

Socialist Challenge

TORY



THE TORIES are doing everything they can to discredit the unions.

Tory minister Geoffrey Howe led off with the charge that the unions have been responsible for causing the economic crisis. Trade unionists 'live in a dream world', he says.

The Tory press followed on with news of 'an outbreak of industrial sanity'. Leyland worker Mike Savage became a ruling class hero overnight when he refused to strike without a vote.

Then *Panorama* added its own exposure on Monday of how deals are worked out behind the scenes at the TUC, and dragged out right-wing union leader Frank Chapple to confirm Tory accusations that the unions are unrepresentative.

The picture they paint is of ordinary workers being manipulated by a faceless, undemocratic union machine. What hypocrisy!

Geoffrey Howe never complained when the TUC General Council endorsed Callaghan's incomes policy. Nor when it imposed the 12 month rule without the agreement of Congress.

The Tory press never reported the

scores of engineering factories which *did* vote to strike, or interviewed any of the 1 3/4 million workers who came out. And Frank Chapple was not questioned on *Panorama* about how democratically *his* union is run.

The overwhelming support the engineers' strike received on Monday and Tuesday shows that for all the Tory propaganda the militancy of working people has not been punctured. But the best way to ensure that militancy remains is through involving the membership.

When shop stewards refuse to call mass meetings and take strike votes they play into Tory hands. The only way to win support for action is by winning arguments.

When union bureaucrats manoeuvre to prevent a real debate on differences at the TUC they deepen the suspicion of rank and file members that it does not reflect their concerns.

Trade union democracy is not a luxury. Without it there can be no genuine unity. One way to fight the Tories *is* to fight for democracy in the labour movement, for rank-and-file control over *all* decisions.

HYPOCRITES



THE DAILY MIRROR last Saturday sent a front page message to the Trade Union Congress. It said: 'Unite, don't fight!'

Well, that is exactly what the Congress has done. They have shown lots of unity in words but there's still no sign of unity in action against the Tories.

There was unity in fiery speeches, in resolutions condemning the Tories' policies of cuts and increased unemployment; in rejecting the government's attacks on union rights.

But instead of launching a fight, the TUC decided to go on chatting with government ministers.

There had been proposals that the unions should stop

talking to the Tories, and start fighting them. These came from the Bakers' Union and from UCATT, the building workers' union.

They should have been debated and adopted. The unions have nothing to gain by negotiating with James Prior on how far union rights should be curbed.

But Len Murray got these resolutions withdrawn from the agenda in the name of 'unity'.

It does not surprise us that the Daily Mirror calls for this. It is after all merely echoing Jim Callaghan, the man that this pro-Labour newspaper is defending against the party's left wing. Callaghan's calls for unity are also aimed at

avoiding action. We have a different message of advice: Unity, yes; but only for action.

Don't be put off fighting for a socialist response from the unions and the Labour Party by the smokescreen of a false unity.

And above all start building action now to defend basic rights.

*Throw the full support of the trade union movement behind the engineering workers' strikes for a decent minimum wage.

*Build for the TUC demonstration in defence of abortion rights on 28 October.

*And make the test of those leaders who call for unity what they are doing in action.

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)

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EDITORIAL

Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1 2XQ. Editorial: 01-359 8180/9. Distribution/Advertising: 01-359 8371.

Defend the Iranian revolution!



Rebel Kurds face the firing squad.

'NO QUARTER given or received.' That was the message of the Kurdish people last week to demands by the Khomeini-Bazargan government for their surrender. The indiscriminate and continuous strafing of Kurdish towns and cities (Saddeq, Pavah, Zanjan) by government helicopter gunships, the summary executions of Kurdish prisoners, and the violence of the denunciations and slanders aimed at the Kurdish Democratic Party and the Kurdish people from the pulpits of Qom and Tehran have only increased Kurdish determination to resist. Nothing less than their lives and future are at stake.

The stakes are equally high in Ahwaz in the province of Khuzestan. There twelve Trotskyists — members of the Socialist Workers Party (HKS), Iranian section of the Fourth International — were sentenced to death in a secret trial conducted without the slightest pretence of legality. The trials, arranged by the local Imam Committee, also sentenced two further HKS members to life imprisonment. The charges contained not a single reference to any illegal or criminal act, merely slanderous attacks against the ideas of the Trotskyists and their political support for the struggle of the oppressed masses of Iran. Although a re-trial now seems to have been scheduled, the lives of these comrades may still be in the balance.

Has the Iranian revolution come to an end? After only six months of seeing the light of day, are the Iranian people now being led back into the dark night of repression for another quarter century? Has Khomeini replaced Mohammed Reza Pahlavi as the new Shah of Iran? We think not.

For 25 long years, the Shah ruled Iran with an iron fist. The suppression of all democratic rights and the crushing of all opposition was carried out with a brutality and cruelty unmatched throughout the globe. Those who rail against the repression launched by Khomeini should not for one second forget this fact.

Both under the Shah's regime and under the rule of Khomeini, power is wielded without the scantest regard for the interests or wishes of the Iranian masses. But it is the manner of coming to power which is crucial. The Shah took hold of the reins after a CIA-backed coup in which the workers movement and the oppressed suffered a crushing defeat. Khomeini, on the other hand, rode to power on the crest of a mass movement unequalled in this

century. Every section of society, including the massed ranks of the urban poor, the nationalities in Kurdistan, Khuzestan, Turkomenistan and Azerbaijan, women, and the organised power of the workers in the oil fields and all the other industries mobilised to bring down the Pahlavi dynasty. It is to this mass movement that Khomeini owes his present position. He was, to be sure, in the leadership of this movement; but the movement was not Khomeini.

'The masses', wrote Trotsky in his *History of the Russian Revolution*, 'go into a revolution not with a prepared plan of social reconstruction, but with a sharp feeling that they cannot endure the old regime.' The repression meted out by the SAVAK agents of the Shah, the denial of all democratic rights, a land reform which made millions of peasants landless and destitute and drove them to live jobless in ghettos around the cities, racist denial of the cultural rights of the non-Persian nationalities, and an economic collapse which was steadily deepening and nourishing the discontent of ever widening layers of society...these conditions were without doubt too much to endure.

Insurrections, however, are never merely spontaneous explosions of anger or discontent. Although they may not have had 'a prepared plan of social reconstruction', the masses in Iran were moved by a thirst for control over their own lives, by the desire to speak freely, by the need for democratic rights and for the ending of their exploitation at the hands of the Shah, the landowners and capitalists.

The failure of both the National Front and the Tudeh Party to oppose the land reforms in 1963 and the absence of any political leadership created a vacuum into which Khomeini could move. He had been alone in voicing any opposition to the White Revolution programme of 1963, and had been exiled for this very reason. His reputation was clear, and in the sketches of an Islamic Republic which he offered from Paris the masses saw the possibilities of a regime free from exploitation, one in which they could see realised their rightful demands. Khomeini seemed to add weight to the vision he invoked by his steadfast refusal to compromise with the Pahlavi regime and his unrelenting exhortations to the masses to continue the struggle until the Shah and all his hangers-on were gone.

By claiming to rise above classes, Khomeini exploited the unity of the anti-Shah movement. But this 'national unity' could not obscure for long the fundamental class issues at stake in Iran today. Because of the dependent character of the Iranian economy in relation to imperialism, the bourgeois government of Bazargan installed by Khomeini cannot fulfil the needs and wishes of the people, which are the tasks of the Iranian revolution. Since taking office Bazargan has been unable to introduce a single reform. Unemployment continues to rise, inflation is rampant, industry is at a standstill, and food production is as unreliable as ever.

But the expectations of the masses remain, and these expectations run counter to the type of society which Khomeini-Bazargan want to rebuild — a capitalist society. The dynamic of the movement which led to the fall of the Shah cannot be appeased. It will either sweep forward to bring the land into the hands of the peasants, the means of production into the hands of the workers, and the formation of a proletarian government — or it will be destroyed.

This latter is the task which the Khomeini-Bazargan government has set itself. The violent attempt to suppress the demands of the Kurdish people is an attempt to suppress democracy, a climate in which the class consciousness of the masses can only grow. The persecution of the left and the abolition of press freedom have exactly the same aim. If this is achieved, the government will move to clamp down on the other nationalities, and on the working class itself.

But Khomeini-Bazargan are on shaky ground. The forces of repression at their disposal are at best unreliable. Many sections of the armed forces, which themselves were part of the mass radicalisation earlier in the year, are unwilling to go into action against the Kurds. The government has been forced to rely on the uncoordinated movements of the Islamic Guards — often hastily recruited from among the unemployed in the urban ghettos, untrained and undisciplined — and on an economic infrastructure which is unable to service the military hardware at its disposal. And the Kurdish people, armed from the youngest to the oldest, are prepared to resist to the end.

Moreover, the credibility of the government is gradually beginning to crumble. The widespread boycott of the elections to the Council of Experts indicated a large reservoir of opposition to Khomeini. The Arabs of Khuzestan continue to pose a threat to the stability of the oil-producing regions.

International action can prise open these cracks. For instance, the announcement by the Foreign Minister of Iran last Sunday that the HKS militants are not at present under sentence of death was a self-confessed response to the international campaign of pickets, demonstrations, telegrams, etc. We shall continue our campaign, not merely for the dropping of all charges and the release of the prisoners, but in defence of the heroic struggle of the Kurdish people. This is the greatest contribution we can make in this country to the building of a revolutionary leadership in Iran.

Today the class struggle which died down after the February insurrection is coming to life again in the form of civil war. The resistance of the Kurds, now at the forefront of the revolution's defence, can spread over into the Arab nationality in Khuzestan, into the Turkomeni and Azerbaijani regions; the struggles of women and of the working masses themselves can draw strength from the struggles of the nationalities.

Imperialism can support only one side in such a war. Already the State Department in Washington is offering to renew the sale of arms to Khomeini-Bazargan. The stability of a capitalist regime in Iran is more important to the human rights demagogues on Capitol Hill than the lives and political rights of the Kurdish people.

Socialists internationally have a duty to counter such manoeuvres. A defeat for the Iranian revolution will be a defeat for the oppressed masses throughout the world. No to the arms sales! Hands off Kurdistan! Release the Kurdish prisoners! Stop the executions! Release the HKS members! Defend the Iranian Revolution!



A letter protesting against the death sentence is handed in at the Iranian embassy by Reg Race MP, Ernie Roberts MP and others.

Demonstration called by Association of Kurdish Students Abroad (AKSA) to protest the attacks on the Kurdish people. Saturday 8 September — assemble Speakers Corner 1pm for march to Iraqi and Iranian embassies. Supported by Ad Hoc Committee to Defend Democratic Rights in Iran.

Public meeting: 'Stop the repression in Iran'. Friday 7 September, 7.30pm, in Assembly Hall, Central Hall, Westminster. Speakers: Hojabr Khosravi (HKS, Iran), Shirko Abid (AKSA), Fred Halliday, labour movement speakers. Sponsored by AKSA, Kurdistan Solidarity Committee, IMG, SWP, Workers Action.

Right to Work March

A blistering attack on the TUC

By Jude Arkwright, on the Right to Work March
Tuesday 4 September

THERE ARE over five hundred people, mainly young, on this year's Right to Work march to the TUC. So far the march has been through Liverpool, Kirkby, Leyland and Preston, we'll get to Blackpool tonight.

Yesterday we walked 25 miles in one day, after a night when a rainstorm brought down our marquee and soaked our sleeping bags at 5am. As a result there are lots of blisters

and aches and pains. Sometimes it seems a bit like an endurance test.

But we've been calling in at factories, trade union headquarters and labour clubs on the way, and we've been really welcomed. It's not surprising, really — in Kirkby half the population is unemployed.

The attitude of the police has not been so welcoming. On the very first day one Asian youth was arrested for spray painting. Then when 25 marchers — members of the National Union of School Students and about half of them *Revolution* supporters — went to a school to talk

to students, they were all arrested. They had gone to talk about the campaign and the need to organise to fight for jobs and for their rights in school.

They were all done for breach of the peace and came up in court the next day. All of them were bound over to keep the peace for a year, with a £100 fine if they don't.

This is what you get for asserting your democratic right to organise. All those who were under 17 were kept overnight in the cells and one of them was badly beaten up by the police.

It's not a joke getting picked up by

the police in Chief Constable Anderton's territory. We still don't know what happened to those who had to stay at the police station. But despite the efforts of the police we are all still determined to fight back — most of the people here have no option.

We can see, too, that the unemployed can't fight alone; they have so little power. That's why we're marching on the TUC — to demand a big campaign in the trade unions for a 35-hour week, a minimum wage, and against all redundancies.

You'll be surprised to learn that

this is precisely what the TUC leaders are afraid to do.

Why should they worry about the unemployed? As Val Dunn of the Bakers' Union pointed out in her address to us at Preston: 'Socialism is supposed to be caring about people. If you care about people you don't spend £5,000 on dinners at the Imperial Hotel in Blackpool.'

The only way we'll make these leaders shift is if we organise to make them. The Right to Work march is the beginning, we have to go on from here.

News from nowhere

The Clapham mullahs

WE REALLY must protest at the new soft attitudes being displayed by the Workers Revolutionary Party newspaper *Newsline*, journal of the Clapham Mullahs.

In an article on 25 August it commented on the threatened executions of the 14 members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party, Iranian section of the Fourth International:

'The Iranian SWP is an offshoot of Tariq Ali's misnamed International Marxist Group and the SWP of the United States, an organisation which is led by FBI spies.'

The article continued: 'After failing to launch a bogus "women's rights" provocation, and then failing to stir up "human rights" to rescue the agents of the Shah's regime and the SAVAK torturers, the SWP began to concentrate its attention on the Kurdish minority in the western province and the Arabs in the south.'

After reporting the trial of the 14, *Newsline* informed its reader (Colonel Gaddafi) that the Iranian SWP 'is controlled by American agents whose purpose is to overthrow Khomeini and return Iran to a base for imperialist exploitation and war intrigues against the Arab revolution.'

This type of biting logic was exactly the sort employed in the heroic Moscow trials of the 1930s when it was proved that the well-known Jew, Leon Trotsky, was an agent of the Nazis and other assorted counter-revolutionaries. Trotsky was later executed by Stalin's agent for his crimes.

But *Newsline* to its shame shows no such resolve as far as the Iranian 14 are concerned. The article completely capitulates to bourgeois liberalism and merely says that the 14 'should be booted out of Iran.'

Having said that, let us give credit where it is due. Last Saturday *Newsline* revealed that our very own reporter in Nicaragua, Clive Turnbull, 'was the man who turned state's evidence at the judicial inquiry into the death of Warwick student Kevin Gately, killed during a police charge

on anti-fascist demonstrators in London's Red Lion Square in 1974.'

This certainly came as a surprise to us, not to say the renegade Turnbull, who pathetically requested evidence of this charge at his secret trial. Although *Newsline* is a bit short on evidence we did not let that stand in the way of justice. An ice-pick was duly planted in his head.

Let us leave the last word to Lawrie McMenemy, the manager of Southampton Football Club, praising the Clapham Mullahs' newspaper thus in its 1 September edition:

'As part of my up-bringing I was taught to look for the Sports Page first. In some papers this is difficult, because for some reason they tend to talk about such mundane things as politics, the Common Market and the state of the country.'

'However, with your colour supplement there is no such problem.'

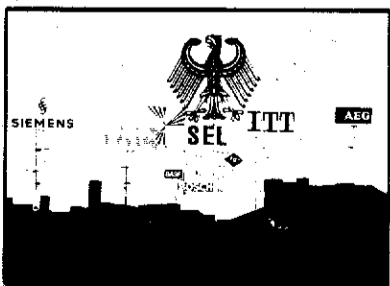
Keep it up Alex!

Give up Guinness

THE *Daily Star* has just about won the prize for anti-Irish hysteria following the boating accident of Lord Mountbatten. Last Thursday it called on 'every husband who enjoys a pint of Guinness or Harp (actually women enjoy them as well — Ed.) can order a different brew at the local'.

Such a 'boycott everything Irish' campaign might be all very well for the likes of *Star* proprietor Victor Matthews but not buying Guinness is hardly consistent with such a campaign.

The company is after all owned by a very English aristocratic family whose head happens to be one Jonathon Guinness, Tory MP, a leading advocate of the hanging of 'terrorists', and a former head of the right-wing Monday Club.



A west German militant's view of the television system in that country. For what's going on behind the commercial TV screens in Britain, turn the page...

REVOLUTION

10p

GIRO FIGHT BACK

Career opportunities are the ones that never knock Every job they offer you is to keep you out the dock Career opportunities are the ones that never knock.

I hate the army and I hate the RAF I don't want to go fighting in the tropical heat I hate the civil service rules and I won't open letter bombs for you.

They offered me the office, they offered me the shop they said I'd better take anything they'd got Do you wanna make tea at the BBC Do you wanna be, do you really wanna be a cop?

They're gonna have to introduce conscription They're gonna have to take away my prescription If they wanna get me making toys If they wanna get me, well I've got no choice

Career opportunities are the ones that never knock Every job they offer you is to keep you out the dock Career opportunities are the ones that never knock

FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO WORK

March: Liverpool to Blackpool 4 to 5 September Lobby the Trades Union Congress Demand the unions fight for jobs and a 35 HOUR WEEK

5

Unemployed or working come to the Revolution Young Workers Conference in Birmingham on Saturday 15 September, 11am to 6pm. There'll be workshops and discussions. Get all the details from: 76B Digbeth, Birmingham 5. Tel: 021-643 9209.

TV strike

Battle over control lies behind blank screens

By an ACTT member at London Weekend Television

THE TIMING of the dispute that has blanked out ITV screens for almost a month was no accident. The unions were forced into a showdown in August, the month when advertising revenue is at its lowest. Few programmes are made then and the companies could afford to fight.

The firm stand taken by members of the three major unions involved — ACTT, EETPU, and NATTK — must have come as a nasty shock to the companies.

Alan Sapper, general secretary of the Association of Cinematograph, Television and allied Technicians, has tried to portray the dispute as simply about pay. But figures supplied by ACTT itself show him to be wrong.

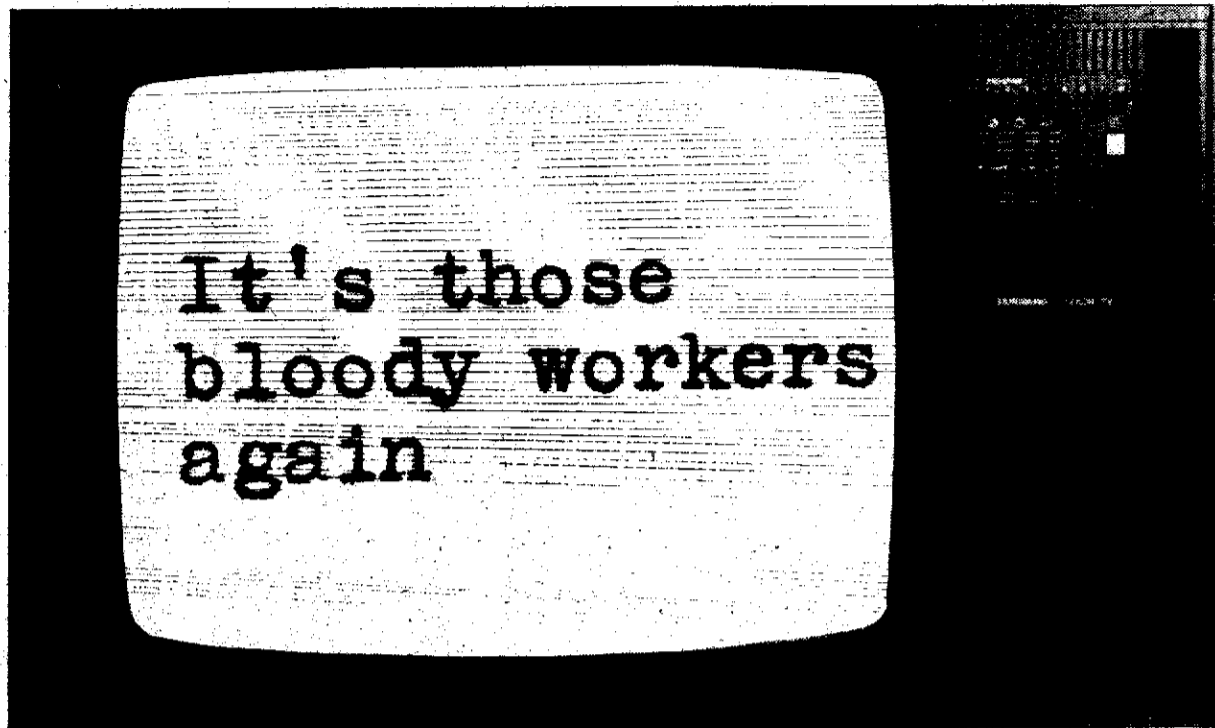
The net revenue of the ITV companies last year was £363m, while the claim presented by the unions, which amounts to about 25 per cent on the national rate, would cost £3m to settle in full.

That's only three days' revenue, so from day three of the dispute, early last month, the companies had sacrificed more than it would have cost them to cough up.

The real issue is: Who runs the television industry? Behind the fight over pay lies a trial of strength over the re-allocation of franchises, control of the fourth TV channel, and the implementation of new technology.

The present dispute came to a head on 10 August after a 'final' offer of 15 per cent. When this was withdrawn by management, along with a threat to suspend those taking industrial action, ACTT called out all its members nationally.

Fleet Street has produced its usual smears about earnings of £17,000 a year and more in ITV. The fact is that pay ranges from £3,300 a year for programme assistants to around £12,000 for a handful of producers. The few really big earners, as Sapper has pointed out, are about as typical of the television industry as Elton John is of the Musicians' Union.



Inflation rates mean that a 35 per cent rise now would leave ACTT members no better off by July 1980 than we were in July 1975. This is why the union wants to reactivate a cost-of-living clause which was frozen under the Labour government's pay policy.

The union has strong support for its resistance to management. Last Friday, for example, a meeting of 450 ACTT members at London Weekend Television gave 'whole hearted support' to the unions' negotiating position, with only six votes against.

But the union leaders' eagerness to go to arbitration is an evasion of the real issues at

stake.

Ten years ago, when the current ITV companies received their franchises, the unions successfully established control over staffing levels and other aspects of organisation. As the scramble for the new franchises and ITV2 gets underway, the companies want to avoid a repetition of this situation.

If they win the present dispute, the companies will be in a position to dictate terms to weakened unions, in particular over the introduction of new technology.

Electronic news gathering equipment is

already in use throughout much of the world. But in Britain, with the exception of ITN, its introduction has been blocked, principally by ACTT. All the major companies have installed this equipment, and are itching to use it.

The unions want safeguards over crewing levels and jobs. Without these, the system could make Fleet Street's new technology look like a job creation programme.

With all this at stake, the dispute is evidently about much more than pay, and as the Financial Times mournfully noted, it is the rank and file which has made the running.

The blank screens are now beginning to affect the lucrative autumn schedules. There are signs of chinks in ITV's armour, particularly among the smaller companies. The tide is no longer running in the companies' favour.

Nottingham Post — and now for the boycott

By Brian Simister
Vice president, Nottingham Trades Council, personal capacity

LED BY Thoresby miners' band, 800 trade unionists marched on the offices of the Nottingham Evening Post on Saturday to form a mass picket.

The pickets represented journalists, print workers, engineers, public sector workers and many other trades and industries from all over the country — all in support of the 28 locked out journalists victimised for taking part in the provincial journalists' strike last winter.

We were opposing a particularly violent anti-union management which since 1973 has smashed effective organisation within the plant and by so doing has made 300 printworkers redundant.

Central to this triumph of modern management is Christopher Pole-Carew, managing director of the paper, High Sheriff of Nottingham-

shire, and a close friend of the area's Chief Constable.

We were not alone on Saturday. In case Nottinghamshire's police force proved unequal to the task, police reserves had been drawn in from other areas, and for further 'protection', the company had hired bouncers from local clubs at £15 a head.

We massed outside the gates and until 5.20pm prevented anything from moving. Yet as more and more police reserves were being marched up in military fashion it became clear that we were going to be greatly outnumbered. A mêlée ensued and a few arrests were made.

Eventually the constabulary proved too much for us, and four delivery vans were able to break through — well behind schedule for the Post's sports editions.

There will be other pickets, and we need more people on them. But these in and of themselves are insufficient. Nottingham Trades Council is

convening a working conference in early November, charged with the task of planning and implementing a comprehensive boycott of supplies and advertising.

The Post has shown a willingness to use any method, legal or otherwise, to defeat the unions. The weakness on the union side has been the lack of coordination and disunity. In establishing effective boycotts, such weaknesses have to be overcome locally and nationally.

As the National Union of Journalists discusses country-wide industrial action to gain the re-instatement of its 28 sacked members, the TUC and the branches of every union whose members have any dealings with the Post should take up the fight for a boycott.

In this way, we will be able to move together in November to smash Pole-Carew's bastion of anti-trade unionism.

Suffer little children

BURY Tory councillor Evelyn Waite has a simple philosophy. It could be described as 'suffer little children while I go to Portugal'.

Two weeks ago she used her casting vote to impose, for the first time, fines on old age pensioners and children who return library books late. The move, Waite told the local press, was to teach children 'a sense of responsibility'.

But Waite's 'sense of responsibility' is such that she is going on an all-expenses paid trip to Portugal to watch the filming of the BBC-TV show *It's a Knockout*.

Waite will be part of a three person council delegation which will cost Bury's ratepayers £1,500.

The Bury branch of the National and Local Government Officers' Association has protested against the introduction of the library fines and has launched a local campaign to fight all cuts in public expenditure.

Cuts galore

A CALL on Essex Area Health Authority to 'follow the Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham AHA's example and refuse to implement these vicious cuts' has been made by Colchester Trades Council.

The call came at the launching by the trades council of an anti-cuts campaign.

Hazel Smith, secretary of the cuts campaign and a member of the health union COHSE, said: 'Conditions are so bad in the Essex area hospitals that this has just received national notoriety because of a Royal College of Nursing report criticising standards in some Essex hospitals.

'If the hospitals are struggling to keep going now, how are we going to manage with yet more cuts?'

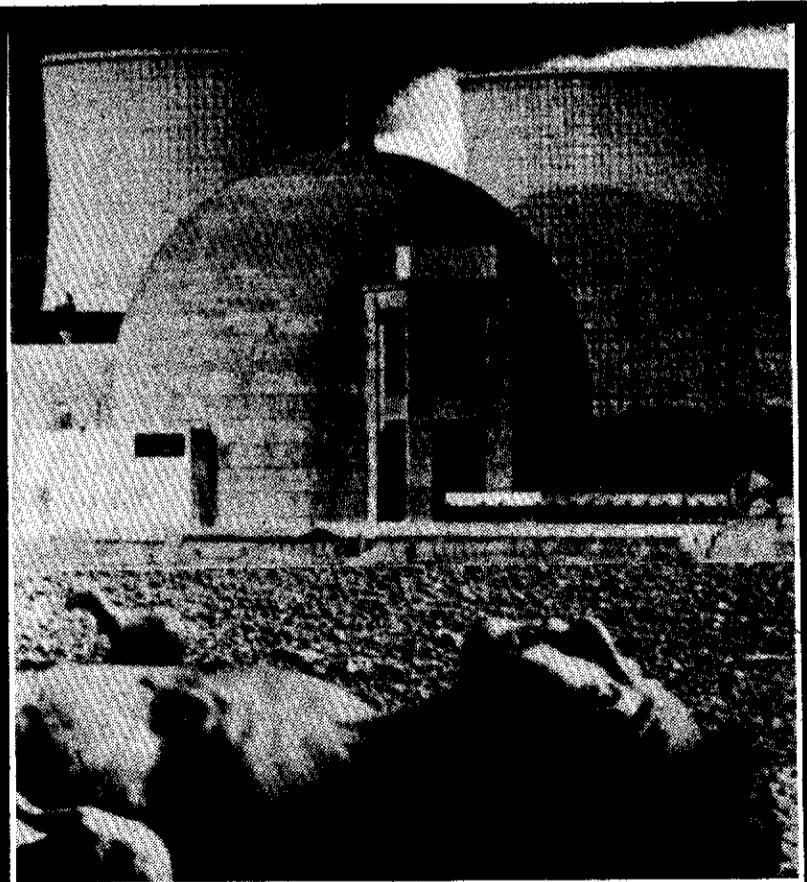
The anti-cuts campaign hopes to draw together all sections of the labour movement. It will launch a cuts bulletin to highlight and monitor any expenditure cuts in and around Colchester.

Further information: Hazel Smith, COHSE, Essex Hall, 45 Mill Rd, Colchester.

Switch on

A GLIMMER of light in the long cold summer of repeats on BBC TV. Tonight 6 September at 10.15pm BBC-1 is showing again *The Spongers*, Jim Allen's brilliant play about a woman's attempts to obtain social security benefits.

Set in the context of the flag-waving Jubilee celebrations in 1977, the play stabs a knife in the guts of the real scroungers.



YOU don't have to drop nuclear bombs to kill people — just manufacture them. That's the verdict to be drawn from the death on 10 August of 49-year-old Ken Cummins, who 'wasted away' after working for 14 years at the Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Research Establishment, near Reading.

Last week the victim's brother, Geoff Cummins, revealed that Ken had a medical examination last October when it was discovered that he had four times the safe level of plutonium in his lungs. An emergency operation failed to stop the cancer.

Said Geoff: 'It was horrifying. He wasted away to virtually nothing. You could see him getting thinner and thinner each day.'

Ken Cummins' job involved the handling of atomic waste. Now the Transport and General Workers Union officials at Aldermaston are planning to take the Ministry of Defence to court over their member's death. Among the questions to be answered is why no action was taken by the Aldermaston authorities six years ago when traces of contamination were first recorded in Ken Cummins' body.

This headline could be yours Unions to take on Fleet St in national paper bid

By Geoffrey Sheridan

WHAT HAVE Congress House, Transport House, and New Printing House Square got in common? The answer is that none of these buildings — respectively home to the TUC, the Labour Party, and The Times — is presently publishing a national daily newspaper, but rumours are rife.

Today's debate at the Trade Union Congress includes the issue of press freedom, and several union leaders are expected to take the opportunity to call for a feasibility study into the publication by the labour movement of a mass daily paper.

Moss Evans, Transport Union general secretary, expressed his enthusiasm for the project last week by declaring that the TGWU, which spends about £250,000 on its monthly journal, would be willing to spend an even larger sum on a daily paper produced by the labour movement.

Few union activists need persuading that the mass media in Britain have a pronounced anti-working class bias; the line-up on the general election and the coverage of last winter's strikes amply attest to their rampant Toryism. In a country with 11 million paid-up trade union members, such a uniform volume of bias, distortion, and plain slander requires urgent correction.

The position in Britain is in sharp contrast to that in other West European countries. In France, for example, not only does the Communist Party's newspaper *L'Humanité* have a daily circulation equivalent to that of *The Guardian* here, but now the Socialist Party, along with other left-wing groups, openly defies the state monopoly of the airwaves by broadcasting radio programmes from the party HQ.

It is understandable, however, if the thought of a TUC-Labour Party daily does not instil joy in the hearts of militants. To judge by the discussion which took place at a recent

conference on 'Democratic accountability in the Media' held by the Institute of Workers Control, it is the question of ownership and control of a labour movement mass daily that needs to be clarified.

Is the dread hand of bureaucracy exhibited by the leadership of the TUC and the Labour Party, coupled with its opposition to most of the policies and activities needed to fight the Tories, reason to seek other means of launching a working class newspaper? There are two considerations why the answer has to be No.

The first is organisational. The TUC and Labour Party centralise the funds of the labour movement. Only these bodies have the capacity to provide the finances required to launch and establish such an expensive undertaking as a mass daily paper.

The second consideration is political. Moss Evans pointed to the atrocious coverage of the lorry drivers', local authority and health workers' strikes as the reason for the labour movement to have its own voice. Would a TUC-Labour Party paper have given the strikers support? Probably not (although the TUC's pamphlet 'A cause for concern' ably takes apart the mass media's coverage).

But there's the rub. While the strikers may not have been moved to respond to the attacks in the Mirror, the Mail, and the rest, it is considerably less likely that they would have stood by if 'their own' paper had treated them similarly.

In all probability we would have seen pickets of Congress House and Transport House with demands by the strikers for the right to put their case and call for support. In any event, that's what socialists would have urged.

It is these kinds of pressures which explain why there is presently limited enthusiasm among the labour leadership for a daily. They would be placing themselves on a vulnerable line not simply on trade union matters but on every issue confronting the working class movement. And that is precisely what socialists should

demand the TUC and Labour Party leaders should do, for it is by insisting that they take up our struggles and confronting their collaborationist policies that we can best challenge the labour leadership.

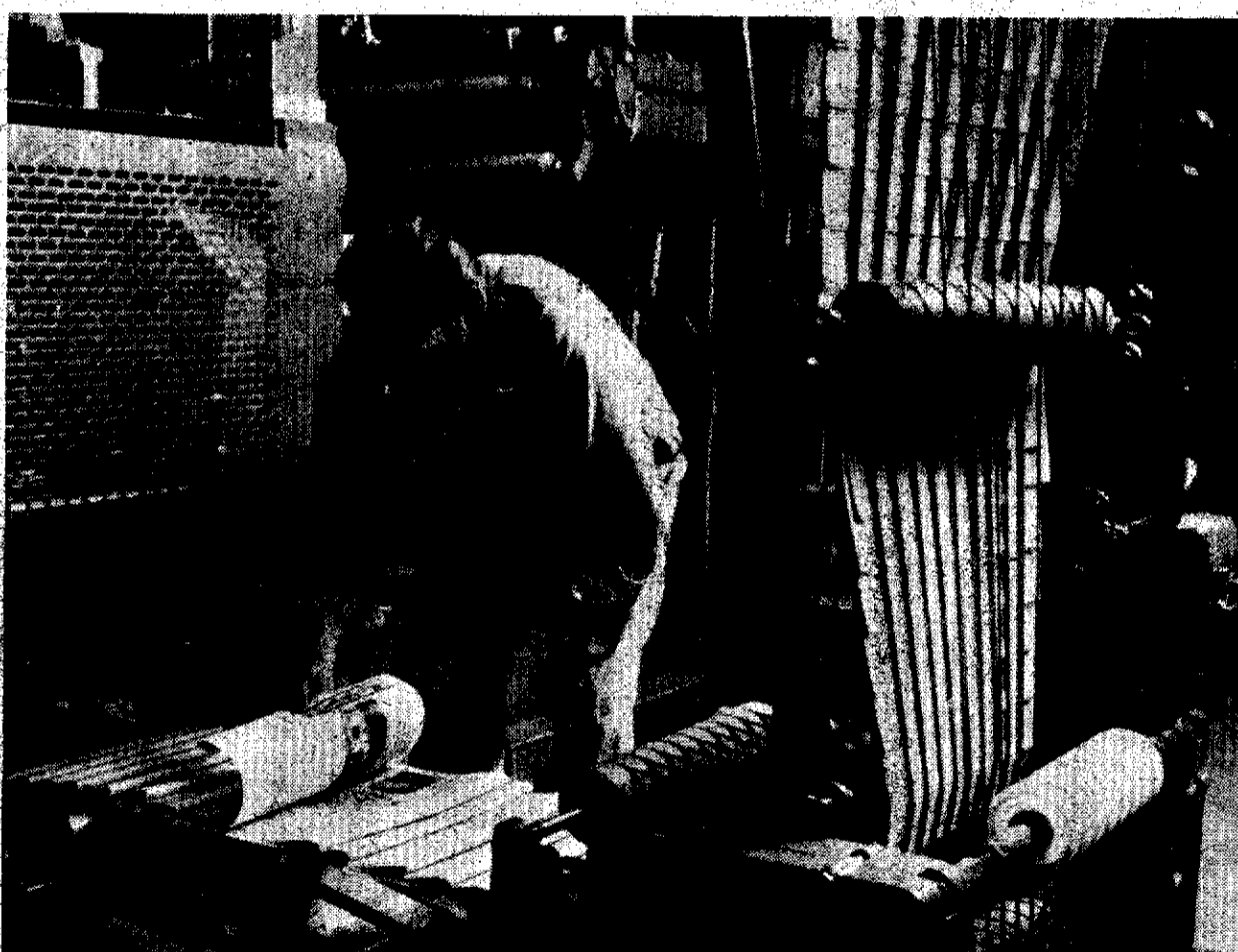
The Guardian has already poured scorn on the idea of a labour movement daily, and as the prospect draws closer we can expect the rest of Fleet Street to follow suit. They have one particular response to the accusations of bias which requires our attention.

They will say: 'You talk about press freedom and proprietorial control. But what about the trade union journals? They are simply mouthpieces for the bureaucracies. Put your own house in order.' And so we should.

Most union journals are a mockery of press freedom and therefore ought to be made a target at every single union conference, with demands for the regular election of editors, the right of reply, and genuine debate. Such a campaign would take us a long way forward in helping to persuade the mass of trade unionists and other sections of the working class that an independent voice for the labour movement is a crucial asset. Forward to a TUC-Labour Party daily!

*A Campaign for Press Freedom has just been launched with sponsorship from various labour movement figures, journalists and academics. Individual membership is £3. The campaign's pamphlet, 'Towards Press Freedom', costs 30p. Details from: John Jennings, Campaign for Press Freedom, 274/288 London Road, Hadleigh, Essex.

*The South-east Region of the TUC is to hold a conference on 'Workers, Unions, and the Media' on 3 November. Speakers include Bill Keys, general secretary of SOGAT, and Tony Benn. Up to four delegates from union branches and chapels, at £1 a head. Details from: Marian Scott, South-east TUC, Congress House, Great Russell St., WC1.



HOW much longer will the bosses have a monopoly over the mass media?

Using the media

'USING THE MEDIA', a handbook for trade unionists and community activists on how to handle the media, has just been published by Pluto Press at £2.50 paperback.

In over two hundred pages it covers in an eminently practical way how the press, radio, and TV function; how to contact journalists, write press releases, organise news conferences, deal with interviews, and — not least — how to complain about and confront the mass media.

The handbook is written by DENIS MacSHANE, past president of the National Union of Journalists. Here he argues the need for the wide availability of such information.

It is often difficult to explain to journalist colleagues who are disinterested in the working of the trade union movement the bitter dislike that is endemic among workers for the press, television and, less so, radio.

The reaction of workers is understandable.

If you are a striking lorry driver and you read on the front page of the Sun that two million people are to be laid off because of your strike and millions of chickens are dying of starvation on account of your cruelty when the truth is completely different — probably the only chickens to suffer were those slaughtered to fill the bellies of Fleet Street editors congratulating themselves on another successful campaign against working people — you must wonder what kind of individual morality obtains inside the newsrooms up and down the country.

The reaction of many workers in the face of such an experience is to say 'To hell with the media', and refuse to have any dealings with journalists.

Such a reaction is understandable but a mistake. Trade unionists may ignore the media; that doesn't mean the media will ignore trade unionists.

From my personal experience of running courses for trade union representatives on how to use the media, most are not wise to the processes and tricks of the journalistic trade.

The picket line shop steward who speaks freely to a friendly reporter may not realise how little control that reporter has over his or her copy when it is handed in and how much it may be mangled or, thanks to an emotive headline, sensationalised by someone who was not present at the scene or who hasn't any sense of what the

issues are really about.

Employers have long learnt the importance of handling the media professionally. There are an estimated 10,000 full- or part-time public relations and press officers putting over the employers' point of view.

Trade unionists need to learn some aspects of the work that PROs do. They need to know how to issue press releases, how to organise news conferences, have a sense of deadlines, know how to go 'off-the-record', learn how to make a good case in a 90-second television interview, use the growing network of local radio stations — 57 will be in operation in 1982.

Too often the trade unionist's first contact with a journalist is when s/he is phoned up for a comment in the middle of a dispute.

Relying on his or her native cunning or instincts is not good enough. S/he should have some training or guidance on how to handle the media.

Obviously all the media training in the world is not going to counter the bias of a press that is privately owned and run with a clear political motivation.

But there are many journalists, especially in the provincial press and on local radio, who would like to report fairly on union affairs but are put off by surly, uncooperative responses when they try to make contact.

The trade union movement must discuss fundamental reforms in the ownership and control of the media. But at the same time the movement has to move into the 1980s with a more mature, professional approach to media relations.

*'Using the Media' is available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper Street, London N1. Add 10 per cent if ordering by mail.

*The TUC debate on press freedom will include firm denunciations of the bias of the bosses' media, no doubt with last winter's strikes as a major example. Another could well be the present attempts to derail the engineering strikes by making heroes of the opponents at British Leyland.

There is a simple way to confront this bias — to call on every trade unionist who works in the mass media to ensure that a reply is published to each and every attack on the working class.

Trades Council launches weekly paper

By a member of the Hull News Group
THE FIRST weekly newspaper in Britain to be run by a trades council has just been launched in Hull. Hull News, with 24 tabloid pages, will appear on news-stands throughout the city in mid-October.

An eight-page pilot edition was produced last week, with the aim of building circulation and attracting advertising. The target is upwards of 20,000 weekly sales by the end of the year.

In a city of nearly 300,000, where nearly everyone who is eligible votes Labour, this target

seems reasonably realistic.

The only 'competition' is the Hull Daily Mail and its weekly, the Hull Times. Coming from the same stable as the national Daily Mail, the editorial line of these rags is not hard to guess.

Hull News will report on and examine day to day happenings in the city from a broad left-wing viewpoint. Editorial policy and control will lie with the full body of the trades council, and will be discussed at regular monthly meetings.

The trades council, which has wide representation from left-wing

groups, has set up a newspaper management committee. This includes members of the Hull News Group itself, to which a number of professional journalists have offered practical help and which is an open body.

The pilot edition includes articles by left-wing journalist James Cameron, Labour MPs Frank Allaun and Tony Benn, and local playwright Alan Plater, as well as by local speedway and rugby league stars.

Also published is a poem on youth struggle, by 'An E-grade Sausage'. The trades council

wants to raise about £25,000 in advertising and donations to ensure the success of Hull News.

We want to syndicate the paper's feature columns to other trades councils and to National Union of Journalists' branches, so that they might attempt similar ventures.

*Why not send us an advert expressing your support? Three cm. display times 1 col. costs just £6. Ads, donations, and inquiries to: Hull News, Corporation Chambers, Trinity House, Hull, East Yorks.

LEON TROTSKY 1879-1940



"open the road to the youth"

OUR FUND DRIVE

THIS WEEK we're printing as the main item in this column the press release from the International Marxist Group about the rally for the centenary of Trotsky's birth on Friday 21 September.

Besides celebrating the centenary, we hope this event will raise a lot of money for our £20,000 Special Fund. So make it an evening out and help the paper at the same time.

This year we celebrate the centenary of the birth of Leon Trotsky. In an era that lives under the shadow of nuclear devastation, and is once again haunted by the spectre of mass unemployment, the heroic physical and intellectual struggle of this revolutionary titan remains a powerful example to all those who believe in the future of humanity.

On 21 September at 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1, the IMG — the British Section of the Fourth International, the movement founded by Trotsky — will be holding a centenary celebration.

Our thanks this week to:	
J. Thackara	£12.50
Tony Meehan	5.00
Brighton IMG	10.00
R. Blackburn	1.00
'JP's petrol + inflation'	10.00
Week's total	£38.50
Cumulative total	£13,721.25

HOME NEWS

CLASS

By Tariq Ali

'IN ONE SENSE the House of Commons is the most unrepresentative of representative assemblies. It is an elaborate conspiracy to prevent the real clash of opinion which exists outside from finding an appropriate echo within its walls. It is a social shock absorber placed between privilege and the pressure of public consent.'

Thus wrote Labour left-winger Aneurin Bevan many decades ago. But today even those of Bevan's heirs who might agree with the observation would probably not care to repeat it in public. For it would be considered an attack on 'democracy'.

Yet never has the political and economic situation in Britain more needed an ideological assault on the institutions of the British bourgeoisie. The present Tory government was elected earlier this year with an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons. Its popular vote was the largest to be obtained by a British political party. In terms of bourgeois legitimacy the Tories are in a very strong position.

Wisdom

This point is being stressed not simply by the Tories and their servile press. It has also become the conventional wisdom of the right wing of the Labour Party and the trade unions. In other words, British workers are being told by Callaghan, Healey, Murray and Duffy: 'We know what the Tories are doing is rough, but grin and bear it for five years and then we'll get Labour back.'

Leaving aside the question of what a new Labour government would or would not do, the argument is utterly bankrupt. In the face of a sustained attack on working class living standards through cuts in social expenditure, mass unemployment and soon an incomes policy it is ridiculous to expect workers to sit back and wait.

It is obvious that the labour movement — despite its immense organised strength — is seriously divided on the tactics necessary to fight this Tory government. These divisions will be exploited by the Tory leaders and their press to delay any industrial uprising against the Thatcher government, and if that happens they will be used to ensure that it is diverted into safe channels.

Trump

The trump card available to the British ruling class and the Tory government is its political-ideological strength and the labour movement's political-ideological weakness. In 1972-4 Heath attempted to use this political strength of the bourgeoisie to working the economic strength of the working class. He failed.

But Wilson and then Callaghan succeeded to a limited extent by persuading the trade unions to accept partial blame for the economic crisis of the capitalist economic system. The outbreak of industrial struggles earlier this year and the Labour government's ferocious verbal attacks on them finally culminated in a massive Tory victory.

Thatcher governs with the benefit of hindsight. She has the Heath and the Callaghan experiences behind her. From present Tory strategy it appears that Thatcher attributes Heath's blunders to political weakness and a loss of nerve at critical moments of the previous Tory administration.

Audacious

The Tory leader and her advisers are convinced that the audacious pursuit of reactionary policies is quite capable of delivering the goods because of the political backwardness of the working class movement. Any

attempt by the workers or other oppressed sections of society to resist the Tory onslaught will be greeted with a barrage of hostile propaganda centred on the defence of 'democracy' against the members of the trade unions.

Onslaught

It is extremely important that the response to the Tory and right-wing Labour ideological onslaught is well prepared and well argued. The function of bourgeois democracy is to secure the consent of the masses to their own exploitation and oppression. The price paid for obtaining this consent is the existence of important democratic rights: the right to form political parties, the right to publish and distribute political propaganda, the existence of trade unions, etc.

Royalty

Such a system is clearly the best possible way of integrating the masses into the existing political and social order. Bourgeois ideology and bourgeois institutions — parliament, church, family, royalty and as a last resort the armed forces — are there to ensure that there is no breach in the system of capitalist fortifications.

In Britain the importance of ideology and institutions is more crucial than elsewhere in Western Europe because the overwhelming majority of the population consists of workers. Hence the importance of British social-democracy as a vital pillar of bourgeois democracy.

Trotsky remarked on this feature of British political life on more than one occasion. A perceptive passage in his writings on German fascism revealed the contradictory aspects of this reality:

Stronghold

'In a developed capitalist society, during a "democratic" regime, the bourgeoisie leans for support primarily upon the working classes, which are held in check by the reformists. In its most finished form, this system finds its highest expression in Britain during the administration of a Labour government as well as during the Conservatives.'

'In the course of many decades, the workers have built up within the bourgeois democracy, by utilising it, by fighting against it, their own strongholds and bases of proletarian democracy: the trade unions, the political parties, the educational and sport clubs, the cooperatives, etc. The proletariat cannot attain power within the formal limits of bourgeois democracy, but can do so only by taking the road of revolution: this has been proved by theory and experience. And these bulwarks of workers' democracy within the bourgeois state are absolutely essential for taking the revolutionary road.'

Old man

Many readers will be shocked by these remarks. Was the old man really talking about British trade unions as the 'bases of proletarian democracy'? Our heavily bureaucratized, undemocratic unions? The answer is yes.

Trotsky was arguing that all working class organisations, despite their reformist leaderships, despite their bureaucracies, would have to be the centre of socialist activities before the victory of the revolution. Clearly he envisaged the defeat of reformism, but he refused to equate the unions (as an institution) with their compromised leaderships.

The strength of bourgeois democratic institutions as far as the mass of workers are concerned does not lie in the fact that they are bourgeois, but that they sanction certain funda-

21-23 September 1979

MARXIST SYMPOSIUM

DAY ONE

10.30-1.30pm
CURRENT ISSUES OF MARXISM
Perry Anderson

2.30-5.00pm
Workshops
The Debate on English History, Alternative Economic Strategy, Bahro's Marxism
Speakers include: Perry Anderson, John Ross, Alan Freeman, Gunther Minnerup

7.30-10.00pm
RALLY
100th ANNIVERSARY OF TROTSKY'S BIRTH
Speakers include: Pierre Frank, Tariq Ali, the Voice of Leon Trotsky

DAY TWO

10.00-1.00pm
IS LENINISM OBSOLETE?
Dodie Weppeler and two of the authors of Beyond the Fragments

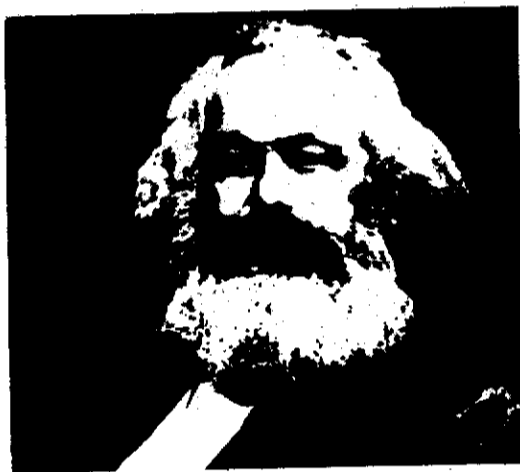
Workshops
Class Analysis and Political Strategy, Kautsky and Eurocommunism, The Communist International
Speakers include: Robin Blackburn, Pierre Frank

2.00-5.00pm
CULTURE AND POLITICS
Francis Mulhern
THE TRADE UNIONS TODAY
Richard Hyman, Steve Jefferys [SWP], Pat Hickey [deputy senior steward, Rover Solihull — in personal capacity]
Workshops include youth and revolution

Make Cheques and Postal Orders out to 'Socialist Challenge'
Fill in the form below:

Name.....

Address.....



DAY THREE

10.00-1.00pm
TWO TRADITIONS OF MARXISM IN BRITAIN
John Ross

Workshops
Workers Plans and Workers Control, Women in Eastern Europe.
Speakers include: Hilary Wainwright, Dave Bailey

2.00-5.00pm
THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT IN EUROPE
Chris Harman [SWP], Tariq Ali [IMG]

Creche facilities
Refreshments available

£1 a session.
£5.50 six sessions excluding the rally
£1 for rally.
£5 for all the sessions except the rally [£6 including the rally] if paid before 12 September.

VENUE: Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London

STRUGGLE AND DEMOCRACY

the economic and social crisis, every major economic struggle inevitably becomes a political challenge to the government in office.

Chartists

So our reply to the bourgeois offensive has to take as its central thrust the intrinsically undemocratic character of British bourgeois democracy. This means that a number of radical, democratic demands have to be prioritised both within the institutions of the working class and in developing our challenge to the institutions of the bourgeoisie.

Starting off from the democratic organisation of strikes (regular mass meetings, accountable strike committees, etc.), these will have to include the democratisation of the unions and of the Labour Party through to demanding more democratic forms of representation within the existing bourgeois state.

One of the central demands of the Chartists was for annual parliaments. It was never seriously considered by the British ruling class and was soon abandoned by the workers movement after the defeat of Chartism. And yet the demand is an important part of our armoury.

There can be little doubt that annual elections would create a greater interest in politics, would force the labour movement to introduce politics in the workplace, and would make bourgeois governments more accountable. Would an election next year return Thatcher with the same majority — if she was returned at all?

Appeal

From this it is obvious that we stress the primacy of the masses in struggle. For us real, effective democracy is mass democracy — the very opposite of bourgeois democracy. And we assert the right of the labour movement to appeal to the masses on that basis against the policies of this or any other reactionary government.

A democratically organised labour movement, which is not frightened of raising political questions on the shop-floor and which ends the absurd division between politics (in Parliament) and economic struggles (in the workplaces), is capable of taking on the Tories and defeating them on every possible terrain.

Furthermore, it needs to be stressed that the ruling class does not accept the division between economics (City of London) and politics (House of Commons, the Lords). Their democracy is, in reality, organised in such a way as to maintain the existing economic divisions. The result is that the House of Commons is subordinated to the needs of national and international capitalism.

Boardrooms

The vital decisions concerning the economic life of this country are not made in the House of Commons. They are decided in the boardrooms of the City and the planning meetings of the International Monetary Fund. The link between these bodies and the British civil service is a little-studied phenomenon, precisely because of the secrecy necessary to prevent any opposition from the victims of capital.

The labour movement has no need to be defensive in the face of the bourgeois ideological offensive provided it puts its own house in order and is prepared to fight back. The problem, we should state, is that there is too little democracy in British society. The strongholds of the workers movement should be utilised to change this situation and create the basis for the transformation of British society.



mental democratic rights. This on its own would not be sufficient to keep workers confined within the strait-jacket of bourgeois democracy. However, one also has to take into account the lasting negative impact of the experiences of Stalinism in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

Any successful struggle for socialism in the West will thus have to be more democratic than what exists today in both its organisation and its aims in order to succeed. In other words, socialist democracy must be

seen to operate in all the proletarian institutions of struggle.

Our aim as socialists must be to stimulate and aid all developments which lead to the mass entry of the working class into political activity at its workplaces. And this is where we return to the question of whether workers should wait five years before embarking on struggles against the Tories.

We are, naturally, in favour of the most powerful mass struggles to defeat Tory policies. But is the British labour movement prepared to accept

the Tory challenge on the question of 'democracy'?

Not even the left wing of the labour movement has thought out a serious response to these questions. Left social-democrats are addicted — more so than the young Nye Bevan — to the unquestionable sovereignty of the House of Commons. The revolutionary left, meanwhile, has tended to regard all questions about the bourgeois political order as irrelevant, merely anticipating that it will all ultimately be swept away by the tide of mass struggle and replaced

with soviets.

If the first approach reveals the utter bankruptcy of social-democracy, the latter reveals the weakness of the far left, because all it can offer is propaganda. However, if it is accepted that the aim is to involve the masses in politics at the workplace, then every possible attempt (including within the present political system) has to be made to develop such a project.

The objective political and economic situation clearly favours such a project. For because of the gravity of

London conference, 10 September

HANDS OFF ZIMBABWE

ON MONDAY 10 September at Lancaster the British government begins its conference to discuss the future of Zimbabwe. For the first time since 1976 a British government has been in getting all parties around the table.

But can the Tories succeed in imposing their will? We reprint here a statement of the political programme of the Patriotic Front issued in Dar-es-Salaam a fortnight ago. The Patriotic Front's confidence in the intentions of the state is not to endorse the central arguments of the statement.

Elsewhere on this spread RICHARD DODD explains what we can do to get British hands off Zimbabwe.



Where the Patriotic Front stands

1. The reality in Zimbabwe is that of a war situation in which the liberation forces of the Patriotic Front as representing the interests of seven million Zimbabweans are locked in a bitter conflict against the forces of the rebel regime representative of the racist settler minority.

2. The historical development of the present conflict situation consistently demonstrates that Britain, as the colonial power since 1890, has, in successive stages, not only consistently refrained from exercising her colonial responsibilities towards the Zimbabwean people but has also yielded to the racist demands of the settler community to the extent of acquiescing in the illegal acts of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

3. Since the Patriotic Front forces assumed the revolutionary task, it redressed the imbalance of power between the oppressed and subjected majority and the oppressive minority ruling class through the instrumentality of armed struggle.

By its sweat and blood, therefore, the Patriotic Front becomes the effective and decisive factor in the decolonisation process which the decolonisation power had failed to accomplish.

Accordingly, by the fact of the advance of the liberation struggle resulting in the establishment of firm and indisputable control over a vast region of the country and the extension of its military operations over 90 per cent of the total area of Zimbabwe, the Patriotic Front, which enjoys the fullest support of the masses, has become the only dominant force operating against the settler colonial system, thus diminishing the role of Britain as decolonising power to the extent to which it has become merely nominal.

4. By virtue of its established military and political position, the Patriotic Front has become the sole legitimate and authentic

representative of the people of Zimbabwe, without whose consent no settlement of whatever kind could ever succeed.

5. The Patriotic Front, recognising that the process of achieving an acceptable agreement is necessarily a movement from war to peace, holds that the basis of any desired constitutional settlement cannot fall short of the complete removal of the causes of the war, through the disbandment of the oppressive and racist regime together with its physical instruments of control, and its consequent replacement by a truly democratic government into whose control the liberation forces are placed and transformed into the People's Army.

6. The movement from war to peace, being a movement from an undemocratic and oppressive settler minority rule to a democratic system, cannot at the same time be based on a constitution of the very racial and undemocratic system it seeks to destroy. To do so is not only to vitiate the principle of democracy, but also to sanctify illegality and racism.

Similarly, to incorporate in a purportedly democratic constitution provisions creating a special position for groups or communities or according such groups or communities any preferential treatment on no other basis than those of race or colour is repugnant to the principles of democracy as we understand and cherish them.

All citizens being equal before the law must enjoy equal rights and privileges.

7. The process of establishing peace from war must aim at the achievement of genuine independence through the utilisation of such modalities as are promotive and not inhibitive of the process. In this regard, the election process leading to the emergence of the government of an independent Zimbabwe should not only be democratic but also come under the supervision of such persons or groups

of persons as possess an objectivity and impartiality which are beyond question.

The Conservative government of Britain, having publicly endorsed the fraudulent elections held by the present illegal regime in April as 'free and fair', and having pronounced themselves in favour of lifting sanctions, has forfeited every right to supervise the process of change. It is decidedly biased in favour of the illegal regime.

8. Any proposed scheme envisaging the solution of the Rhodesian problem must be consistent with the expressed wishes and interests of the people of Zimbabwe and the course which the international community, in particular the OAU (Organisation of African Unity) and the United Nations, has prescribed and advocated with consistent vigour over the last 17 years, that is from 1962 to 1979.

During this period the United Nations has demanded consistently that Rhodesia be decolonised to the satisfaction of the people of Zimbabwe. Both the General Assembly and the Security Council rejected UDI in 1965 at the request of Britain (resolutions 232 -232- and 252 -252-).

In 1977 Britain sought before the Security Council a resolution empowering the United Nations to supervise elections in Zimbabwe under the Anglo-American plan.

In March 1978 the Security Council passed a resolution rejecting the 3 March so-called 'internal settlement' and called for a solution based on the United Nations resolutions on Rhodesia.

9. The Patriotic Front has always recognised that the principle of serious negotiations to bring about a genuine settlement leading to the total transference of power from the settler racist minority to the majority of the people in Zimbabwe could not be excluded as an additional means of resolving the present conflict.

The Patriotic Front therefore expresses itself in favour of entering into serious negotiations with the British government with a view to assessing whether any substantial area of common agreement exists between Britain and itself.

10. By accepting the British invitation to attend the proposed conference the Patriotic Front must clearly be understood to have done nothing more than indicate its willingness to negotiate a solution.

It rejects both the proposed constitutional framework, which has as its basis the illegal internal settlement constitution, and the proposal of a ceasefire it unjustifiably makes.

The war will therefore continue until the objective of liberation has been achieved.

Signed:

R.G. Mugabe
President of ZANU

J.N.M. Nkomo
President of ZAPU

20 August 1979

Tory manoeuvres

House in London, the Tory
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ARVER looks at British
ababwe and JOHN HUNT
ff Zimbabwe.

By Richard Carver

THE case of the 'terrorist' passports well illustrates the British government's hypocritical muddle over Zimbabwe.

The government of Bishop Muzorewa — what used to be called the 'illegal Smith regime' — has complained to the Foreign Office that members of ZAPU, known 'terrorists', have been travelling on British passports.

Now, considering its sudden concern for Britain's colonial responsibility in Zimbabwe, the Tory government could have told the 'illegal' regime where to get off. It could have suggested that these 'rebels against the Crown' had no valid opinion on who was or was not a 'terrorist'. It could even (truthfully) have pointed out that successive British governments had formulated immigration policy in blatant disregard of the wishes of foreign governments and had no intention of changing now.

(And it could have added that forthcoming legislation would make a British passport useless anyway!)

Surprisingly enough, the government did none of these things. Instead, the Attorney General made a statement in the Commons that 'passports for persons known to be terrorists will, of course, be refused.'

This at least theoretically raises the possibility that Patriotic Front leaders Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe — a pair of 'terrorists' if ever there was one — will be refused admission to next week's Zimbabwe constitutional conference, while an Order in Council has been issued granting Ian Smith and Abel Muzorewa immunity from arrest for treason.

The affair of the passports is instructive because the issue of Britain's 'colonial responsibility' will figure centrally in the London conference. It was on that basis that the Tories and the Commonwealth prime ministers were able to reach agreement at the Lusaka conference last month.

At Lusaka it was 'fully accepted that it is the constitutional responsibility of the British government to grant legal independence to Zimbabwe on the basis of majority rule.'

The Tories deliberately hark back to their 'golden age' of decolonisation in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Successive colonial countries were bequeathed a constitution on the Westminster model, a pro-Western black elite, and a heavily dependent economy. Then they were cut adrift.

The Tories do genuinely seem to think that that process can simply be repeated, even down to their choice of venue — Lancaster House, scene of so many pre-independence conferences.

The Kenyan model has long been a favourite with British governments.

After a brutal war against the liberation movement the British graciously relinquished power to the most amenable section of the black opposition, having first won considerable guarantees for the many white settlers. Nairobi is now a playground for international capitalism — so much so that the British press is magnanimously prepared to overlook the fact that the country is a brutal, one-party dictatorship.

The parallels with Zimbabwe are obvious. The last Labour government sought to make that point by appointing Lord Carver, who had served in Kenya, to supervise the transfer of power in Zimbabwe. And President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania struck a chord in Lusaka when he enthusiastically announced that 'In Kenya white settlers were paid large sums of money by Britain to make possible racial harmony and peaceful transition to independence.'

In the statement reprinted on this page, the Patriotic Front correctly rejects this sort of precedent. Britain's arrogant interference with African self-determination 15 years ago becomes no more justifiable with the passage of time.

The Lusaka conference endorsed a longstanding aim of British governments, both Labour and Tory, 'that the search for a lasting settlement must involve all parties to the conflict.'

The Patriotic Front statement, by contrast, states that the only thing to be discussed is how the white settler regime is to be totally divested of its power. An 'all-party' agreement which treats racists and liberation fighters as equal parties to the conflict is unacceptable.

An outstanding problem — and one of the many points on which the conference could founder — is who will administer Zimbabwe during the transition? The Lusaka conference 'acknowledged that the government formed under such an independence constitution must be chosen through free and fair elections properly supervised under British government authority, and with Commonwealth observers.'

The ambiguities are manifold. Bishop Muzorewa, for example, will be the first to point out that according to a Tory Party delegation the 'internal settlement' elections in April were 'free and fair'. So why the need for new ones?

And what is meant by 'under British government authority'? And will the 'Commonwealth observers' actually turn out to be foreign troops, as envisaged under the Labour government's Anglo-American plan?

It is to be hoped that the Patriotic Front's statement of position indicates its refusal to accommodate to British demands at Lancaster House. The Smith regime is only sending representatives because it imagines that the Tories wish to freeze the liberation movement out.

The real aim of the conference is more dangerous: the incorporation of the Front into British plans, probably by inducing a split in its ranks.

That is the plan. Yet without the Patriotic Front the combined powers of London and Salisbury will be unable to impose their settlement. That is why we offer the Front our fullest solidarity in rejecting any British pretensions to wield legitimate power in Zimbabwe.



Build a Solidarity Campaign

June alarmed Anti-Apartheid, its organisers.

The Zimbabwe Emergency Campaign Committee was set up by Anti-Apartheid in an attempt to broaden out activity on Zimbabwe. This has functioned in a commendably open manner, with reasonably democratic decision-making structures. A wide range of organisations are involved, including both ZANU and ZAPU.

ZECC has taken some important initiatives — notably the picket of the London conference on 10 September and the solidarity demonstration planned for November. The question is where it goes from here.

The first thing to stress is the need to develop the basis of a continuing mass action campaign within all such initiatives. Support must be won from different sectors.

For instance, the project of launching an appeal for a direct action boycott of trade with Zimbabwe if Thatcher lifts sanctions on the Muzorewa government is one which must be vigorously taken up in the labour movement. Particular attention also needs to be given to drawing youth into the campaign, and to approaching black organisations for their support.

Secondly, the committee needs to develop greater clarity on which political issue it aims to make the main focus of its mobilisation. Socialist Challenge believes that the main thing which needs saying now is that the Zimbabwean people have the right to determine their

own future, and that Britain has no right to intervene there. Self-determination for the Zimbabwean people — Hands off Zimbabwe!

Thatcher hopes to impose a 'solution' on the Zimbabwean people that protects British imperialist economic and political interests. British troops have already been trained to go in and consolidate such a settlement as part of a peace-keeping force.

Tory manoeuvres include trying to draw a section of the Patriotic Front leadership into a deal and making more and more concessions to Muzorewa — including the possible easing of sanctions.

The kind of movement that needs to be built is one which consistently opposes every attempt by the British government to dictate to the Zimbabwean people. United action is not merely the best way of aiding the Zimbabwean revolution. It is also a very practical way of limiting the Tories' room for manoeuvre.

Lastly, the ZECC must be built as an autonomous campaign. This means building local ZECC groups sponsored by labour movement organisations, and paving the way for a national organisation fully independent of Anti-Apartheid, capable of taking its own decisions, and eventually having its own newspaper, full-time workers and so on.

By building ZECC we have a chance to develop a campaign which can really assist the struggle in Zimbabwe. Let's not blow it!

By John Hunt

SEVEN YEARS AGO, when the Heath government was trying to legitimize its sell-out plan for Zimbabwe via the Pearce Commission, tens of thousands of people were mobilised in protest through initiatives launched by the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

Since then Zimbabwe solidarity has fallen on hard times. Under Wilson and Callaghan the Labour left MPs wouldn't rock the boat by criticising Owen's pro-imperialist manoeuvres. And the Anti-Apartheid Movement in turn, dominated by the Communist Party and its strategy of alliance with these lefts, adopted a 'low profile' attitude to work on Zimbabwe.

For a time most solidarity work was carried out by various groups of sectarian Maoists. What little Anti-Apartheid did was marred by favouritism towards ZAPU — again because of the CP's links with the ZAPU leadership and Moscow's hostility to ZANU.

The deepening of the Zimbabwe crisis thus found the solidarity movement ill-prepared to respond. The low turn-out on the demonstration in

NO SELL OUT IN ZIMBABWE!
 DEMONSTRATE AT LANCASTER HOUSE 10 NOVEMBER
 ASSEMBLY ROOMS 15.00-18.00
 CORNER OF PALL MALL & ST JAMES STREET
 MARCH 8.30AM FROM LANCASTER HOUSE
 TO RAILWAY STATION
 AT WESTMINSTER CENTRAL HALL
 SOLIDARITY WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT
 1979

30 days of the Nicaraguan revolution

By Clive Turnbull
recently in Nicaragua

'THE REVOLUTION has not ended; all we have done so far is to throw out Somoza and the National Guard. The revolution is only beginning.'

Speaking as a representative of the FSLN (Sandinistas) at one of the many rallies held on 19 August to celebrate 30 days of the Nicaraguan revolution. Workers and peasants, men and women, young and old, demonstrated in hundreds of thousands in support of their victory.

It was very much their victory. The National Guard was defeated by the masses. It was the workers in cities like Masaya, Matagalpa, Jinotega, Leon, and Managua who played the decisive role in toppling Somoza.

From September 1978, under the leadership of the FSLN, the masses in every town organised into street, block, barrio and area committees to prepare the struggle. Militias were formed in the neighbourhoods, taking on National Guard units again and again.

Unable to crush the mass upsurge with troops, Somoza sent in aircraft, shells, and rockets to bombard the working class districts. In the capital, Managua, the main industrial area was devastated by bombing in the last days of the battle.

This destruction came on top of the 1972 earthquake, which literally flattened the centre of Managua. Nothing was rebuilt. The millions of dollars in relief went straight into Somoza's pockets.

Today international aid is urgently needed. In Leon the head of the local supplies committee, Vladimir Cordero, explained that aid to date had been very limited. 'Most of it has been distributed to the agricultural production units (UPAs), the hospitals, and the troops. The compañeros of the UPAs are working in exchange for food aid.'

In rural areas the peasants have received no aid, because international aid has not been arriving. He made clear to us the immediate need for 'basic grains, rice, beans, wheat, flour, sugar, salt, and oil'.

At a rally in Leon one of the speakers was Dora Maria Tellez, Commander Dos (Two), one of the leaders of the Sandinista attack on the National Palace in August 1978. She stressed the need to understand the tasks facing a nation in ruins. 'We need to organise ourselves. We need everyone's participation in this process. Every person can choose their own representatives, can say whether or not they agree with what we are doing.'

She urged everyone to join the Sandinista trade union federation and the Sandinista defence committees. 'This revolution,' she declared, 'has to be a positive revolution.'

In the month since it came to power the Sandinista leadership has taken a series of radical measures. All property belonging to Somoza and his followers has been nationalised — amounting to over 60 per cent of the economy. The banks have been nationalised and a state monopoly established on foreign trade.

Seventy per cent of the land has been taken over. The larger estates are being turned into cooperatives, and the rest being distributed to the tillers. The remainder of the land is in

suck huge profits from the Nicaraguan workers and peasants.

The mass struggle that defeated Somoza has already inspired workers and peasants in other Central American countries. In Guatemala, 50,000 students went on strike for democratic rights at the beginning of August.

In El Salvador churches have been occupied in the capital to call for the release of political prisoners. By day a stream of workers, peasants, and students hold meetings in the churches to discuss their problems and organise.

In Costa Rica there have been large demonstrations in support of the Nicaraguan revolution. Five thousand striking dock workers have been involved in pitched battles with government troops.

US imperialism has not felt able so far to intervene militarily, as it did when marines were sent into Santo Domingo in 1965. Carter's attempt to send in troops through the Organisation of American States, just before Somoza fell, was blocked.

The main imperialist intervention at present is economic and diplomatic. It is attempting to bully and cajole the FSLN leadership, or a section of it, into halting the revolutionary process and then to roll back the gains of the masses. This is what lies behind the withholding of aid, the manoeuvres over a loan from the International Monetary Fund, and the offer of training for the Sandinista army and police from Omar Torrijos, the 'strong man' of Panama.

The FSLN leadership originated as a Castroist current, believing in the words of its founder, Carlos Fonseca Amador, that 'One worker in the mountains is more important than 100 on strike in the city.' The three currents of the FSLN — the Prolonged People's War tendency, the Proletarian tendency, and the Insurrectionist tendency — all evolved in light of the experience of the struggle of the masses. The FSLN was the undisputed leadership of the masses in the struggle against Somoza. The question that is posed today is: Will the FSLN continue that evolution?

Since coming to power the Sandinistas have set up a Government of National Reconstruction, which includes a number of bourgeois figures. FSLN leaders argue that they would be isolated if they set up a workers and peasants government today — 'Everyone, the US imperialists, other Latin American regimes, the social democracy, would attack us.'

the hands of 160,000 middle peasants.

The mass struggle has continued to develop since the fall of Somoza, leading to the take-over of land and factories not owned by Somocistas. These actions have been backed by the FSLN.

The self-organisation of the masses has continued and deepened. Everyone is discussing politics. Meetings and demonstrations take place every day. The neighbourhood committees are now organising all aspects of life in the barrios — housing, health, food, jobs, orphaned children, cleaning the streets, political education and discussion...

Every area has its local militia. On the street corners young men and women sit armed with pistols, M 16s, Uzis, Jalils, and grenades; or they ride round in jeeps, armed to the teeth but with a friendly smile or broad grin.

In the barrios house after house has an FSLN flag at the door. FSLN graffiti cover the walls: 'Free country or death'; 'Long live Nicaragua'; 'No manoeuvres, no pacts, no concessions, yes to popular insurrection — FSLN Proletarian.'

Women are massively participating in the neighbourhood committees, in the factories, among youth, and in the militias. One of the reasons for this has been AMPRONAC, the women's organisation, which has played a leading role in building the neighbourhood committees as a result of its experience of 'mass' work under Somoza.

The Nicaraguan revolution is a major defeat for US imperialism. A US Secretary of State once remarked of Somoza's father that he might be a son of a bitch, 'but he's our son of a bitch!' The Somoza family worked hand in glove with the US trusts to



threw the Somoza tyranny, so they are the best defence against imperialist armed intervention. An army and police force trained by Torrijos (in the CIA camps in the Canal Zone?) would be a step back into the arms of imperialism.

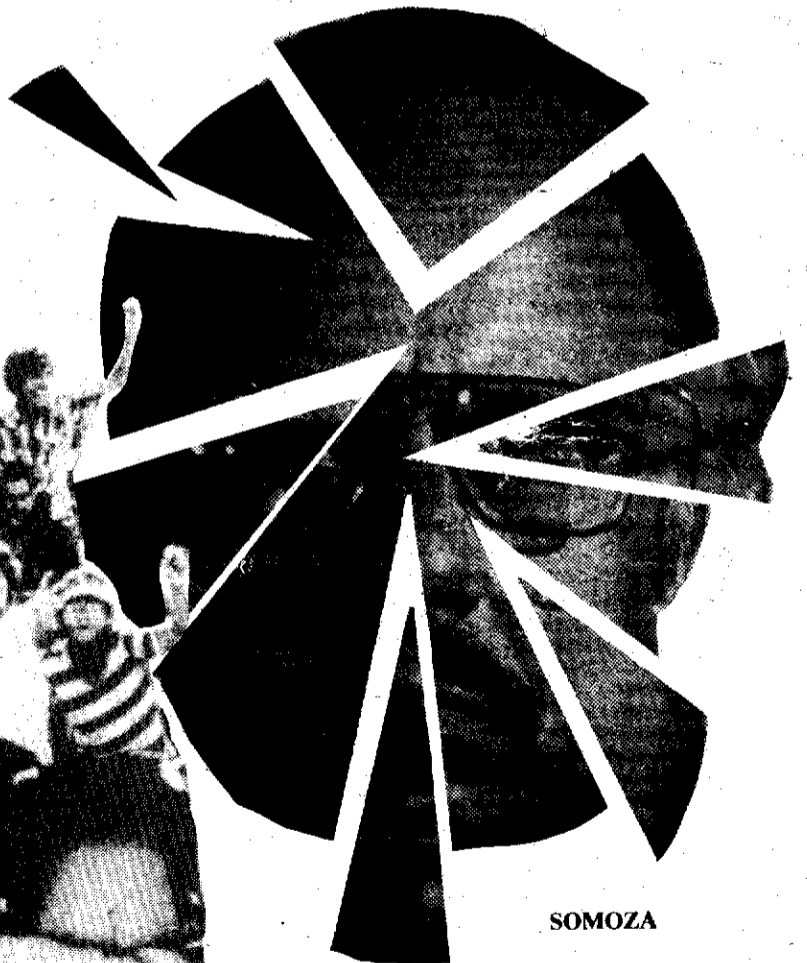
Revolutionaries have to throw their maximum effort into the fight against imperialist intervention in Nicaragua. This requires the broadest possible campaign of solidarity with the Nicaraguan revolution: for imperialist hands off Nicaragua; for immediate aid without strings to relieve the shortage of food, agricultural and medical supplies.

Our aim has to be to try to counter the imperialist pressure on the FSLN leadership. But we must also state clearly that the presence of bourgeois ministers in the government will make this harder. Only a workers and peasants government based on the mass organisations can defend and extend the Nicaraguan revolution.

But the bourgeois ministers, while individually powerless, represent a compromise with imperialist pressure. It means that the bourgeoisie gains credibility in the eyes of the masses out of all proportion to its negligible social weight.

So far, where the masses have gone beyond the programme of the Reconstruction Government, the Sandinista leadership has backed them and not the bourgeoisie. This choice will confront them more and more sharply as time goes on: to rely on the mass self-organisation of the workers and peasants to reconstruct Nicaragua, or on the aid which imperialism will try to turn into a noose with which to choke the revolution?

Just as the mass struggle of the armed workers and peasants over-



SOMOZA

PUBLIC MEETING

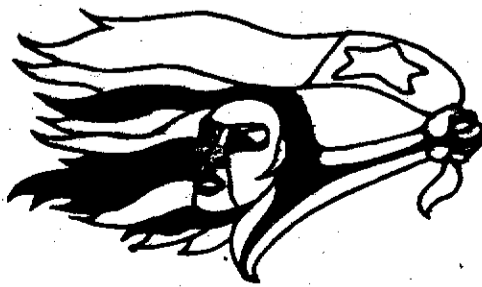
Defend the Nicaraguan Revolution!

Eyewitness report from
CLIVETURNBULL

Speaker from Nicaraguan
Coordinating Committee invited

Friday 14 September, 7.30pm
Friends Meeting House,
Euston Rd, London NW1

Organised by
International Marxist Group



**No Betrayal of Chile!
No Deals with Pinochet!
Free all Latin American Political Prisoners!**

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

Sunday 16 September
Assemble 1pm Clerkenwell Green (Farringdon tube)
March to Trafalgar Square

Speakers Michael Foot MP; Moss Evans (Gen. Sec., TGWU);
Jonathan Dimbleby; a representative of the Chilean people.

Organised by Chile Solidarity Campaign (tel. 01 272-4298)



Ireland's tragedy

LAST week's issue of Socialist Challenge marked the centenary of the birth of the Scottish Marxist and workers' leader JOHN MACLEAN, who died at the age of 44.

The following article is an extract from a pamphlet written by MacLean at the end of the First World War. The issues it discusses — democracy, Ireland and 'terrorism' — are still stunningly relevant. It is the socialist answer to the barrage of hypocrisy and anti-Irish propaganda which has filled the media in the wake of the IRA's military actions on 27 August.

THE ALLIES have won — or at any rate, America has won. Has democracy been recognised? Have small nations had their rights? The piteous plight of Ireland gives the lie direct to those profound prevaricators called the Coalition Government...

To any right-thinking person Britain's retention of Ireland is the world's most startling instance of a 'dictatorship by terrorists', as Britain rules Ireland against Irish wishes with policemen armed with bombs and a huge army equipped with over 40 tanks and as many aeroplanes, machine guns galore, and all the other beautiful manifestations of Christian brotherhood, love and charity.

Democracy in Britain means rule by a clear majority vote, although in some cases trade unions are not allowed to vote. How did Ireland vote at the General Election in 1918?

Sinn Feiners and Redmondites polled 1,211,516 votes or 79.3 per cent of the total votes; the Unionists polled 271,455 or 17.8 per cent; and the Independents and Labourists polled 45,939 or 2.9 per cent. Obviously, the vote shows that by 4 to 1 the people in Ireland wish to look after their own affairs. That overwhelming vote satisfies the most stringent demands of democracy inside trade union and co-operative circles.

This Irish decision was reaffirmed in January 1920 at the municipal elections, when 95 per cent of the townships outside Ulster fell into the hands of the Republicans under a system of proportional representation. Even Derry and Lurgan in Ulster were taken from the Unionists, and in Lisburn, Dungannon, and Cookstown the Carsonites have only a bare majority.

The complete statistics of municipal elections show that in Leinster 36 out of 38 towns were won by Republicans and Nationalists, in Connaught 9 out of 10, in Munster 32 out of 32, and in Ulster 21 out of 47.

That is not all. The Republicans are now controlling and policing 21 counties, and news

has just arrived that in Ulster the Sinn Feiners and Nationalists combined have captured County Tyrone with 11 against 9, and County Fermanagh also with 11 against 9. Great gains have also been registered in the other four of the special Ulster counties, although the final results are not out at the moment of writing.

If all these decisions do not clearly indicate the mind of the majority in Ireland, then elections will never establish any definite verdict.

Britain has obviously no excuse for the flooding of Ireland with troops, and it must be British labour's bounden duty to see that these soldiers, mainly boys of 18, be withdrawn and let the Irish settle their own affairs...

Britain's brutal treatment of Ireland, more blatant today than ever before, indicates that quite clearly. Immediately the Armistice was signed more troops poured into Ireland, not as a precaution against a possible rising but as an irritant. Meetings were deliberately suppressed with brutal arrogance, then football matches and other sports were stopped and the spectators and players scattered with violence, concerts and entertainments were forbidden — even a concert run to provide money to establish a Labour College in Dublin.

Thereafter, De Valera went to America to get funds to help the Irish Parliament or Dail Eireann. Appeals for funds also appeared in the Irish press. Then followed suppressions right and left, as Britain was determined to stand no rival parliament in Ireland:—

20 Sept. The entire Republican press in Ireland was suppressed.

15 Oct. Sinn Fein and Republican organisations in Dublin suppressed.

21 Oct. Weekly meetings of Sinn Fein Central Club suppressed.

21 Nov. Military and police raid headquarters of the Republican government and arrest and imprison the staff.

27 Nov. Sinn Fein and Republican organisations suppressed throughout Ireland.

10 Dec. Sinn Fein and Republican headquarters ordered to be closed.

12 Dec. Sinn Fein leaders, including the secretary of the Sinn Fein organisation, arrested in Dublin and provinces and deported without trial. Republican headquarters again raided and literature confiscated.

During 1919 and the early months of 1920, 66 of the Irish MPs elected in 1918 were sent to prison after farces of a trial or without trial at all. Only seven escaped prison by leaving Ireland shortly after their election in 1918.

Since the municipal elections in January 1920, 35 councillors have been arrested, and attempts were made to arrest at least 36 other councillors.

On 3 March armed military raided the Women Workers' Club, the Irish Women Workers' Union, Liberty Hall, the Socialist Party of Ireland headquarters, the Grocers' Assistants' Union headquarters, and the Irish Drapers' Assistants' headquarters — all in Dublin. At the same time Alderman Wm. O'Brien, the leader of the Irish labour movement, was snatched away and smuggled into England, where he was kept in prison without trial...

As a matter of fact there is no crime the government has not incited the police and the soldiers to perpetuate in this war to the knife

with Ireland. Since May 1916, till December 1919, the government in Ireland has been responsible for 59 murders, 2,084 deportations, 575 armed assaults on unarmed civilians, 14,153 raids on private houses, 5,041 arrests, 2,038 sentences, 369 proclamations and suppressions, 53 suppressions of papers, 506 courts-martial: a total of 25,378.

Since January 1920, matters have become worse. Let us take the week ending 17 April. Raids, 1,135; arrests, 260; sentences, 2; proclamations and suppressions, 2; courts-martial, 2; armed assaults, 16; deportations, 92; murders, 4: a total of 1,513...

This information is carefully suppressed by the government so that ordinary people are forced to come to entirely wrong conclusions as to the real situation in Ireland.

Acts of Aggression in Ireland 1919

12 Feb. Pat Gavin shot dead by soldiers at the Curragh Camp.

6 April Robt. Byrne shot dead by police in Limerick Hospital.

26 April M. Walsh shot dead by police at Dungarvan.

29 April Two men shot by police at Longford.

5 June Matthew Murphy, Dundalk, shot dead by soldiers at Dundalk.

16 June Michael Rice (60 years) and his son, Martin, shot dead in his house by police.

14 Aug. F. Murphy, Glan (15 years) shot dead by soldiers firing into his father's house at midnight.

9 Sept. Fermoy sacked by soldiers.

10 Oct. Boy shot at Banbridge by police.

6 Nov. Kinsale sacked by soldiers.

12 Nov. Cork partly sacked by soldiers.

20 Nov. Motorists shot by police at Sligo for not halting.

24 Nov. Civilians shot at Tipperary by police.

29 Dec. Laurence Kennedy murdered by police at Phoenix Park, Dublin.

1920

6 Jan. Dr. Keane, Ennismoyon, shot by police while on his medical rounds.

19 Jan. Civilians at Enniscorthy shot by police.

20 Jan. M. Darcy, Cooraclare, drowned while police held off would-be rescuers.

22 Jan. Thurles wrecked by soldiers.

4 Feb. Man and girl shot dead in Limerick by soldiers and police.

14 Feb. Jas. O'Brien shot dead at Rathdrum by police.

So I might continue itemising the bloody butchery right down to the time of writing this pamphlet were I not sick of the whole murderous business.

To expect the Irish to accept crushing and blackening both is to stretch expectation and endurance beyond the limit. So the Irish have naturally replied by laying low policemen and detectives.

Policemen are now resigning by the hundred. Police barracks have been blown up and policemen driven from whole stretches of the country. The Sinn Feiners are, however, establishing their own police and their own courts, which now control 21 of Ireland's 32 counties. Britain's police system is virtually destroyed in vast stretches of Ireland, never again to be re-established.

Britain is pouring more and more troops into Ireland, and now the navy is being called into play. A terrible tragedy may be perpetrated by Britain before labour has realised the full gravity of the situation. It is therefore essential that drastic action be taken very soon.

British Labour and Ireland: 1969-79



the cost of bipartisanship
by Geoff Bell cartoons by Cormac

BRITISH LABOUR AND IRELAND 1969-79

A new pamphlet by Geoff Bell with cartoons by Cormac, which analyses the costs of bipartisanship over the last ten years. It is available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St., London N1, cost 40p + 10p post. Bulk rates available on request.

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at **Conway Hall Red Lion Sq**

at **8:00pm** come early
£1 (cheap)



Fighting Corrie in the labour movement

Fighting Corrie in the labour movement

Fighting Corrie in the labour movement

RAISE support for the campaign against the Corrie anti-abortion Bill in the labour movement — that's the call which has gone out from the National Abortion Campaign and the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign.

The NAC/LARC Trade Union Liaison Committee have sent out a special letter as part of the build-up to the TUC-sponsored demonstration on 28 October against the Corrie Bill. The letter suggests a number of ways in which the fight against Corrie can be spread:

*Write a letter to your MP explaining why s/he should vote against the Corrie Bill at the third reading in February.

*Put a resolution to your branch meeting asking: for support for the Campaign Against the Corrie Bill; a donation to the Campaign Against the Corrie Bill; affiliation either to the National Abortion Campaign or Labour Abortion Rights Campaign.

*Call on your national executive body to inform sponsored MPs of your branch/union opposition to the Bill and ask them to vote against it.

*Raise the issue at your local trades council and ask them to: sponsor a public meeting on the Bill; circulate affiliated branches with information; coordinate local opposition to the Bill and provide transport to London for the 28 October demonstration.

*If official support is not given, start or join a local NAC or LARC group, talk to friends, neighbours and ask them to sign the NAC petition against the Bill, write to your paper and 'phone in' to your local radio station. Join up with other people locally and come to the demonstration.

FIVE REASONS WHY TRADE UNIONISTS SHOULD MARCH AGAINST CORRIE'S ANTI-ABORTION BILL:

The Corrie Bill would strictly limit the number of legal abortions in Britain. Two-thirds of the women who had safe, legal abortions this year would have been forced to use illegal methods or have unwanted children if Corrie's Bill were in force. If we don't stop this Bill it would be you or I, your sister, wife, friend or lover who suffers.

- 1 Women should have a democratic right to decide for themselves when and if they will have children and how they will organise their working lives.
- 2 Trade unions should fight for this right just as they fight against unemployment and racial discrimination.
- 3 Those who seek to restrict the abortion law are anti-democratic. They are attempting to impose their moral views on all of us. Those who favour liberal laws are putting the moral decision where it belongs, in the control of the pregnant woman herself.
- 4 The Tory Government supports the Corrie Bill, just as it favours a reduction in the right to maternity leave. They want to force women to stay at home and pay with their labour for the dismantling of the welfare state.
- 5 Abortion does not go away if it is made illegal. It goes underground. In the 1930s, the death rate from illegal abortion rocketed. Working class families could neither afford the extra mouths to feed nor the cost of a safe abortion. We all want to preserve jobs and living standards. Let us make sure that this time, pregnant women don't die while we are fighting for a better world.

Support the TUC demonstration against the Bill

OCTOBER 28

12 NOON SPEAKERS CORNER HYDE PARK LONDON

Published by NAC/LARC Trade Union Liaison Committee, 374 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1.

CAMPAIGN NEWS



Wandsworth

A **RESOUNDING** victory for opponents of the Corrie Bill was recorded in South London last Saturday.

The occasion was the opening of a day-care clinic at South London Women's Hospital, Clapham Common. Opponents of a woman's right to choose, parading under the banner of the anti-abortion group Life, had announced their intention to demonstrate outside the hospital demanding the closure of the day-care clinic.

But the Wandsworth Campaign Against Corrie arranged a counter-demonstration which mobilised 200 people in support of a woman's right to choose and the opening of the clinic despite the short notice. The Life march was only 150-strong on arrival and plans to take in flowers to children in the hospital ward — a sick publicity stunt — were hastily abandoned when the Life organisers saw the size of the opposition. Demoralised, their forces simply melted away.

Supporters of the anti-Corrie protest included the local trades council, a number of NUT branches, Wandsworth, Lambeth and Southwark campaigns against Corrie, socialist feminists groups, and local branches of the Labour Party, the Socialist Workers Party, the International Marxist Group and the Workers Party.

The Wandsworth Campaign Against Corrie now intend to lobby the surgery of local Labour MP Tom Cox, who voted for the Corrie Bill at its second reading. The lobby takes place at 6pm on Friday 7 September at 611 Garratt Lane, Wandsworth.

International meeting

'INTERNATIONAL' attacks on abortion rights — international women's forum organised by the International Contraception, Abortion and Sterilisation Campaign, Fri 7 Sept, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, London WC1.

Street action

CAMPAIGNING against the Corrie Bill has begun in Birmingham. The main aim of the campaign locally is to get trade unionists involved in the fight for a woman's right to choose.

Lots of activities are in the pipeline. Apart from petitioning in the town and among trade unionists the campaign hopes to set up anti-Corrie groups in the National Union of Teachers and the National Union of Public Employees.

Special events planned include a day of street action in twelve different areas of Birmingham on Saturday 8 September, while a mass event on Saturday 22 September will have street theatre, exhibitions and singing to publicise a public meeting on the 26 September.

The group wants to get a train down for the demonstration in London on 28 October, hopefully full of trade union members from the Birmingham area.

Expectations are also high in the North-west area for a train down to London on the day of the demonstration financed by the North-west TUC.

The National Abortion Campaign in Manchester and Salford is organising petitioning every Saturday in the Greater Manchester area.

Bury Trades Council has affiliated to NAC, and already lots of resolutions from local trade unions are coming in.

It's only seven weeks to the demonstration. So let's hear from your group.



Don't blame Scotland - they voted labour

By George Kerevan

IF YOU see a smug, self-satisfied look on someone's face north of the border, more likely than not that person is a member of the Labour Party. While European social-democracy has suffered consistent electoral defeats in the past two years, just the opposite is true in Scotland.

At the general election, Labour in Scotland increased its share of the poll from 36 per cent to 42 per cent; in the UK as a whole, Labour went down from 39 per cent to 37 per cent. Every region, including Wales, showed a drop in the Labour vote except Scotland, where nearly a quarter of a million extra people voted Labour compared with 1974.

This dramatic shift was not just the result of previous Labour voters returning from the Scottish Nationalist camp.

The 1970s slump was bound to polarise politics on class lines to the detriment of the Nationalists, especially in a Scotland where the cowboy economy based on oil and multinationals did nothing to halt the net loss of 50,000 industrial jobs since 1974.

Scottish Labour attacked Callaghan's 5 per cent wage limit — in words. But more than this, Labour stole the SNP's thunder by fighting for devolution. Though middle class voters took fright at the referendum, working class voters in the industrial heartlands went overwhelmingly for the Assembly. Labour was thus able to seize the banner of self-determination from the Nationalists.

This does not wholly account for the reconsolidation of Labour. One factor is Labour's dominant role in cementing together Scottish society — very different from its role in England.

Scottish Labour emerged in the '30s on the basis of cheap municipal housing, Catholic communalism, and a historic compromise with Clydeside capital to pressure Westminster for financial aid. The Tories were

reduced to Edinburgh lawyers and Highland lairds. With the new recession the Scottish working class has returned to what it knows best: fortress Labour with its paternalism and reformism.

Paradoxically, this revival has not strengthened the Labour left. True, the old guard bureaucrats were ousted in the mid '70s by the Scottish unions, having failed to stem the rise of the SNP. But they were replaced by a new generation of bureaucrats who, though mindful of supporting the union hierarchies against the 5 per cent wage limit, are machine politicians rather than left militants.

The left is not well organised. The Tribunites are on the wane, and the Bennite Labour Coordinating Committee is only just getting off the ground. For the most part, there are informal coalitions of left militants controlling local party machines.

The Labour pro-Assembly forces, strengthened by the entry of a significant part of the decaying Scottish Labour Party breakaway, have turned their attention to the campaign against the cuts. Devolution is a forgotten issue. The current leadership of the SNP poses no threat, having drawn no lessons from its recent setbacks. The new SNP left-wing Group 79, which held its founding conference on 18 August, is too weak and too ideologically confused to make any difference.

However the national question is not dead.

The very victory of the Labour Party in Scotland will range it against the Thatcher government on a national basis. Comments such as 'this is the worst election ever for the Union' were flying freely in May. The economy is set to move at a different pace: while unemployment fell in England in August, it continued to worsen north of the border. It has not gone unnoticed that three of the four shipyards scheduled to be axed are in Scotland.

The future of the Labour Party in Scotland will ultimately depend on the direction of the mass struggles against the Tory government. The

Scottish working class voted in droves for Labour as a bulwark against Thatcher. But Scottish Labour is founded on reformist wheeling and dealing, not on leading mass struggles.

The first signs of the end of the honeymoon are already apparent in the campaign against the public expenditure cuts. While leftist Lothian Labour Party has called a public demonstration against the cuts for September, the right-wing Strathclyde Labour councillors are demanding that Labour-controlled Lothian carry the bulk of the cuts. The common front against the Tories will not look so secure when it comes to choosing the method of struggle.



The Scottish working class returned to fortress Labour — with its paternalism and reformism

Picket vital Southall show trials start 10 September

By Oliver New

THE SOUTHALL Defence Committee has been told by members of the Civil and Public Services Association that their strike action is unlikely to have crippled Barnet Magistrates Court by 10 September. This means that the Southall show trials will begin in earnest on that date.

Among the first batch of defendants will be Clarence Baker, the manager of the reggae group Misty. Readers will recall that Clarence was nearly killed by the Special Patrol Group during the police riot in Southall last April. He was in the intensive care unit in Hounslow hospital for a week. In a clear attempt to justify their atrocities, the police are charging Clarence with possessing offensive weapons.

Support for the picket is becoming national. Rock Against Racism are calling on supporters to be there by 9am. Barnet Trades Council is backing the picket, as is Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee. From outside London the Leamington Anti-Racist Committee and Warwick University Students Union are sending a coach all the way to Barnet.

Parita Trivedy from the campaign committee in Southall told Socialist Challenge: 'We're delighted with some of the support which we're getting from outside Southall, but it is still not enough. And we have a real task mobilising in Southall itself, not to mention the rest of London. This support should be mobilised now and not after tough sentences have been handed out.'

The 10 September picket is also an important test for the Anti Nazi League and the groups that support it. For if they cannot defend the Southall 342, it is unlikely that they will be taken seriously by black people in other parts of the country.

All out for the picket! Assemble outside Barnet Magistrates Court, 9am, 10 September [nearest tube: High Barnet].

SPG— killers in blue

THE MURDER of Blair Peach by a member of the Special Patrol Group on 23 April led to a huge wave of protest in the labour movement. There have been many calls for the SPG to be disbanded, including a motion from the Association of Cinematograph, Television & Allied Technicians which is due to be debated at this week's TUC Congress.

The State Research Bulletin recently published the first national survey of SPGs in Britain. This stated: 'The development of the SPG from an anti-crime unit to a para-military one has led to one very obvious contradiction, namely, that having been trained and used in its para-military role it still continues to be used in the community as an anti-crime unit.'

Anti-Terrorist

The survey is based on the annual reports of the Chief Constables for 1978 (published during 1979) and covers all police forces in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It shows that 24 out of the 52 police forces in the UK now have SPG-type units, 15 of which were formed after 1972.

The first SPGs were formed in 1965 (in London and Hertfordshire) as centrally-controlled anti-crime units to go in to support local police divisions in crime prevention drives. All SPG-type units continue to be used in this role in local communities.

However, from 1972, the role of many SPGs (especially in major urban areas) was extended to include their use in public order and anti-terrorist situations. This involves, as the annual reports show, specialist training in riot control and firearms training.

This new role, State Research argues, resulted from the decision in 1972 (after the confrontation between the police and miners' pickets at Saltley in Birmingham) not to create a 'third force' (a para-military force) to

stand between the police and the army. Many West European countries have a 'third force' which consists of a 'para-military police who are trained to deal with pickets during strikes, political demonstrations and terrorism'.

As a result of successfully resisting the idea of creating a 'third force' in

STOP THE SOUTHALL SHOW TRIALS! RELEASE THE SOUTHALL 342!

On 23 April the police rioted in Southall. Blair Peach was killed, dozens of brothers and sisters were wounded. 342 people, predominantly black workers, were charged. Some have already been sentenced, but the majority will face show trials from 10 September onwards. Regular picketing is being organised outside the courts.



You can raise the plight of the 342 in your trade union branch or trades council. You can donate money. For further details ring: Parita Trivedy [01-574 1325]

We want your help We want you there

1972, the police undertook a fundamental change of direction in traditional policing roles:

'Every major city now has its own SPG, many of them playing the dual

role of anti-crime and para-military units. The SPG in London, and those in the provinces, are involved more and more in industrial disputes and political demonstrations, and by

having an anti-terrorist capacity they are developing the ability to take on some of the functions that had previously been the preserve of the army — the ability to kill.

There have been widespread demands for the disbandment of the London SPG, the Tactical Aid Group in Greater Manchester and the Support Group in Strathclyde. TUC general secretary Len Murray has called for the disbanding of the London SPG, and the Labour Party Conference will also have before it a resolution to this effect in October.

This survey shows that SPG-type units exist in many other parts of the country outside London, and that their elite status and training leads them to be 'aggressive and violent when called on to undertake normal policing roles in the local communities, at strikes and at demonstrations'.

State Research Bulletin No. 13: single copy 50p (inc. post), subscription £3 p.a. from: 9 Poland Street, London W1.

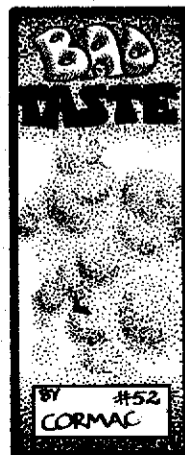
The following resolution will go before the TUC

16 SPECIAL PATROL GROUP

Congress asserts that the activities of the Special Patrol Group pose a fundamental challenge to public order and to the civil and political rights of citizens legitimately engaged in industrial disputes and political activity. Despite discussions with the Police Federation and the previous Government, the activities of the Special Patrol Group continue to raise issues of deep public concern. Their record during the Grunwick dispute and their unwarranted intervention at Southall which clearly merited a public inquiry have provided further evidence of the dangerous and unregulated character of the Special Patrol Group.

Congress believes that the Special Patrol Group must now be disbanded and instructs the incoming General Council to actively pursue this objective.

Association of Cinematograph, Television & Allied Technicians



By Varda Burstyn

EVERYONE remembers all those films of the thirties, forties, and fifties — from the ones with musical numbers like 'We're In the Money' made in the depths of the depression, to those of the fifties, projecting a blonde, beaming, 'wholesome' picture of sexual relations in a decade of pure sexual misery.

But few of us remember that the sexual and class values in these films were by no means a true reflection of what was happening in society. Nor were they even the spontaneous expression of writers, directors, and actors. The explicit values of the movies made in America were dictated for over 20 years by the Hays Production Code (1933-1951).

In relation to matters sexual, all films had to have a 'happy ending' — marriage for lovers, reconciliation for troubled partners, whatever was necessary to restore the family unit again. No pre-marital or extra-marital sex was allowed, unless accompanied by appropriate dire consequences. Bedroom scenes were permitted only if there were twin beds, and each person had one foot on the floor!

The infamous production code did not reflect social reality. The values that it propagated were not those of the entire population. What it did reflect however, was capital's complete control over the film industry, and the values it needed to maintain its control in all other spheres of life.

It further reflected a certain relationship of forces between the capitalist class, the working class, and women more generally, insofar as the capitalist class was able to impose, through its monopoly, a direct censorship in what appeared to be the 'harmless' entertainment industry.

Although virtually every capitalist country still has its board of censors, today no such official code exists to regulate the 'moral' content of American films. As a result, many of us have become accustomed to thinking that the images, situations and patterns we see in the movies are in some sense a real reflection of life, of the trends and issues of contemporary society, even if it takes the cinema a long time to 'catch up' with reality.

After all, isn't *Saturday Night Fever* a film about the alienation of urban, working class youth? Aren't *Girlfriends* and *Norma Rae* feminist films? Aren't films like these evidence that Hollywood has its thumb on our pulse, since it is able to make movies that reflect and explore the experiences and questions of the seventies?

Hollywood films have changed — at least in some measure — in their presentation of women. This has taken place due to two overriding factors. First, the women's liberation movement has had a direct effect on Hollywood itself.

Women writers, actors, and directors have all felt the supportive and challenging impact of the movement, and have begun to push away some of the old barriers in their path. Increasingly, they are demanding that role, job, and script come more into line with their 'reality.'

Second, the men who largely control the industry have also felt the impact of the movement, in two ways. Doubtless, there are some who have thought certain attitudes to women, and whose contribution to certain films comes from what we could call positive motives.

But largely, the pressure of the women's movement comes in the form of a large audience outside Hollywood who have also been affected by this movement and will pay to see films which deal with their life experience.

This kind of motivation by its very logic implies an imperative to play down the revolutionary possibilities of women's liberation. If this seems too crass or cynical an explanation for the minor proliferation of films like *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, *An Unmarried Woman*, *Julia* or *Girlfriends*, a brief look at these films reveals that this tendency is very much at play, mixed in with the positive motion toward change for women.

Alice and *An Unmarried Woman*

The seductive illusion

Women in the Hollywood cinema

both revolve around the adventures of women who are left on their own in the world (widowed or divorced). Ellen Burstyn plays Alice, a working class woman who supports herself by waitressing, and would like to sing for a career. Jill Clayburgh plays the ex-wife of a stockbroker, a woman with few visible skills but with some undefined artistic aspirations. They both have pubescent children.

While these two women live on opposite sides of the class fence, their situations are otherwise similar. They even have similar coteries of women friends, cynical and heart-broken, but full of wit and courage, waitresses in the one case, idle ex-wives in the other.

If these similarities are remarkable, even more remarkable is the symmetry of the resolution in each film. The working class woman goes off into the sunset with her handsome, burly and affluent cowboy, and the petit-bourgeois woman goes off into the New York twilight with her handsome, burly, and established artist.

Nevertheless, these films were greeted as 'feminist' simply because they took the first steps to bring women out from the shadows of the kitchen and nursery on to centre stage. Women appeared to have been granted the opportunity to be seen as protagonists in life, not simply as moving parts in a play of male initiative. Fair enough — but this does not yet make a feminist film.

Julia was released at about the same time as *Unmarried Woman*, and it was quickly followed by *Girlfriends*.

Julia told the story of a friendship between Lillian Hellman (Lilly), the playwright and novelist, and her

friend Julia, a woman who studied philosophy at Oxford, and went to Vienna to work with Sigmund Freud. She became a highly committed socialist and anti-fascist in the thirties, a commitment which led to her assassination.

Julia represented a major advance over *Alice* because it gave us a sense of the role which social and political commitment can play in women's ability to transcend traditional female barriers, as well as the profound role it plays in deepening the friendship between women. The film also underlined the right of women to lead independent and creative lives of their own.

Julia lends itself immediately to a comparison with *Girlfriends*, the story of two young contemporary women, and how their friendship evolves as they grapple with the implications of singlehood and marriage, children and work, and of course, sexual relations (essentially with men).

Where *Julia* takes place against a sweeping backdrop of world-shattering events, *Girlfriends* is very much an 'everyday' film. Its success lies in the way it conveys the contradictions between what the 'old' woman wants ('I want Martin to look after me,' says Annie) and what the 'new' one aspires to ('You don't need

Sally Field as Norma Rae, modern 'union-maid'.

anyone to look after you, you can take care of yourself,' Susan replies). We get a clear sense of how these contradictions put stress on the friendship as well as on each woman individually.

Good as these films are from a feminist point of view, they still exhibit several important, even central flaws.

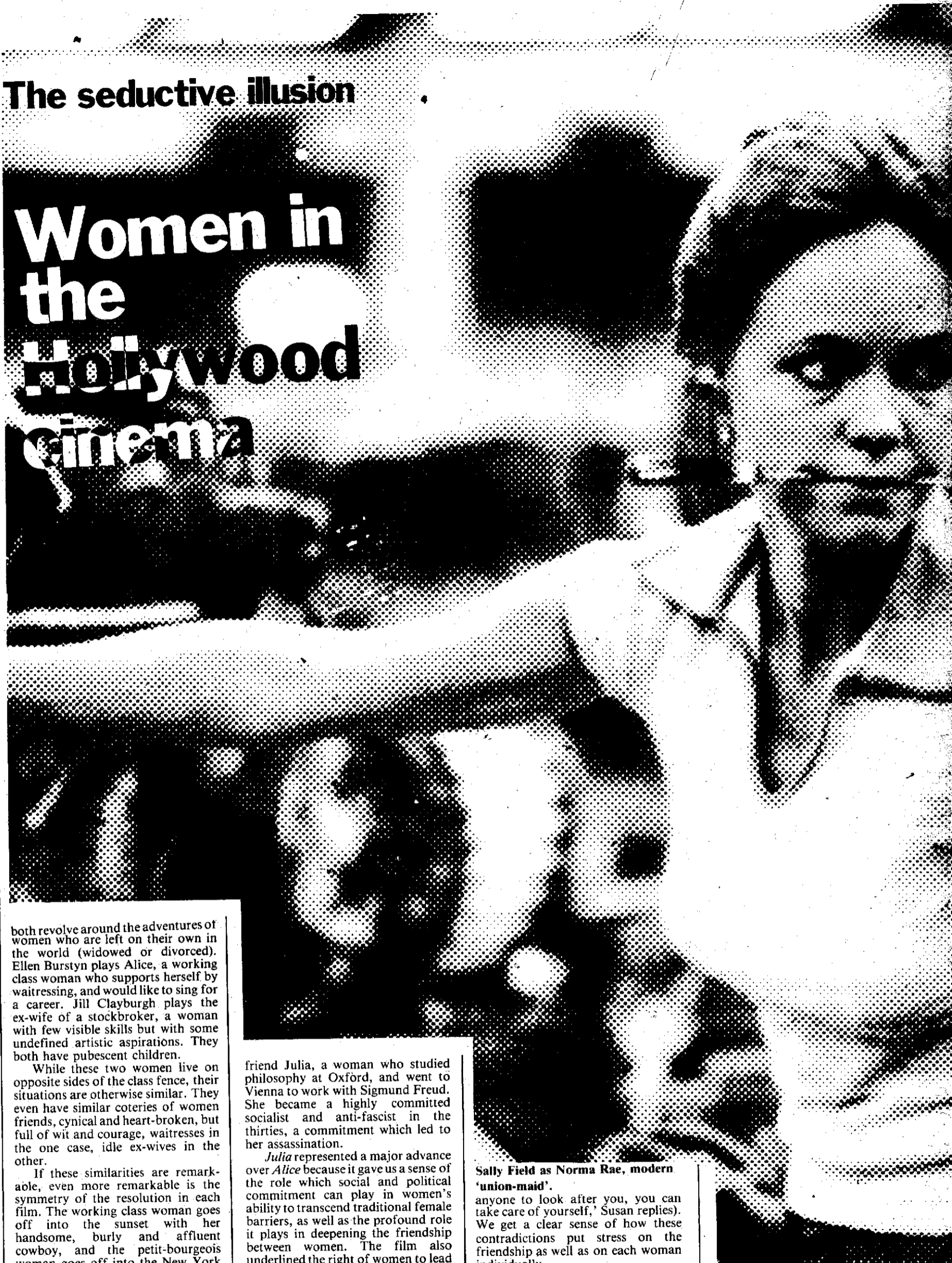
First, while they explore some of the issues in male-female relationships, they do no exploration of either lesbianism or collective living and childrearing as potential alternatives to 'normal' sexual and family patterns. Consequently, all the resolutions available to each woman protagonist inevitably come up against all the limitations of the traditional social-sexual arrangements.

Nowhere do we get even a flavour of the women's movement itself — the very thing which makes Susan and

Annie's new lifestyle (not to speak of the film itself), possible.

From consciousness-raising groups to building demonstrations, there is nowhere any sense that women can improve the quality of their lives if they are engaged in the process of collective activity for change. Good old American (read bourgeois) individualism persists throughout.

The film industry has shown a marked aversion to combining the themes of women's liberation with class politics in the spite of films that have emerged to respond to the appearance of the working class, as a class, since the mid-seventies.





nagging wives, mistresses, whores, they are never co-workers in plant or union.

The opposition to this kind of treatment of working class and feminist issues comes primarily in the form of films made by independent producers, writers and directors, films like *Harlan County USA*, *Union Maids*, *Les Filles du Roi*, and countless other films which express the many dimensions of the women's movement — from daycare to rape.

It seems to me that recently *Harlan County* is the film which could be singled out as representing the greatest challenge to Hollywood's view. A non-fictionalised 'real-life' struggle is documented with all the emotional charge which real-life experiences of struggle involve.

Although the miners are male to a man, the role of women — toughest and most willing to fight up to the use of arms, excellent organisers — clearly repudiates the image of women as either independent and individualist middle-class women or passive, helpless working class 'girls'. Because of the quality of the film and the breadth of its distribution, some response was necessary.

Hollywood's production of *Norma Rae* was the perfect answer. A woman protagonist standing up for what she believes in — workers' rights and her own rights to independence — combines the feminist and working class themes effectively. Sally Field's wonderful performance adds irresistible charisma. Yet if one stops to think about it for a moment, the realisation dawns that this film is in many ways a carefully *laundered* version of what a real Norma Rae's struggle would be.

As far as feminist themes go, Norma Rae fights the battle against husband, union, and boss without the aid of other women. Nowhere do we see the dynamic between women in situations of struggle so clear in *Harlan County*.

Norma Rae herself does not really become more of a *feminist* through the process of her struggle, as most other women in her situation and position do. Once again, women organised (the women's movement) is nowhere in sight.

But the omission is equally serious from the class point of view. Norma Rae's co-workers are never shown grappling with their own needs and strategies, collectively deciding on their actions.

Instead, their rebellion against their conditions takes place through almost passive trust in their leaders, in this case Norma Rae and the young, idealistic male organiser who has arrived from union headquarters in New York.

Most glaringly conspicuous by its absence is the extreme violence which confronts working people when they organise in the South. This violence, depicted so graphically in *Harlan County*, is reduced to a scuffle between Norma Rae and the local sheriff.

In contrast to the blatant manipulation of the Hays Production Code, a very subtle manipulation is going on in *Norma Rae* and the other films I have mentioned. By giving us back our own 'reality' in an altered, watered-down form the Hollywood cinema also *hides* that reality, and the possibilities inherent in it.

In other words, it helps to *defuse* the potential dynamite of women's liberation and class struggle by presenting selective and partial aspects of life-situations which pose these questions.

One would not want to say that the effect of these films is by any means all negative. By portraying strong women and working people fighting for their rights, greater legitimacy is gained for a change in sex and class conditions in society as a whole. But we must always keep in mind that the way these issues are presented is Hollywood's *reaction* to social developments, in large part a commercial reaction.

We should never approach these films without being on the look-out for those missing dimensions of social reality which are most exciting and inspiring, lest we forget that these do exist in our lives and accept the built-in pessimism and conservatism of the mainstream capitalist cinema.

Once more on NALGO

ALAN Walker's points on Liverpool NALGO (16 August) need to be challenged. If John Strauther's letter (26 July) contained some inaccuracies, this was no doubt because it was written in haste and reflected a growing frustration with his comrades in the Liverpool NALGO left, in particular their extremely sectarian attitude towards an amendment to 'their' motion rejecting a 9.4 per cent pay offer. Alan Walker's inaccuracies are a continuation of these attitudes.

1. The action programme put forward by the NALGO Action Group (NAG) did not call 'only for a one day strike nationally, plus indefinite selective action'. It was a detailed escalation with the demand that it lead to **all-out** strike action as soon as possible to win the claim. Other demands, both **argued against** by NALGO Left supporters, were for all action to be controlled locally by elected strike committees accountable to regular mass meetings, and that all sections wishing to strike be given support. The latter was opposed at the general meeting by a NALGO Left supporter on the grounds that it would give a free hand to the social workers and the reds (yes, it was put like that!).

2. While it is true that the amendment was smashed at a general meeting (mainly because of the opposition of the 'Left' — 'stupid', 'unrealistic', etc.) it certainly received more than seven votes. Here Alan confuses an executive with a general meeting.

3. There is no justification for saying that NAG is increasingly on the sidelines when members mobilise to defend living standards. Every attempt to mobilise the membership against the offer was supported and in many cases led by the NAG. Indeed, what was really necessary for rejection was a mobilisation prior to the Group Meeting. A strong lobby outside the Group Meeting would have been a start, but in Liverpool the NALGO Left chairperson refused to even allow a call for support for such a lobby to be put to the meeting.

If NAG are always on the sidelines, why is it that in the social workers' strike, even in Liverpool, there were more NAG members on the strike committee than NALGO Left members, while both locally and nationally that 'potent force' to which Alan refers, the Broad Left, were nowhere to be seen?

JOHN HOLLIDAY (Liverpool NALGO)

Trades Council report

SOME five weeks ago our trades council launched a report, 'Five Days in Ireland', which attempted to present an accurate and detailed account of a delegation we had to Belfast and Derry in May. Copies were sent to all the national press and unsurprisingly provoked no response. Copies were also sent to yourselves, Socialist Worker and the Morning Star. More surprisingly — and much more disappointingly — none of these

apology

Last week's article on the Iranian economy by Fred Halliday was taken from the *Irish Times*.

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS INPRECOR

THE latest issue of the weekly Intercontinental Press/Inprecor (Vol. 17, No. 31) contains a series of reports on the revolutionary upheaval in Nicaragua as well as coverage of the repression in Iran.

Individual copies cost 30p plus 10p p&p, but subscriptions work out cheaper at £11 for a year (48 issues), £6 for six months (24 issues), or £3 for 10 weeks. Cheques/POs should be made out to 'Intercontinental Press' and sent to: IP/I, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

papers showed a flicker of interest in their printed pages.

Our press release clearly pointed out the main aim of the report — to aid the opening up of discussion in the labour movement on the critical issue of Ireland. We welcomed comments and opposition views and did not seek to push the 'correct' line. Perhaps that is where our trades council 'failed'. No 'line' guaranteed no 'news' and meant no coverage.

Whilst the capitalist media — at this time of 'anniversaries' — continues the promotion of the bi-partisan 'security against the terrorists' policy, it seems that the socialist media, with its concentration on the 'bombs and bullets', excludes from the debate large sections of working people who would wish to ask the deeper questions 'why and what must be done?'

COLIN RANDALL
(Newcastle Trades Council)

FIVE DAYS
IN IRELAND

DERRY



Newcastle on Tyne Trades Council

£1

Acid test of Kurdistan

IT IS not long since the people of Iraqi Kurdistan were branded as agents of imperialism for their struggle against the 'progressive' Ba'athist regime. Much of the labour movement, blinded by the slanders of the pro-Moscow Communist parties, did not see the atrocity that was being committed. The support that the Fourth International, within its limited means, gave at that time of isolation is remembered with gratitude by many of us.

So we are all the more disappointed to see the coverage in *Socialist Challenge* (30 August) of the struggle in Iran. Just as Ireland is the acid test for the British working class, the question of Kurdistan is decisive for

the future of the Iranian revolution. If Khomeini can build an army capable of crushing the Kurds, the fate of the other nationalities in the non-Persian majority, the Iranian working class and the socialists, will be sealed in blood.

What is going on in Kurdistan is not simply repression of democratic rights. It is war. Defence of the Kurdish people against this barbarous onslaught is a grave and urgent matter.

Your coverage failed to bring this out. Worse than that: a photograph of Kurdish fighters dying before a firing-squad was used with a headline stressing the threat of execution faced by 14 Iranian Trotskyists. We appreciate and share your concern for these comrades. But at a time when Kurds are being massacred daily, your priorities leave a very bad taste.

A similar imbalance, to say the least, marred your report on the picket of the Iranian embassy. You didn't mention that the bulk of this picket was called by the Association of Kurdish Students Abroad, specifically on the question of Kurdistan. We affirm that many of the Kurdish militants present also protested at the jailing of the HKS members, and we don't doubt that your own supporters will defend the Kurds. So why not say explicitly that this was a **joint** action, instead of giving the misleading impression that it was a picket mainly on the issue of the Iranian socialists?

All defenders of democratic rights in Iran will need the maximum solidarity in the coming months. The kind of coverage in this issue of *Socialist Challenge*, which was (perhaps unconsciously) sectarian — putting the interests of your own party above those of the oppressed masses — can only set this back. It has already given an opening for some people in the Kurdish movement who have anti-Trotskyist prejudices to oppose future joint work with the International Marxist Group and the Fourth International. A written apology in *Socialist Challenge* would go a long way to prevent such a damaging development.

We hope that in future your journalists will show greater sensitivity to the feelings of an oppressed nation whose people are today defending a front-line trench of the world revolution and are paying a heavy price for their courage.

SHIRKO ABID (Association of Kurdish Students Abroad — UK branch)

•We apologise to the comrades for any misleading impression that may have been given by the coverage in the last issue of *Socialist Challenge*. We refer them to our editorial statement on page 2 for a clarification of our position.

WHAT'S LEFT

ENTRIES in *Whats Left* are 5p per word. Display ads are £2 a column inch. Deadline: 5pm Friday before publication. All payments in advance.

'FREE ABORTION on Demand' and 'No means No' badges are again available from The Week, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Singly 25p each, bulk 12p each. Make cheques/POs out to 'The Week'.

STEVE BIKO memorial service, Wed 12 Sept, 7.30pm, St Mary's Church, Lewisham High St. Organised by Black Consciousness Movement of South Africa.

SOCIALIST feminist and child urgently need room for two months. Phone Oldham 692 1468 or Freeman 852 1671.

IMG TRADE UNION fraction meetings: 8 September — NUT, NATFHE; 9 September — NUPE; 23 September — ASTMS; 30 September — NALGO, CPSA. For details write to Centre or phone 01-359 8371.

BOOKS for Southern Africa comrades — money is desperately needed for this vital field of international activity. Or send any books you can spare. Books for Southern Africa, Box 102, c/o Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1.

POLITICAL PRINTSHOP, London, needs person for design work. Printshop experience would be useful asset. Applicants must have had some experience in design, although training would be given. Applications to: Socialist Challenge (Print), PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

LECTURES in Marxism: Lecturer David Yaffe, BA, BSc. Focus on Marx's critique of political economy to examine the crisis of the capitalist system today; imperialism and national oppression, racism, women's oppression under capitalism are discussed from a revolutionary working class standpoint. 30 lectures held Tuesday evenings, 7.30-9.30pm at Toynbee Hall, London E1 (nearest tubes: Aldgate, Aldgate East). Dates: 25/9-11/12/79, 8/1-18/3/80, 15/4-27/5/80. Fees: 50p per lecture (minimum 5); 30 lectures £10. Apply to: RCG Publications Ltd, 49 Railton Rd, SE24 OLN. Tel: 01-737 3922.

PUBLIC MEETING of Revolutionary Communist Tendency East London Branch — 'Public sector cuts: how to fight them'. Speaker: Fran Eden, at Hackney Labour and Trade Union Hall, Dalston Lane, E8. Wed 12 Sept, 7.30pm. Adm. 20p. Defend East London hospitals: Support 13 September demonstration against cuts and closures.

HACKNEY Socialist Challenge meeting: 'Fighting the Cuts'. Speakers invited from local campaigns against hospital and school closures. Thurs 6 Sept, 7.30pm, Trades Hall, 96 Dalston Lane, E8 (change of venue).

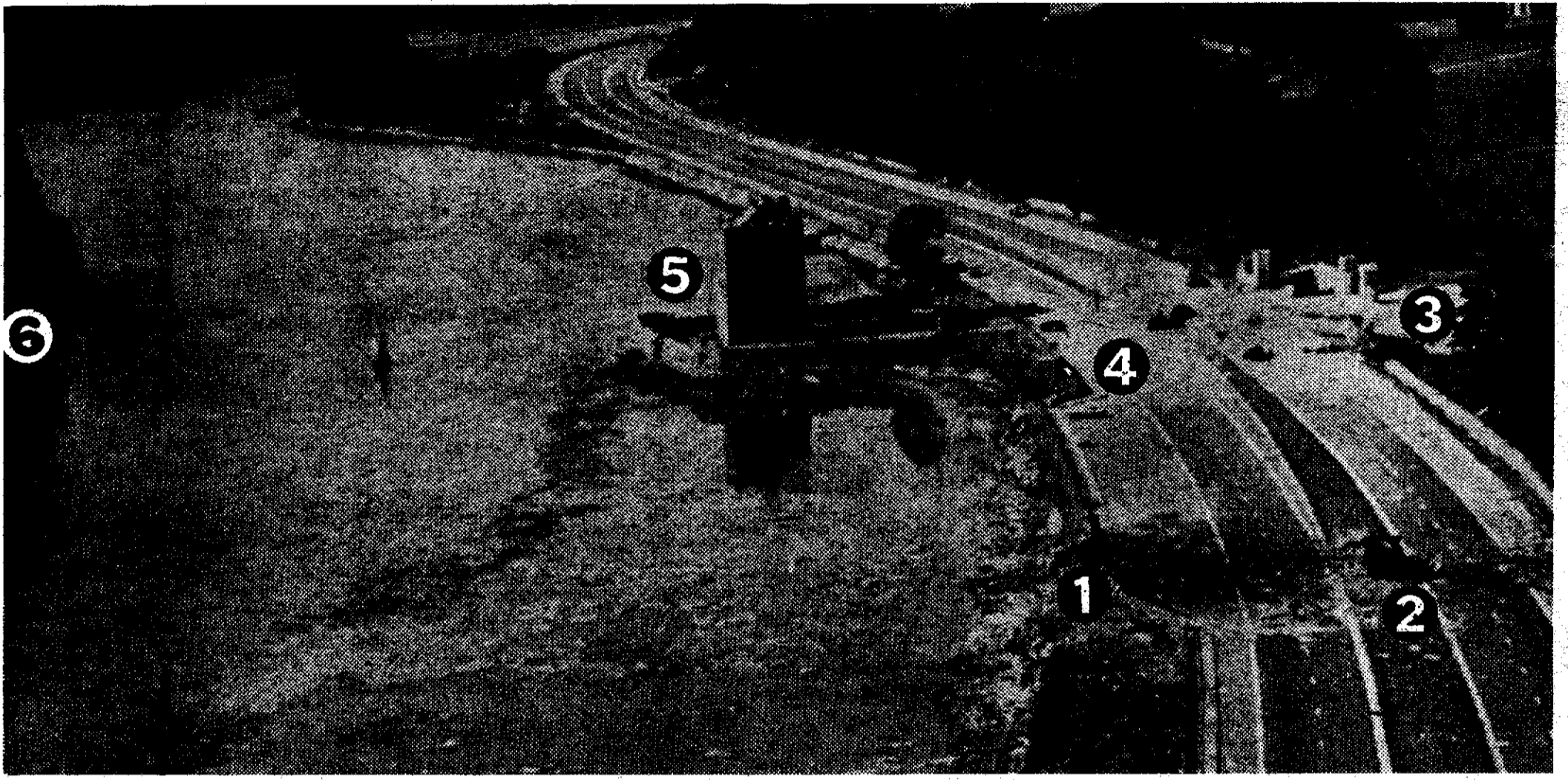
HULL UNIVERSITY FI Society and Socialist Challenge supporters present 'The Patriot Game' (first time in Hull) — Fri 19 Oct, 7.45pm in Middleton Hall, Hull University, Cottingham Rd, Hull. Tickets (75p) from any SC seller, Socialist Books, or ring Angie 441922.

LIVERPOOL Socialist Challenge group has recently obtained premises for SC centre on Merseyside. Donations towards cost of rent, rates, security, etc. gratefully received — send to Socialist Challenge (Box 64), PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

Speaking loosely, one could include such films as *Taxi Driver*, *Rocky*, *Saturday Night Fever*, and the *Deer Hunter* in this category. But those films most concerned with working class politics are *Blue Collar* and *FIST*. In all these films, men alone control the action. Women are not even 'sidekicks' to men, let alone equal participants.

Women are supportive wives,

Socialist Challenge



1. First blast caused by parked hay lorry. 2. Army lorry smashed in first explosion. 3. Gate house wrecked by second bomb. 4. Vehicles in second blast. 5. Castle keep. 6. Where Hudson was murdered.

The death they covered up

By Geoff Bell

IN ALL the hysteria about the deaths of Mountbatten and friends and those of the 18 soldiers killed at Warrenpoint, one victim has been ignored.

His name is Michael Hudson, son of one of the Queen's coach drivers. He died across the river from Warrenpoint. The reason his death has not been explained by the media is that he was shot by the British Army. A friend with him was wounded.

When the British press have mentioned Hudson's death they have shrouded it in mystery. The Sun, 28

August, explained that Hudson was 'killed in crossfire between troops and IRA gunmen'.

The following day the Daily Mail reported that 'a civilian was killed in the crossfire on the Republic side'.

But there never was any 'crossfire' at the Warrenpoint ambush. After a thorough search of the area the Irish Army said there was 'no evidence' of shots being fired at the British.

This was confirmed by local councillor Tommy Elmore. He told the Irish Times he had 'checked with local people and they had told him there had been no sign of IRA men shooting at British troops'. On the

other hand, said Elmore, 'British gunfire had been very intense and many houses had been badly damaged by it.'

Originally the British Army 'claimed responsibility' for Hudson's death. Their first statement after the ambush said he was a 'terrorist'. But this statement was hastily withdrawn when the identity of Hudson was revealed.

What really seems to have happened is that following the ambush British troops started randomly firing across the border. Hudson was caught in the hail of bullets.

It is hardly surprising that the British media has chosen to ignore the death of Hudson. Nor is the attitude they have displayed towards the Loyalists unexpected.

When European MP and Unionist John Taylor called on Loyalists to bomb the South of Ireland there were no outraged editorials in the British press calling for his arrest in the name of 'security'.

When on Sunday the Ulster Freedom Fighters held an armed press conference in Belfast there were no demands that the British Army act against these 'men of violence'.

There are no calls on the government to declare illegal the Ulster Defence Association, despite the common knowledge that the UFF is part of the UDA.

These double standards have been applied because Britain remains where it has always been — in the Loyalist camp.

That camp continues to resist the demands that Britain leaves Ireland and gives the Irish people the right to rule themselves. That denial led to the events of 27 August. It will lead to similar occurrences until the last British soldier leaves Ireland.



Fight the Tories - and boost Socialist Challenge

'DON'T blame me — I didn't vote Tory.' So says the badge and it's selling like hot cakes. It's easy to see why. Our newly elected government has not taken long to bare its teeth. From Prior's proposals to restrict picketing rights to the attacks on abortion, jobs and welfare facilities the Tories have made it clear what they stand for — class war, not class peace.

And despite the politeness of the gentlemen at the TUC, engineering and shipbuilding workers have shown that the British working class is unlikely to take these attacks lying down.

Unlike the popular press, Socialist Challenge takes the side of labour in the struggle against capital. It reports the real facts about the government's policies here in Britain and abroad — especially in countries like Ireland and Zimbabwe, where this government is preparing to crush the Catholic minority and do deals with apartheid. Socialist Challenge explains why these attacks are necessary for capitalism to survive and how the fightback must

waged in Britain and abroad.

This Tory government is out to strangle the working class. It has Parliament, the House of Lords, the law courts, the police and the army on its side. But it also has the television and the press. When a group of workers go on strike, other workers are told they're greedy and stupid and violent day after day in the Sun, the Express, the Mail and even the Mirror [particularly when Labour's in power].

That's why a paper like Socialist Challenge is important. It gives another view — a socialist view. Unlike the timid trade union leaders, we will give a voice to anyone who wants to see action in the fight against the Tories, to anyone who understands the need to bring this government to its knees.

Nor do we simply want Callaghan & Co. back again. They've done enough damage as it is. We want to continue to fight in and outside the Labour Party for a socialist alternative. And we're prepared to debate out that alternative.

But to do all this we need your support. Opposition to this government will come from people who can't get hospital beds, can't afford private abortions, can't send their children to public schools, and can't live on their lousy wages. If you're involved in a fightback write and tell us about it or ask us to come and report it.

If you're a regular reader of Socialist Challenge but don't sell it yet, how about trying to? If you already sell, how about trying to sell more? The more readers, sellers, subscribers the paper has the better it will be. The more people that are prepared to write for it who are involved in their trade unions, Labour parties, socialist and community groups, the more stimulating the paper will be to read. The better it will reflect the discontent ordinary working people have with this Tory government.

We aim to make this winter of discontent a boost for Socialist Challenge. We strongly urge you to do that too.

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