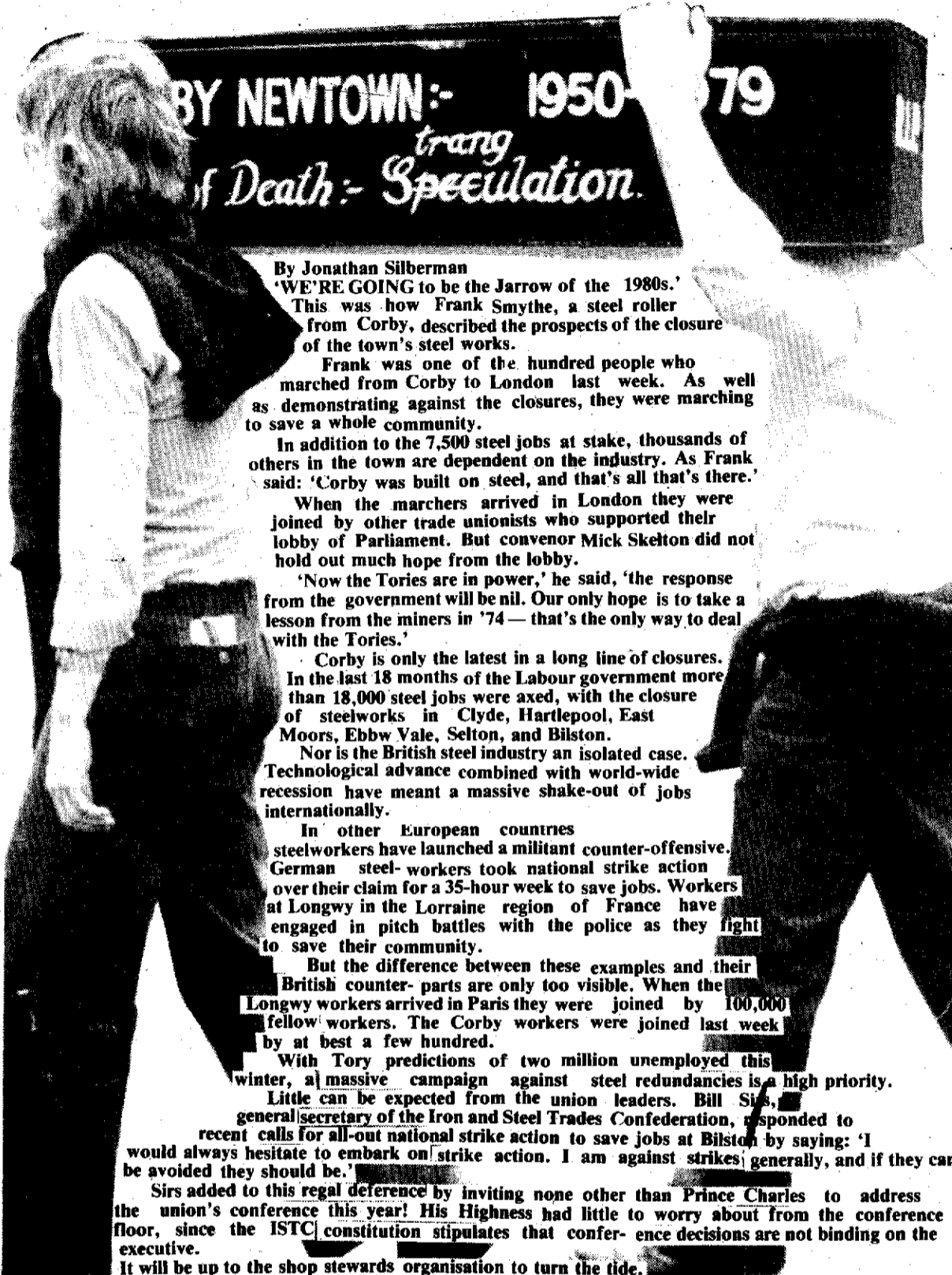
The area health authority for Lambeth, Southwark, and Lewisham in South London does not like this, but one of the solutions it is putting forward to solve the 'financial crisis' is to cutback on 'specialised services' like kidney dialysis, liver units, pace makers and open heart surgery. These services will be denied to people not living in the area, unless other hospitals pay for them. This 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' approach denies the right of every single person to a full and free health service.

Such a policy will not stop at the borough boundary. Once we let one limb of the NHS get chopped off, the gangrene of cuts will infect every other area.

A campaign has been jointly formed by the trades councils in the three boroughs and represents unions in the NHS and outside, in order to maintain and improve health care in the area. It wants to see the principle of free health care for all at the time of need re-established.

The campaign will be holding a major conference on 10 November and will be producing some 30,000 leaflets for mass distribution in the localities and hospitals.

Corby - Premeditated death of a community



By Jonathan Silberman

'WE'RE GOING to be the Jarrow of the 1980s.'

This was how Frank Smythe, a steel roller from Corby, described the prospects of the closure of the town's steel works.

Frank was one of the hundred people who marched from Corby to London last week. As well as demonstrating against the closures, they were marching to save a whole community.

In addition to the 7,500 steel jobs at stake, thousands of others in the town are dependent on the industry. As Frank said: 'Corby was built on steel, and that's all that's there.'

When the marchers arrived in London they were joined by other trade unionists who supported their lobby of Parliament. But convenor Mick Skelton did not hold out much hope from the lobby.

'Now the Tories are in power,' he said, 'the response from the government will be nil. Our only hope is to take a lesson from the miners in '74 — that's the only way to deal with the Tories.'

Corby is only the latest in a long line of closures.

In the last 18 months of the Labour government more than 18,000 steel jobs were axed, with the closure of steelworks in Clyde, Hartlepool, East Moors, Ebbw Vale, Selton, and Bilston.

Nor is the British steel industry an isolated case. Technological advance combined with world-wide recession have meant a massive shake-out of jobs internationally.

In other European countries steelworkers have launched a militant counter-offensive. German steelworkers took national strike action over their claim for a 35-hour week to save jobs. Workers at Longwy in the Lorraine region of France have engaged in pitch battles with the police as they fight to save their community.

But the difference between these examples and their British counter-parts are only too visible. When the Longwy workers arrived in Paris they were joined by 100,000 fellow workers. The Corby workers were joined last week by at best a few hundred.

With Tory predictions of two million unemployed this winter, a massive campaign against steel redundancies is a high priority.

Little can be expected from the union leaders. Bill Sims, general secretary of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, responded to recent calls for all-out national strike action to save jobs at Bilston by saying: 'I would always hesitate to embark on strike action. I am against strikes generally, and if they can be avoided they should be.'

Sims added to this regal deference by inviting none other than Prince Charles to address the union's conference this year! His Highness had little to worry about from the conference floor, since the ISTC constitution stipulates that conference decisions are not binding on the executive.

It will be up to the shop stewards organisation to turn the tide.

Newcastle wasteland

By a CPSA member, Newcastle

THE LARGEST branch of the Civil and Public Services Association is the 8,000-strong central office branch of the DHSS in Newcastle. This branch has voted by a 2-1 majority to support the campaign launched by the union's executive against Tory expenditure cuts, and has done so by introducing an overtime ban.

The three-month ban on recruitment in the Civil Service will have a massive effect in our office, which is scheduled for cuts of 6 per cent. There is no way that this can be achieved through 'natural wastage' — to which we're in any case opposed — so the Tories must be thinking of compulsory redundancies.

At the same time, the long-term effects of computerisation and new technology could lead to a least a fifth of the workforce on the clerical side being eliminated over the next few years. When it is borne in mind that this is the North-East and that over 80 per cent of our workforce are women, the effects of such policies can be readily appreciated.

Civil servants like us don't sit around all day drinking tea. We are, in the main, young workers who would in the past have been employed in the shipyards, engineering, or in the many factories in the area. But these jobs no longer exist.

So we have no choice but to turn to the government offices. If we lose these jobs, the whole region will become a wasteland with no future for school leavers. The CPSA campaign offers us a chance to fight back.

Bahro solidarity

By Barry Wilkins

THE Association of University Teachers is backing Bahro. The association's council, the national delegate body, has accepted the following motion, which now becomes national policy:

'AUT supports the call for the immediate release of Rudolf Bahro from imprisonment in the German Democratic Republic, and upholds the rights of intellectual freedom for citizens, including the right to publish views critical of their society and its government without fear of reprisal.'

'Council instructs the general secretary to communicate this to the government of the GDR and the GDR embassy in London.'

The only vocal opposition came from the union's executive, which invited the proposers — the University College Cardiff branch — to withdraw the resolution.

The reason given was that the AUT can only take up the cases of university teachers who suffer repression, and that Bahro is not a university teacher! The proposers rejected this feeble argument and insisted on the resolution being put to the vote; it was passed by a strong majority.

The same meeting narrowly supported the call for free abortion and contraception on request, to which the executive was also opposed.

Sussex

FOR two years, students at Sussex University have been involved in a campaign to oppose non-final science exams being utilised as disciplinary measures. For six months the campus has also been the scene of a rent strike.

The two campaigns have culminated in the following direct attacks by the vice-chancellor: forced re-sits for exam boycotters; expulsion of the student union president and one other activist; the threatened expulsion of 300 rent strikers; six arrests following the presence of over a hundred cops on campus; and the use of physical violence by members of the science faculty.

The decision to expel two students has now been rescinded by the faculty disciplinary committee, but more charges are being concocted against the same two students.

The Broad Left's ineptitude and passivity has meant that students at Sussex face grave threats in the autumn period.

The Socialist Students Alliance will be calling a national demonstration at the beginning of the new academic year. A Defence Fund has been set up and contributions will be welcomed. Write to: Defence Fund, c/o Sussex University Students Union, Falmer, Sussex.

AT 8am on Saturday, when the chambermaids sacked by the Grosvenor House Hotel arrived to begin their picket duty, they were horrified to discover a large group of men clearing the hotel's 'Great Room'. The pickets tried to talk to them and explain their case, but the scabs shoved them roughly aside.

Shop steward Ellen Gallagher was struck on the face. All the women were subjected to crude remarks and other abuse. The police told them that they had better get out of the way as they could not guarantee their safety.

The women were forced to watch, some in tears, as the scabs completed the job which the UCATT building workers had refused to touch. The scabs belonged to Goddards of Brentford, a firm well-known for this sort of activity.

In spite of this, the chambermaids are carrying on their fight. They are demanding reinstatement for several women with long service at the hotel, and financial compensation for the others who have been dismissed and evicted.

They are convinced that if they lose management will be given a free hand to threaten sackings whenever the workers attempt to improve their pay and conditions. If they win it will be a victory for all Trust House Forte workers.

They are calling for support from the entire trade union movement. All goods and services to the hotel must be blacked. Support is needed on the picket line, to relieve them and to keep their spirits up. Further information and donations to: Grosvenor House Support Committee, c/o 59 Star St., London W2.



Left in NALGO

DAVE Burn's report of NALGO's annual conference (21 June) presents a picture of the left in NALGO which we as NALGO militants feel bound to question. Dave rightly points out that the National Executive Council had no real policy to put forward on how to fight the Tory cuts and also rightly says that the 'Broad Left' failed to come up with a fighting alternative. But in his appraisal of the NALGO Action Group (NAG) he fails to admit that they didn't come up with an alternative either.

All that the NAG had to offer was invective mainly directed at the Broad Left. In spite of all its faults, the only motion on the Budget cuts came from the Broad Left, as did the major resolution on the future economic policy of the union. If NAG had some real answers to the cuts, why didn't they put forward emergency resolutions presenting those answers?

This brings into question Dave's whole approach to the question of how the left should organise in NALGO. His proposal that militants should enter the NAG would solve none of the problems we are facing. The NAG, to be honest, is little more than the Socialist Workers Party and its periphery in NALGO. As such it can take valuable and correct initiatives, which we should always support, but it stands no chance of really organising the left in NALGO.

It is rather ironic that just over the page from Dave's article, Ray Varnes and Janet Maguire point out the positive experience of fighting to transform the Broad Left in the CPSA — turning it into an 'open activist body'. On the basis of our practical experience over the past six years or so in NALGO, it seems to us that this is the kind of course we should be following.

The Broad Left will not go away if we ignore them. The task for rank and file militants like ourselves is to follow the example of our comrades in the CPSA and to turn the Broad Left — which is a very potent force in NALGO, leading the opposition to wage restraint during the Labour government's pay policy — into a democratic national forum for the left, where different ideas on how to fight for class struggle policies in the union can be argued out.

PETE CRESSWELL, AL WALKER, GRAHAM BURGESS, SARA BURN, PETE SAVAGE (Liverpool)

EEC elections

IN your comment on the 'Against the Bosses' Europe — For Workers' Unity' co-ordination that Big Flame is involved in (7 June), there is a factual mistake — VS in Denmark were not involved in a 'chauvinist' slate with populists and the Danish CP. VS stood on its own, got 3.5 per cent of the vote, but no one elected.

Two further points need to be made:

* Over the last eight months, the co-ordination tried to arrange a



discussion with the Fourth International. The FI was invited to our January meeting in Turin — but declined to attend. Big Flame wrote to the IMG to invite them to the March meeting of the co-ordination — I was told verbally by a member of the IMG that an answer was forthcoming, but in fact we got no reply.

We fully understand that the Fourth International wanted to 'do its own thing' over the European elections but that should not prevent it from engaging in discussion. In any case, to stand Tariq Ali on an IMG platform without bothering to raise it in Socialist Unity is hardly the most constructive political act.

* The joint platform 'Against the Bosses' Europe — For Workers' Unity' began as an international dialogue between groups from differing political backgrounds. And from the very beginning it was decided that it was up to each group to decide on their tactics towards the elections. All the groups involved are against the institutions of the EEC — different national conditions required different tactics in the elections.

Finally, we would like to inform your readers that both PDUP and the NSU (New United Left, which includes Democrazia Proletaria) got a member elected to the European Parliament — it is not only Trotskyist candidates who are revolutionary. PETE ANDERSON (Coventry Big Flame)

• There is no mistake about the VS in Denmark. It signed what it called a 'technical' agreement with the People's Movement (a bourgeois anti-market organisation). The agreement was to vote for each other's candidates in the PR system, with VS's votes going to the People's Movement in the event that VS didn't get enough to have someone elected.

Secondly, the Fourth International was not invited, deliberately, to the meeting which drew up the framework and first draft platform of the 'co-ordination'. The January meeting was to ratify this.

Thirdly, the different campaigns of the groups supporting the 'co-ordination' had nothing to do with tactics reflecting 'different national conditions' — or why did one of the French signatories, the PSU, chase around trying to form a

joint slate with anyone it could lay its hands on (including an approach to the bourgeois Left Radicals), while the other, the OCT, called for a vote for the LO/LCR joint slate?

In fact the signatories couldn't agree on programme. Hence the co-ordination's platform

* was silent on the 35-hour week (which even the social-democratic parties talk about) because DP in Italy

was opposed to its inclusion;

* was silent on the need to build an independent women's movement;

* was silent on the struggle for democratic rights and political revolution in the other half of Europe — the East;

* counterposed 'national identity' to 'the European institutions' without making any distinction between oppressed nationalities like the Irish

or Basques and imperialist nations.

The sacrifice of such points is, in the IMG's view, an unacceptably high price to pay for 'an international dialogue'. The FI's 'own thing', on the other hand, was a common campaign in all the EEC countries plus Greece, Spain and Portugal on a clear revolutionary programme. CLIVE TURNBULL

UNDER REVIEW

Bands against repression

By René of Oxy and the Morons

TWO London bands, Charge and Oxy and the Morons, travelled to Ireland last month to play in the predominantly Catholic area of West Belfast, under the banner of Rock Against Repression. There was much debate over the notion of Rock against Repression before we arrived in Belfast ... less so by the time we left.

Rock against Repression was formed by people in Belfast in conjunction with concerned people in England. The organisation has already been seen mistakenly as a peacenik group promoting peace at any price; or, more understandably, it has been described as 'Rock against the Brits' by people in the Six Counties.

Neither description is completely true. We played in predominantly Catholic areas because no venues could be found in Protestant areas, and not through any sectarianism on the part of the organisers. It is accepted that state oppression also exists in the working class Protestant areas of the Six Counties and is not the exclusive burden of the Catholics.

Rock against Repression seeks to perform two main functions. First and most important, it aims to provide a forum and platform for young people interested in music/youth culture to perform rock music to a wide audience in an area of acute social and cultural deprivation. It is hoped that alongside this will exist the

means of sharing equipment (which is very scarce) and the occasion for expressing and sharing ideas in public situations without harassment.

Secondly, it gives English bands who are associated in some way with the socialist movement the chance to play in the Six Counties and thus show an interest in and solidarity with the predicament of the people who live there. This last may seem somewhat patronising — but the response given to the bands, who are by no means well known or commercially successful, discredits this assumption.

On both nights local bands played interspersed between the two English bands. On the first night, at the Shamrock Club in the large, isolated Ardoyne Estate, the audience was made up of about 300 people from the ages of ten to sixty, and made the evening seem happily the most removed from a conventional rock gig. We were amazed by the reception and the support given to us, and never for the rest of our stay had any cause to doubt the validity of our reasons for being there.

Despite the essential conservatism of the audience, any mention of support — and our presence, it seemed, was more than sufficient evidence — was received ecstatically in the almost carnival atmosphere. This success probably had as much to do with our being English and obviously in support of our audience's aims (insofar as this is possible) as with the appeal of our music.

The younger members of the

audience fired immediately on the instant punk adrenalin of Charge, and took a little more sedately — but with enthusiasm — to Oxy and the Morons. Also, the enclosed nature of Ardoyne (the estate has only two entrances) meant that the audience exhibited a stronger sense of community than we found on the subsequent night at the Green Briar on the Falls Road.

Here there was a much younger audience ... who welcomed seeing four of their own bands playing, and the atmosphere was much more like a rock gig. The club was huge, and never more than a third full because it was Sunday, and the atmosphere suffered accordingly.

The Rock against Repression movement is getting underway. The two English bands have been asked to return some time. Meetings have been organised in Belfast by the local bands as a result of the impetus injected by the tour, and they are hopefully now in a better position to seek venues, with the confidence that they can get an audience.

The need for more cultural and social involvement by English people outside of commercial venues or other commercial situations in Belfast (remember the lamentable pictures of the Clash with the troops?) seems obvious.

Our final view of the Six Counties, after having driven down the wrong road, was to be faced across a field with the English concentration camp that is Long Kesh. All rock should stand against repression. Long Kesh and the people of Belfast were a reminder of this.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE EVENTS

NORTH WEST

MOSS SIDE Socialist Challenge supporters sell the paper at Moss Side Centre, Saturday, 11-1.

MANCHESTER SC Centre has been closed because of fire damage, but will be reopening shortly. All mail/enquiries should meanwhile be sent via the paper's national office in London.

OLDHAM SC sales every Saturday, 11-1, outside Yorkshire Bank, High St. For further details tel. 061-652 7851.

N. MANCHESTER-SALFORD SC group meeting: 'The civil war in Nicaragua', with speaker from the Sandinistas. Wed 11 July at the Millers Hotel, Cheetham Hill Road (opp. N. Manchester General Hospital).

NORTH EAST

MIDDLESBROUGH paper sales, Saturday lunchtime at Cleveland Centre, near lottery stand opposite Woolworths. Also available from Newsflare in Linthorpe Road and inside Cleveland Centre.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES readers can buy Socialist Challenge and Revolution from Green Books stall upstairs in Spencer Hall indoor market, Stockton High St.

SCOTLAND

For information about the paper or its supporters' activities throughout Scotland please contact Socialist Challenge Books, 64 Queen St, Glasgow. Open Wed, Thurs, Fri and Sat afternoons. Phone for alternative arrangement (221 7481). Wide range of Fourth International publications.

HAMILTON supporters sell Socialist Challenge every Saturday in the Hamilton shopping centre, 1-5pm. For details of local activities contact John Ford, 553 Eliot Crescent, Hamilton.

EDINBURGH Socialist Challenge supporters group meets regularly. Phone George at 031-346 0466 for details.

DUNDEE Information about Socialist Challenge activities from 64 Queen St, Glasgow. Join in SC sales outside Boots (corner of Reform St) each Saturday 11am-2pm.

MIDLANDS

LEICESTER SC group meets monthly at Highfields Community Centre. Paper on sale at Blackthorn Books.

BIRMINGHAM supporters sell the paper outside New Street station every Saturday, 10-4. Phone 643 9209 for details of SC activities.

TOTTINGHAM readers can buy Socialist Challenge regularly at Mushroom Books, Leathcote St.

LEAMINGTON Socialist Challenge group meets every other Sunday. Contact 311772.

YORKSHIRE

HUDDERSFIELD Socialist Challenge group meets fortnightly on Thursdays at the Friendly & Trades Club, Northumberland St.

DEWSBURY Socialist Challenge sales regularly on Saturday mornings in Westgate at the Nat. Westminster Bank. 12.30-2.00pm.

LEEDS Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday at City Centre Precinct, 11am-1.30pm. And at

Elland Rd — when Leeds Utd are playing at home!

HUDDERSFIELD Socialist Challenge sales regularly Saturdays 11am-1pm in the Piazza.

YORK Socialist Challenge is on sale at the York Community Bookshop, 73 Walmgate or from sellers on Thursdays (12.30-1.45) at York University, Vanbrugh College; Saturdays (11.30-3.30) at Coney Street.

SOUTH WEST

FOR INFORMATION on activities in the South-West, write to Box 002, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Bristol 6.

SOUTHAMPTON Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday from 10am-1pm above bar. Post Office, Bargate.

BRISTOL Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday, 11am-1pm in the 'Hole in the Ground', Haymarket.

ISLE OF WIGHT readers can buy Socialist Challenge from the Oz Shop, 44 Union St, Ryde.

BATH Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday, 2-3.30pm, outside Macfisheries. Ring Bath 20298 for further details.

SWINDON supporters sell Socialist Challenge 11am-1pm Saturdays, Regent St (Brunel Centre).

PORTSMOUTH Socialist Challenge sales, Saturdays 11.30am-1pm, Commercial Road Precinct.

SOUTH EAST

NORWICH Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday in Davey Place (opp. market) and bookstall Thursdays at University of East Anglia.

COLCHESTER SC supporters meet regularly. For details phone Steve on Wivenhoe 2949.

BRIGHTON SC forums fortnightly on Tuesdays. Contact Micky on 605052.

LONDON

TOWER HAMLETS Socialist Challenge Group meets every fortnight (phone 247 2717 for details).

PADDINGTON/N KENSINGTON supporters sell the paper every Saturday at noon at junction Portobello Rd/Westbourne Park Rd, W11.

BRENT supporters sell every Saturday, 2.30pm, at Kilburn Sq, Kilburn High Rd, London NW6.

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD supporters meet regularly on Sunday evenings. For details phone Mick on Hemel Hempstead 41037. Also paper sales Saturday mornings in Times Square.

PADDINGTON-N. KENSINGTON SC group meeting: 'Ireland — 800 years of struggle for liberation', with speaker Geoff Bell. Wed 18 July, 8pm, at Meeting Room, 1 Thorpe Close, W10 (Ladbroke Grove tube).

WALTHAMSTOW readers can buy Socialist Challenge regularly from Sheridan's Newsagents, 86 Hoe St, E17.

LEYTON readers can buy Socialist Challenge from Patel's Newsagents, 326 Lea Bridge Road E10.

TOWER HAMLETS Socialist Challenge supporters sell every weekend: Saturdays 10.30am, Whitechapel tube; Sundays 10am, Brick Lane (corner of Buxton St).

HACKNEY supporters sell every Saturday 12-2pm, in Kingsland High St, Dalston — outside Sainsbury's.

HARROW Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly, details from Box 50, London N1 2JL.

HARINGEY paper sales at Finsbury Park & Seven Sisters tubes, Thurs evening; Muswell Hill and Crouch End Broadways, Saturday mornings. Also available at Muswell Hill Books, Muswell Hill Broadway; Vares newsagents, Middle Lane, N8; and Bookmarks, Finchley Park.

SOUTH LONDON paper sales at Brixton tube 12-2 every Saturday. Also available at Oval and Herne Hill BR kiosks.

S.E. LONDON SC group meets Saturdays 11 outside Midland Bank, Deptford High St. Paper sale in market. All local supporters please note. Watch this spot for details of next meeting.

HACKNEY SC group meeting: 'The left and Labour Party after the election'. Wed 11 July, 7.30pm, Britannia pub, Mare Street, E8.

Socialist Challenge

Build mass movement on Zimbabwe

By John Blair

LAST Saturday's Anti-Apartheid demonstration in London on Zimbabwe was a small but important start in developing a mass movement that becomes daily more urgent as Thatcher threatens to lift sanctions.

Approximately 1,500 people marched to Trafalgar Square for speeches from ZAPU and ZANU leaders, Labour MPs Joan Lester and Bob Hughes, and others. The demonstration was called around the slogan 'No Tory sell-out in Zimbabwe', but its most vociferous section, including contingents from the IMG and Socialist Challenge supporters' groups, hammered home the enduring political issue with an incessant chant of 'US, UK, Hands off Zimbabwe!'

The AA, however, had failed to mobilise anything like its potential mass base. There were only two banners from local AA branches, only two from trade unions, and one from the Communist Party.

One reason for this poor turn-out is undoubtedly political confusion — something that must be urgently eliminated if we are to build a mass movement to counter present moves towards an imperialist-sponsored 'settlement' in southern Africa.

This was sadly reflected at a conference organised by AA on 26 June to 'celebrate' its 20th anniversary. The dominant theme in

discussion of the present situation was that imperialist strategy had undergone a fundamental change.

The argument of UN Special Committee on Apartheid leader Reddy, AA honorary secretary Abdul Minty, and spokespersons for the World Peace Council and French anti-apartheid movement was that after efforts at 'detente' the Western powers were now determined to defend the internal settlement in Zimbabwe and the Turnhalle agreement in Namibia. To do this they were embarking on undeclared war against the front-line states, which made defence of the latter the central task for AA campaigners.

One speaker not convinced of this simplistic line was Oliver Tambo, acting president of the South African ANC, who insisted that imperialism had essentially two strategies available to it. One was hard line support for white supremacy; but the other was the much more dangerous 'integration' of black collaborators. By implication at least, Tambo was giving warning that the possibilities for such a line were by no means at an end.

Minty, however, went so far as to advocate that we should be calling for British troops to defend the front-line states. Tony Southall, a delegate from York AA, challenged this by explaining that any moves by imperialism in the area had to be urgently countered by the solidarity

movement.

Whatever the disguise — 'rescue' operation, part of a UN or even OAU-backed force, policing a negotiated settlement of some kind — their function would remain that of British troops anywhere: to defend imperialist interests. Unfortunately no debate was opened on this.

A second area where the AA leadership's positions were less than satisfactory concerned the urgent need to develop work amongst trade unionists. A member of the NUPE Executive with special responsibility for international work stressed that it was crucial now to prepare for rank-and-file action to impose sanctions if and when Thatcher dropped the sanctions order against Rhodesia. Once again no response came.

It is clearly necessary for activists in the movement to ensure that these two central questions are thoroughly aired at Anti-Apartheid's AGM on 28 October.

Meanwhile all possible resources must be turned to building the demonstration called by the Zimbabwe Emergency Campaign Committee for 11 November. At the same time we must be prepared to take immediate action against any moves towards 'recognition' of the internal settlement, and argue particularly for direct action in response by the labour movement.

FREE THE IRANIAN TROTSKYISTS!

Picket to demand the immediate release of the 16 members of the Iranian HKS (Socialist Workers Party) arrested in Ahwaz, and of the members of the Ahwaz oilworkers' council also being held.

Saturday 7 July, 2pm, at Iran Air, 73 Piccadilly, W1

OUR FUND DRIVE

ENCOURAGEMENT for our efforts came this week from Brighton Poly Student Union, who sent us £25. Their accompanying letter explained:

'It was decided that in these dark ages of Tory rule, the demise of any left paper would be a positive disaster. Especially in the light of the many attacks that student unions can expect to face in the near future.

'We would urge other student unions throughout the country to contribute financially and offer their support to a paper which is so obviously committed to defending the rights of working people.'

Our special fund drive has got off to a slow start, with only £152.30 coming in so far — thanks to: Anon, £2; Dundee SC supporters, £2; Anon, £50; Cardiff SC supporters, £10; L. Hartop, £5; J. Smith, £5; Brighton Poly SU, £25; Manchester SC supporter, £8.30; H. Khamis, £5; P. Feig, £20; John May's sponsored dry-out, £6; H. Wordsworth, £15.

But the main people we want to take notice of this column this week are the people who sell the paper. We estimate that there are about 750 of us, including the people in this office.

Six copies of the paper is a pretty small number for each of us to sell; some people manage a lot more. But if we all sold that number — or even managed it as an average — that would be 4,500 papers. It would be a big improvement in our financial situation. What is more, we think that people who don't sell that many papers would find it politically stimulating to try.

Lately we've had a lot of local groups ringing or writing in to cut their orders because the colleges have closed down. There's something wrong here. Term ending should mean a lot of supporters with more time to sell the paper, if you were already selling so many in college.

Opportunities to sell aren't that few and far between, either. Labour's defeat has opened up a debate in the labour movement on 'which way forward' — militants are willing to read about our alternatives. More and more people are angry at the Tory attacks and interested in a strategy for the fightback.

So we're asking our supporters: give the paper your time! The paper isn't just for you, it's for all the people you could sell it to if you took the time out. Don't let it rot in your front room, the local organiser's front room, or (worst of all) the corridors of our office. Go out and sell!

Carry some in your hand-bag, shoulder-bag, jacket pocket or carrier bag. Use it to illustrate a point in an argument at work. Force it on recalcitrant sympathisers who'd rather spend the money on a half and borrow your copy. Organise new sales in all the places where two or three are gathered together in your locality.

To spell out what this means in

terms of numbers, we've produced targets for our supporters in the localities for a summer sales and subs drive, with the aim of reaching 4,500 individual sales (not shop sales!) a week and selling 500 extra subs. Who'll reach their targets first? The answer depends on you.

Group	Sales	Subs
Aberdeen	55	10
Basingstoke	30	5
Bath	40	5
Bedford	50	5
Birmingham	280	30
Bolton	50	5
Bradford	20	5
Brighton	80	10
Bristol	70	10
Crawley	20	—
Canterbury	30	5
Cardiff	130	15
Colchester	65	5
Coventry	80	10
Derby	10	—
Dundee	35	—
Edinburgh	130	15
Gravesend	10	—
Glasgow	120	15
Harrow	20	5
Hemel Hempstead	45	5
Huddersfield	55	5
Hull	120	15
Leamington Spa	25	5
Leeds	120	15
Leicester	60	5
Liverpool	130	15
Manchester	320	35
Middlesbrough	30	5
Newcastle	90	10
Newport	10	—
Norwich	25	5
Nottingham	100	10
Oxford	190	20
Portsmouth	30	5
Preston	60	5
Plymouth	5	—
St Albans	15	—
Sheffield	80	10
Shrub Hill	10	—
Southampton	55	5
Stirling	25	5
Swansea	55	5
Swindon	50	5
Wakefield	10	—
Wolverhampton	35	5
York	35	5

London:	Sales	Subs
Brent	55	5
Camden	150	15
Hackney	150	15
Hammersmith	30	5
Haringey	90	10
Islington	115	15
Lambeth	150	15
Newham	80	10
Notting Hill	55	5
Outer West	160	15
South East	90	10
Tower Hamlets	115	10
Wandsworth	100	10

SUBSCRIBE NOW

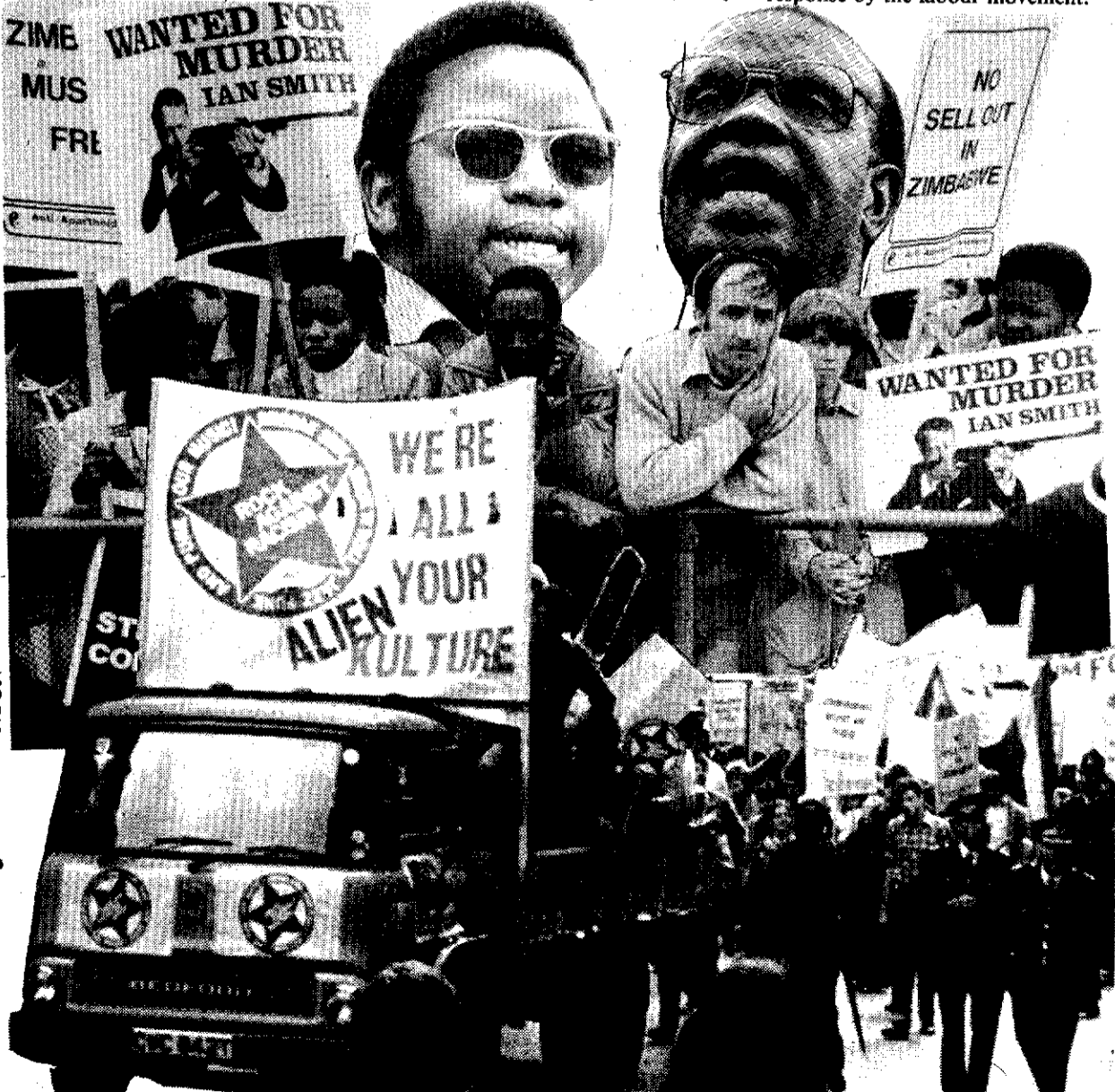
Domestic: 6 months, £5; 12 months, £10
Abroad: Airmail, £16.50. Surface, £10 per annum.
Multi-reader institutions: double individual rate

Name

Address

Enclose a donation for the Fighting Fund of

Cheques, POs and Money Orders should be made payable to 'Socialist Challenge'.
Complete and return to: Socialist Challenge, 328 Upper Street, London N2.



ZANU Speaker (left), ZAPU Speaker (right), rally at Trafalgar Square, and demonstration

Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

Photo and Montage: ALAN LENTON