

# Socialist Challenge

Amnesty International report on Northern Ireland confirms

# BRITISH TORTURE



## BRITAIN'S TORTURES:

- Beating in the face, stomach, head, genitals, back.
- Choking until unconscious.
- Cold liquid poured in ears. Plastic bag placed over head. Thrown against walls.
- Organic brain damage.
- Karate chops, bending of wrists, lifting up by the ears.
- Burnt with cigarettes.
- Men's trousers pulled down, women's skirts lifted.
- Teeth knocked out, beaten with chairs.
- Spreadeagled against walls for long period, spreadeagled on floor and jumped on.
- Threats of death. Light switched off and threatened with rape.

'There is consistency between the alleged maltreatment and the signs.' — Amnesty International

End The Torture:  
Demonstrate 9 July, London

**BRICK LANE: EYEWITNESS REPORT P. 2&3**

# EDITORIAL

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## Build the ANL conference

THE FIRST national conference of the Anti Nazi League is scheduled to take place on 8 July in London (for details see p.7). The task of the conference is to discuss ways of further building the campaign and taking it forward. The political direction of the ANL and its structures will be discussed within the overall context of building the campaign. This is as it should be.

The ANL is a good example of a single-issue united front. It has succeeded in involving large numbers of reformists both as sponsors and on the local level. At the same time most of the grassroots activists are more sympathetic to or are members of revolutionary organisations. There are definite similarities between the way the ANL was conceived and launched and the way in which the Communist Party launched its Civil Liberties campaign in the Thirties: the National Council of Civil Liberties was the child of that campaign.

We reject infantile descriptions of the ANL as a 'popular front'. For those of our readers not in the know, a popular front represents a strategic compromise between a working class and a bourgeois party. It is a programmatic alliance. To put the ANL in that category is to live in a dreamworld. We would remind such purists that the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign had members whose political affiliations were to the Liberals and the Tories. There were not many of these, but they supported the VSC demands and participated in its activities!

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### STRUCTURES

We have consistently argued that the structures of the ANL should be made accountable. This is not an abstract notion. It is a way of drawing the greatest number of non-aligned people into regular activities. A National Steering Committee, representing the geographical spread of the movement, should be elected to meet twice a year. This Committee should then elect a Campaign Committee responsible for the day-to-day running of the campaign. At the same time local structures should also be made more accessible so that activists at the base feel that they have some control and are not being manipulated.

This is necessary if it is intended to build the ANL as a long-term campaign. If it is going to be dissolved after the general election, then clearly the question of structures is irrelevant. But no-one believes that the ANL can be wound up so soon. It has an important role to play and there appears to be virtual unanimity that it has to be built as a serious ongoing campaign. It is this reality that makes its political direction and its structures of some practical importance.

In our opinion, the alliance between left social-democrats and revolutionaries against the fascists represents a real step forward at the present time. We are not for disrupting this coalition in any way. But it is necessary for the ANL to devote more attention to anti-racist propaganda, as it is racism which will be the main problem during the elections and after. Clearly if the SWP had totally dissolved itself into the ANL on the level of propaganda we would have been forced to make some extremely sharp criticisms. But their intervention at the ANL Carnival was centred on opposing all immigration controls — a clear indication that independent socialist propaganda is a necessary complement to involvement in the ANL.

### STATEMENT OF AIMS

It is obvious that it is only the far-left which campaigns today against immigration controls. It should carry on doing so. But to make its revolutionary positions the basis for a united front with reformists would clearly be a self-defeating process. Nonetheless the original ANL 'statement of aims' should be expanded to take account of the needs of activists in combatting racism, stressing the vital importance of mass actions to defeat fascism.

The main activity being organised by the ANL in the coming months is Carnivals. This is excellent, but at the same time the different components of the ANL (SKAN and Students Against the Nazis) should be discussing ways of taking initiatives in schools, polytechnics and the campuses. A full discussion is needed on such initiatives at the forthcoming conference.

Some of the experiences of the recent CARF/ARAFCC conference were, to put it mildly, extremely negative. We can sympathise with the desire of the ANL Steering Committee not to allow their conference to become a repeat performance. But it would be tragic if this were done at the expense of an honest and frank discussion on the way forward.

# HOME NEWS

## Spitalfields, East London

# Apartheid housing plan fuels racist rampage

'YOU FUCKING bastards. You're fucking lucky you've been arrested.' The speaker was a white woman in her fifties, whose appearance suggested a resident of Alf Garnett country.

The location: Chicksand Estate, just off Brick Lane in London's East End.

It was 2pm last Sunday — just a week after the disclosure of the Greater London Council's plans to introduce apartheid in the area. GEOFFREY SHERIDAN was there.

The three teenage skin heads sitting nervously in the back of a police car — one with a copy of the National Front's newspaper visible in his pocket — were indeed lucky.

They had fled into the estate chased by a couple of dozen young Asians in the company of white militants, some of whom had been selling Socialist Worker or Socialist Challenge in the Lane shortly before.

But for the (unusually)

prompt arrival of the police, the empty milk bottles and staves gripped by the Asians and anti-racists would no doubt have united with the skin heads.

### THUGS

To the police, two hundred young thugs charging along Brick Lane screaming 'Kill the black bastards' was a matter of coincidence. 'There is nothing to suggest that they were organised', the police stated. 'It seemed to have been purely a rampage — a nasty case of vandalism with racial undertones.'

Overtones was more like it. Although attack and run incidents are a regular occurrence during the Sunday market — with NF paper sellers and speakers in operation — nothing on this scale had been experienced before.

Two hundred youths, many with skinhead hair styles and wearing NF badges, wrecking shop windows, jumping on cars, and assaulting Asians as the mob marched 12 deep along the Lane.

### SMASHED

Abdul Monaf, a grocer, was serving customers when his windows were smashed. He heard one of the thugs shout: 'There's three bastards in there'. Then a hail of stones and bricks came through his shop front.

Monaf was hit on the arm and back and in the mouth, and knocked unconscious. He joined several others who required hospital treatment. The police arrested just 17 of the racists, eventually charging only three.

Two aspects of these events rudely contradict the thoughts

of Jean Tatham, Tory Chairperson of the GLC housing management committee.

Tatham has declared that the Bengalis (or more properly Asians, since Gujaratis are also part of the community) are demanding that blocks of flats in Spitalfields — the area surrounding Brick Lane — be turned over to their exclusive use.

The result, a GLC ghetto plan for Bengali-only and white-only blocks. Already nine estates have been earmarked for exclusive black habitation.

The supposed justification: that the Asians are seeking security from racist attacks, and return to the area when they are re-housed elsewhere.

The reluctant benevolence with which the council has attempted to dress up its apartheid policy slipped out of sight when Tatham was quoted in the Sunday Times as saying:

### PRIORITY

'I will give priority to any of my white tenants who are overcrowded or who want transfers from blocks that are predominantly non-white.'

The image fostered by the Tories and sections of the media is stark enough: Asians seeking a ghetto fortress from implacably hostile whites — an image straight out of the propaganda of Powell and the National Front, and one which very likely stimulated the thugs to go on the rampage on Sunday.

That underlines the first absurdity of the GLC's plan. Far from being a sanctuary from racist attacks, Spitalfields has probably witnessed more than any other part of Britain — attacks which include two murders in the past few months. Mini-cab firms have flourished on journeys of barely a hundred yards after nightfall.

### AGREEMENT

The Tory plan, which received the tacit agreement of Labour councillors, could not have been better conceived to

dig a moat between local Asians and whites. Yet if the skinheads who fled along Chicksand Street on Sunday afternoon were anticipating a white welcome, they were in for a nasty shock.

### PURSUING

It was white by-standers who pointed the pursuing Asians in the direction of the young thugs, and it was middle-aged and elderly white women who most vociferously expressed their hostility to the thugs when they had been arrested.

'If you wanted to be a Nazi, you were born in the wrong country,' one woman shouted through the police car window (her vibrant anti-fascism mingling with national chauvinism).

'I have worked here for 30 years,' said a white shopkeeper after the rampage, 'and find the Bengalis quiet and peaceful people, anxious to improve themselves and their families.'

'You could not wish for better neighbours,' commented a white woman. 'Some of the white people don't like them, but I think it would be silly to separate people. We all have to learn to live together. And things would be better around here when police stop the bullies.'

### FURÖRE

The Tory plan has caused a furore in the Asian community in Spitalfields, with several meetings called to discuss their response. At one meeting last week, attended by a hundred Bengalis, the proposals were unanimously rejected. Dr Mohammed Harris Ali and Nerul Huque were selected as spokespersons to explain the community's position.

Both are adamant that there is no desire whatever for exclusively Bengali estates. The Bengali Housing Action Group, with which the magazine Race Today is associated, and which was originally quoted as supporting this idea, has since denied that it expressed this view.

'The GLC is telling the local white people, some of whom,



AFTER the rampage



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## OUR POLICIES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

THIS IS not the result of racist wreckage, but the GLC's housing policy. Brady Street Dwellings, now squatted, with a virtually all-white tenanted tower block in the background.

like the Jewish people, have been here for years, that we're trying to push them out," says Ali. "But we want a multi-racial community. We want the mix of communities."

"They want to create divisions in the working class," Haque explains. "We have worked together and become



**NURUL HUQUE** accepted. Separate housing is not only impracticable, but dangerous."

The Asians are under no illusion that segregated housing — or the present concentration in Spitalfields, where an estimated 20,000 Asians make up almost half the local population — presents any defence from racist attacks.

Quite the reverse. "Every place is vulnerable to these attacks," says Ali. "It is no solution for everyone to come here. If anything, the Asians are less vulnerable outside, because they are less easy to find."

What the community certainly wants is physical safety, which is what the GLC plan is in effect seeking to exploit. Needless to say, the council has done nothing practical to meet the need for that security.

Its 'dispersal' policy, which the Labour-controlled Tower Hamlets has not resisted, has consisted of dumping Asian families in ones and twos on decrepit estates like Blackwell Buildings in Poplar, where whites at the bottom of the pile respond to racist agitation with persistent harassment.

## SLUMS

Asians who turn down such tempting offers are informed that they have refused re-housing. "If they are placed together with a reasonable number of other Asians, they will not come back to this slum

area," Harris Ali explains.

And that is the crux of the community's position, although views of what constitutes a reasonable number vary. For Ali, it is 15 families together. Nurul Huque talks of a "considerable number" and adds that he sees better police protection and good neighbourliness as the way to achieve a measure of security.

Harris Ali favours organised self-defence within the Asian community: "Patrols can save innocent people, identify who is responsible for attacks, and if necessary physically deal with the situation."

## PATROLS

The patrols which began in Brick Lane a year ago have since ended, through lack of organisation and finance. Ali wants them restarted, and considers that the council should back them.

Harassment by racist neighbours, and initiatives by the Front — such as smashing



Dr. HARRIS ALI

windows and wrecking furniture — is a feature of estates in Spitalfields as well as elsewhere.

A year ago, a Bengali family moved on to the Mountmorris estate were thrown out by the Front. Now they have moved back in, after Asians and anti-racists organised door-to-door discussions with the residents over the past 12 months.

The all-white blocks suggested by Jean Tatham are already a reality in Spitalfields, thanks to the council's discriminatory policies. Asians make up 47 per cent of the population in the area, yet a mere 5 per cent of council tenants; and there are virtually none in the post-war buildings.

While life in Spitalfields offers the Asian their own

**Oppose the GLC plan and the  
Brick Lane rampage!**

**Demonstration called by the Anti Nazi League**

**Saturday, 17 June**

**11am at the Naz cinema, Brick Lane, E1**

shops, workplaces, mosques, social centres, and family and friendship networks, Harris Ali acknowledges that it is also a circle of exploitation and oppression.

Housing is a scandal, with several to a room, and no drainage or baths is a common feature — and not just for those who have been forced to squat. The community is demanding that the council rebuilds and develops local facilities, while Tower Hamlets council welcomes the encroachment of the City office blocks in the west of the area to boost the rates.

## SWEATSHOPS

For Bengalis coming to Britain, the option is farming or tailoring. With the absence of fields in Spitalfields, the main employment is the sweatshops, many owned by Asians. "The workers need to be united," Ali says, "to talk out their problems. We are trying to get them into political parties and unions."

Nurul Huque points to the widespread discrimination in jobs. Even at the Robert Montefiore school which most of the Asian students attend and which — like the local hospital facilities — is facing closure, there are no Asian teachers.

## WOMEN

For the women, among whom there is a high rate of illiteracy, conditions are even worse. Ironically, the physical insecurity has meant that it is men who do the shopping. Women are disinclined to leave their homes.

The indications are that the furious response to the leaking of the GLC's apartheid plan is causing the Tories to back-peddle, and Labour councillors who last week had nothing to say against the plan have now

the Tories to create those.

Labour's Tory policies of attacking working class living standards and its refusal to challenge racist immigration controls provide ammunition enough for the Thatchers of the Tory front bench to stir up the racist rampages.

## GOAD

On Saturday, Enoch Powell attempted to goad the Tories even further. "The inhabitants of the areas where the concentrated proportion (of blacks) is already high — although only half as high as it will be in 20 years time — know exactly what is meant by

"swamped", he announced.

Why, he wanted to know, had the Tories been silent for two months on their proposals about 'controlling strictly any future immigration'.

Among those who have not been silent are the Labour MPs who put their name to the Select Committee report. So long as the Labour Party ignores its policy to end immigration controls, and the Government allows bans to be imposed on those who would actively confront the fascists on the streets, Brick Lane will not be safe from Powell's 'rivers of blood'.



SKINHEADS trapped in Chicksand Estate after the Brick Lane rampage

Photo: NEWS LINE

# The Socialist Challenge Trade Union Conference

**SOCIALIST CHALLENGE** supporters will be meeting in Birmingham on 1 July to map out a strategy for rebuilding the left in the unions. The left in the Engineering Unions has taken a blow with the election of Duffy. The apparent success of Labour's anti-working class measures — however short-lived it may be — has given the right-wing a new authority and confidence in the unions.

At the same time, militants within the Civil Servants' Union and in the Post Office Engineering Union — as articles on this page indicate — are organising to confront the alliance between the Government and trade union leaders.

Pat Hickey, shop steward at Rovers' Solihull and an

| AGENDA      |   |
|-------------|---|
| 10.30-11.00 | Registration  |
| 11.00-11.10 | Opening remarks by Tariq Ali  |
| 11.10- 1.30 | Rebuilding the left in the unions.                                      |
| 1.30- 3.00  | Lunch (including meetings of supporters from different sectors/ unions. |
| 3.00- 4.30  | Fighting racism.  |
| 4.30- 4.45  | Voting  |
| 4.45- 5.00  | Summary.  |

organiser of the Trade Union Conference, explained to Socialist Challenge: 'We want to use the opportunity of the conference to exchange experiences

and to try and aid militants to take up the political problems which they confront daily.

The real weaknesses of Broad Leftism and rank and fileism — as two political currents within the unions — need to be discussed. The conference can't pretend to be an organisational alternative to these groupings, and that's not what it is designed to do.

But we have to see how we can fight within these formations for democratic, broad based left tendencies within the unions that are ready to fight for class struggle policies and to tackle the leadership of the unions.'

If you are a trade unionist who sees the need to debate these issues, register for the conference today!

## Why I'm coming

**DAVE WARD** was a delegate to the Post Office Engineering Union conference last week. Standing on a slate backing the policies of the Broad Left, he came close to being elected onto the executive.

He sees this as part of the advance of the left in the union, and recognises the need for democratic left tendencies in the unions, which would involve the widest possible forces on class struggle policies.

That's why Dave Ward is coming to the Socialist Challenge Trade Union Conference. He explains:

The POEU conference saw a big advance for the left. We forced the executive to step up industrial action for the vital demand of a 35 hour week.

Although the conference accepted a pay offer within Phase 3, we sent the executive straight back to management with a demand for 20 per cent effective from 1 August this year.

We also forced the executive to call a special conference to discuss our policies against the fantastic implications of the PO's modernisation programme.

### CLIQUE

Our union has been dominated by a right-wing clique called 'The Bloc' for almost 24 years. But this year, the left vote increased substantially in the executive elections, and we won an outright majority on our union's delegation to the TUC and Labour Party conferences.

In my opinion this advance was due not only to the increased feeling of militancy among the membership, but to the fact that the Broad Left has started to come out into the open and involve the rank and file.

Part of the reason for this is that under our rules the issuing of slates for elections and canvassing is forbidden. We still haven't got what we vitally need — a national journal of the left.

### RULES

We can start to change this now by drawing up clear policies through a democratic conference of the whole left in the union. This will prepare the way for a big campaign to our rules revision conference which is coming up soon.

We are anxious to learn from the experience of other left formations in the unions. So we invited Viv Lacey and Stewart McLennan of the CPSA civil servants Broad Left to speak at a meeting of our Broad Left at the POEU conference.

The enthusiastic response that these militants received means to me that building a campaigning democratic broad left in our union is on.

**COACHES**

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Socialist Challenge  
Trade Union Conference



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Socialist Education Fund

It also showed that there is definitely a need for an exchange of experiences between militants working in different unions.

This is not to say that there won't be difficulties in building a Broad Left in the POEU. The first problem is the Bloc.

### MACHINE

But there are also some people on the left who are frightened of organising the left in a more systematic way, in case it appears we are merely building a left-wing version of the right wing's election machine.

Socialist Challenge supporters in the union will be fighting with others for a campaigning Broad Left which draws in the membership in the branches. That means a journal, and democratic conferences.

It means that all political tendencies must be represented on the leadership of the Broad Left — we can't fight for one thing in the union and organise our own house differently.

### POLICIES

Above all we need policies that can deal with both the offensive on POEU members and the problems facing the whole working class. So I will be coming to the Socialist Challenge Trade Union Conference to contribute our experience in fighting for these things and listen to the experience of others.



## PO Engineers call to labour movement Let's fight for the 35 hour week

**UNANIMOUSLY**, delegates at the Post Office Engineering Union's conference in Blackpool last week voted to begin the most militant programme of action in their history.

Their aim is the 35-hour week, to beat the threat of massive job loss in the telecommunications industry. **STEVE POTTER** reports from Blackpool.

The decision of the 125,000 strong POEU, together with a claim by Ford workers which puts equal emphasis on pay and a reduction in the working week, means that the TUC Congress in September may be forced to turn pious resolutions into mass action against unemployment.

The Government has already moved to head off the engineers' action. Industry Minister Eric Varley has announced a special review under Lord McCarthy to look into the POEU's seven-year-old claim.

Irrespective of this, the union's action will continue along the lines of a radical programme produced by its 'moderate' executive.

Since last October, new equipment has been banned, and the programme calls for support from other unions to extend the ban to all sectors of the Post Office.

### PROPOSALS

POEU branches have been invited to submit further proposals for action, which include a work to rule, overtime bans, regional and selective stoppages. Potential targets could be the Stock Exchange, airports, and television.

A weekly levy of 25p from each member will help those suffering any hardship or suspension as a result of the action.

There was massive enthusiasm for the programme among delegates at last week's conference. Most had expected the executive to continue its

blocking of a militant campaign. But the pressure proved too much for even the most die-hard right wingers on the leadership.

Dismay at the mood of militancy was only too plainly written on the faces of Post Office management observing the Winter Gardens debate.

### DOCILE

Before the campaign of action started last year, Gerald Kaufman, Minister of State at the Department of Industry, referred to Post Office staff as: 'The most orderly, one might also say docile workforces in the country.'

There was no sign of that docility in Blackpool. The message had clearly got through to every delegate that the new technological revolution in tele-communications meant the gravest threat to their future.

The major feature of that modernisation is the phasing out of the electro-mechanical Strawger exchanges and the introduction of TXE 2 and 4 electro-magnetic switching systems.

This is only the start of the process. Computer technology will be the main feature of a radically new system, known by the code-name 'X'.

For Post Office engineers, this is as sinister as it sounds. Increasingly, changes to a network will be made by instructions from a computer terminal instead of by engineers with soldering irons. Only one worker out of six

presently employed would survive to work on this new system. The PO has already refused to provide guarantees of jobs beyond the next five years, and the Government has appointed Sir William Barlow — the Michael Edwardes of the electrical engineering industry — to head the Post Office.

The employers are gearing themselves up for a fight. Some delegates considered that Barlow will respond to their action by suspending thousands of workers, provoking national strike action by the union.

One of the chief weaknesses of the POEU leadership is its sectarianism towards the 195,000 members of the Union of Post Office Workers. These workers are also threatened by the new technology, because the more information that can be transmitted in printed form through phone lines the less will be the need for it to be transported by mail workers.

### SPLIT

Yet the executive successfully motivated a proposal to split the Post Office into two separate corporations, a policy which one delegate described as gift wrapping the PO for handing off by the Tories. The executive argued that the corporation could not afford the 35-hour week for both engineers and postal workers.

This identification between the interests of the bosses and the workers is further reflected in the neck-deep commitment of the NEC to Bullock-type participation in the industry.

Arthur Simper, a trade union member of the board, who is on the POEU executive, has explained: 'We recognise that we must be directors with the same responsibilities as existing directors. We must carry the can and we must sell our decisions to the member-

ship.' The engineers will also run into the firm opposition of the Labour Government, when union members lobbied John Goding, a POEU-sponsored MP, on their claim, he repeated Callaghan's argument that the 35-hour week would increase the price of exports and cause further unemployment as Britain's competitive position declined on the world market.

### SAVED

Of course, the impact on unemployment would be the opposite. Hundreds of thousands of jobs would be created and saved through the immediate introduction of the shortened working week without loss of pay.

What would be hit is the profits of the employers, who will wage a gigantic struggle against the measure with the Government on their side.

Imposing the 35-hour week needs the mobilisation of the whole labour movement — employed and unemployed — in mass action. This must be the policy keynote at the September TUC Congress, together with the rejection of Phase Four.

But a further step needs to be taken. What is posed in the Post Office, as in the steel industry, is that a 35-hour week can only be the first step towards work-sharing without loss of pay — a measure which will entail a shorter working week than 35 hours if all jobs are to be maintained.

Post Office workers are fighting in the largest and one of the most ruthless employers in the country.

They are in the vanguard of real action against unemployment. They must campaign for, and the labour movement must respond with, the most massive practical support.

## Public sector pay war

# What's behind Basnett's plans

LAST DECEMBER David Basnett, Chairperson of the TUC, wrote an article in the Sunday Times on 'A way out of warfare over pay'.

Two and a half weeks later he showed just what he meant by a way out of warfare when he voted at the General Council against supporting the firemen's strike.

At the time there was little public response by other union leaders to Basnett's proposals. However behind the scenes, union leaders were scurrying to discuss his proposals within weeks of the firemen's defeat.

On 9 February, at what we believe to be the first of several meetings, the leaders of seven public sector union met to discuss Basnett's proposals. They included Drain of NALGO, Christopher of the IRSE, Fisher of NUPE, Jarvis of the NUT, Spanswick of COHSE, and Thomas of the CPSA. RICH PALSER reports on what followed.

Basnett's original proposals were for the setting up of a Public Sector Committee of the TUC. His first proposal on what this should do was to 'establish even more regular contact with Government ministers in the relevant

government departments to discuss economic policy.

For Basnett, as he made clear at the recent G&MWU conference, whilst there will be 'no agreed phase 4', the unions must not abandon 'all general responsibility' in reaching wage agreements.

For him 'an economic contract' between the unions and the government will still act as watchdog for the Government as it did in isolating the firemen.

The meeting of the public sector unions decided to endorse in principle such a TUC Public Sector Committee with broad terms of reference of 'the creation of a united focus for public sector unions for pressure on Government on issues of public expenditure and cash limits'. This would be nothing more than a bureaucratic pressure group aimed at



David BASNETT

bringing any campaign against the cuts under TUC control, and discussing pay policy in the public sector with the government.

Basnett's second proposal was for moves towards the 'synchronisation of principal settlement dates' and a review of negotiating machinery. This proposal has nothing to do with securing united action on pay by public sector unions on wages. It is aimed at creating a united response by the union leaders in negotiating with, and pressurising, the government, and in settling the agreements reached by their members.

### COMMON

According to our sources the other public sector union leaders do not as yet feel able to go along with this, and have left open how the Public Sector Committee should achieve its objectives on pay.

But they have spelt out a common objective on pay in line with Basnett's original proposals. They agreed the Committee should develop a means of ensuring that 'public service pay is not treated more detrimentally or more rigidly than pay in other sectors of the economy'.

In other words that public sector wages increase in proportion to wages in the private sector. Basnett had originally proposed permanent review bodies to establish comparisons between public and private sector pay.

Whatever the agreements and disagreements between the union leaders on how the TUC Public Sector Committee should achieve its objectives, and there seem to be many, one thing is clear. The discussions are aimed at strengthening the public sector unions in

negotiations and discussions with the government, through the TUC, so that wages in the public sector are not allowed to fall behind the private sector.

They are not aimed at forging united action by public and private sector workers against any wages limit, and against the cash limits system. Particularly dangerous is the idea, which appears very tempting to public sector workers who fear being isolated and defeated like the firemen, that wages can be defended by negotiating for increases in line with the private sector.

This is dangerous firstly because it divides workers in the public and private sector, by leaving public sector workers inactively waiting for the private sector to achieve their wage increases. It is a 'restore differentials' strategy, which has aided the government in isolating the Leyland toolmakers.

### ACTION

Secondly, as with the toolroom workers, it does not allow public sector workers to 'go round' any wages limit. The firemen were promised a similar comparison with wages of other workers — only to find that the government is even refusing their promised shorter working week and threatening the renewed use of troops.

It is only by demanding an end to all talks with the government, and appealing for united action on pay with other unions, that a real alliance to defend living standards can be built.

## EIS Conference

# Scottish teachers say 'Open The Files'

IN EDINBURGH last week delegates to the conference of Scotland's largest teaching union, the Educational Institute of Scotland, called for the opening of all secret files held by head teachers and local authorities.

PAULINE TIERNEY, a Socialist Challenge supporter and member of Rank and File Teacher, reports.

The demand to open the files comes as a result of a scandal brought to light by the Times Educational Supplement. It concerns five teachers, all members of Rank and File, who have been threatened with compulsory transfer from their present schools.

Although no explicit reasons for this have been given by Fife regional council, the teachers have been notified that it is because of their political views, and they have been refused access to their personal files. The vote at the EIS conference came despite the attempts of the executive to prevent the issue being discussed.

This victory by Rank and File teachers showed that delegates were no longer prepared to accept the pronounced right-wing direction which the executive has been taking in recent months — not least in its acceptance of Government wage restrictions and public expenditure cuts.

### REDUCTION

With over 18,000 teachers graduating without jobs in Scotland, delegates successfully fought for a reduction in classes to a maximum of 25, and for teachers in their first two years of service to have drastically reduced time tables.

If these resolutions are implemented, many more teaching jobs would be created.

The conference reflected a growing mood among women teachers that their second class position in education should be improved. Delegates voted in favour of an inquiry into sexist literature in schools.

But a motion seeking improved maternity conditions was narrowly lost.

The growth of the National Front and its propaganda to school students was in delegates' minds when they agreed to monitor racist material in schools. However, a motion calling for affiliation to the Anti Nazi League was defeated.

Although the rightward drift within EIS has not yet been halted, it was clear that for the first time since 1974 Rank and File Teacher is emerging as a credible left alternative to policies of the union leader-

ship.

Its ability to group those forces fighting for such an alternative, in an open and democratic manner, will put it in a good position for organising in the future.

# Summer plans for Socialist Challenge

OVER half the militants who have applied for credentials to the Socialist Challenge Trade Union Conference have come from industrial unions. That's what Pat Hickey, one of the conference organisers, told the first meeting of

Socialist Challenge's National Policy Committee last Saturday.

Hickey explained that the conference would be mainly white-collar trade union supporters of the paper. With the militants from industrial and manual unions as well, it will be an important advance for the paper and the policies it has promoted.

The NPC — elected at the recent Socialist Challenge supporters' conference — discussed the direction of the paper in the summer months.

### UNITED

It agreed on the need to prepare now for a general election, and for a campaign to get a united far left intervention. Stephen Marks, from the International Socialist Alliance, proposed a broad public appeal for a united slate.

The meeting discussed the need for improved trade union coverage — including a series of articles to analyse developments in the labour movement — and accepted an International Marxist Group proposal for a debate on internationalism in the months leading to the fortieth anniversary of the Fourth International in September.

The NPC discussed the next steps in the project for a new, united revolutionary organisation. Stephen Marks referred to a resolution he and Richard Kuper will be putting to the ISA conference this weekend which calls for a common statement for a new organis-

ation, outlines policies for joint work, plus meetings to publicise the policies and a campaign for them.

The resolution proposes a conference after the elections 'to draw up a balance sheet of the campaign and either to found a new united organisation, or to set out a time table for moving towards it'. If the ISA conference agrees to this, the NPC will have to discuss how such a campaign can be reflected in Socialist Challenge and in the activity of its supporters' groups.

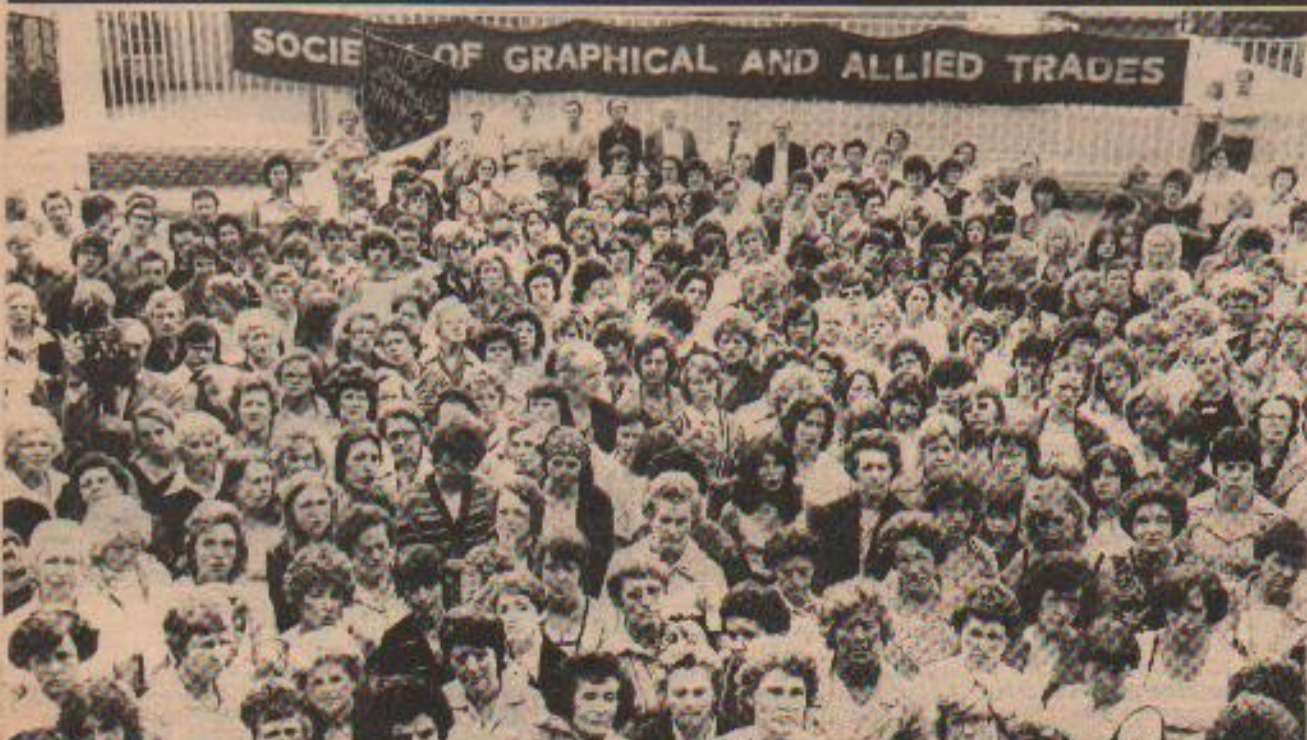
The NPC agreed the need to put more resources into local groups as a precondition for balancing the paper's books. It will take further proposals for speaking tours, fund raising events and other measures to regularise the groups' functioning at its next meeting in July.

It will also discuss the election of the editorial board in light of the ISA conference decisions.

### CORRECTION

But last Saturday's meeting agreed that if the ISA decides to participate fully in the editorial board — as Kuper and Marks propose — two ISA members should attend the meetings.

Correction: Last week's list of NPC members contained two errors. Alan Titchard of the Warrington Socialist Challenge group should have been included in the list; Ros Oliver from Cardiff is a Labour Party member who supports the paper. She is not a member of IMG.



STRIKERS at the Bank of England's printing works in Loughton, Essex, at a mass meeting last week. 520 women and 70 men, all members of the Society of Graphical and Allied Trades, have been on strike for a month to demand a closed shop in predominantly

unionised sections of the plant. Management is evidently keen on unions. Union notices are repeatedly torn down, and just before the strike, three SOGAT women were transferred from a unionised section to be replaced by non-union workers.

Photo: MARK RUSHER (FPL)

# HOMENEWS

## Working Women's Charter

# Needs a new life

THE Working Women's Charter Campaign is holding a national conference in Birmingham this weekend. Socialist Challenge talked to CELIA PUGH, the women's organiser of the International Marxist Group and a member of the Conference's organising committee, about what the meeting aims to achieve.

We haven't heard much about the Charter Campaign recently. Many activists, especially in the women's movement, seem to be asking why they should bother about the campaign.

The campaign has lost momentum since its last conference. Many local groups have turned into socialist feminist or women's groups, and the national secretariat of the campaign has collapsed.

But it's a pity that people seem to have forgotten how they can use the Charter when campaigning for its demands.

Take the recent speeches by Tory and Labour leaders on the need to bolster the family and secure women's place within it.

There's one very important thing we have learned from the women's movement — that real independence and equality for women means giving us a choice and possibility of having concerns outside the family.

That's what I find so important about the Charter itself. Its demands range from women's pay, education opportunities, legal and financial independence, trade union

rights, to maternity leave, fertility control and child benefits.

All these measures are necessary if women are to be more than mothers and wives in our society. With Callaghan joining Mary Whitehouse's chorus to sing praises to the family, I think the Charter can be a useful weapon in confronting this reactionary attack.

### FEMINIST ISSUES

The six demands of the women's movement raise many of these issues. Do you think there is also a need for a campaign around the demands of the Charter?

The two are not counterposed. We should remember that many unions are familiar with the Charter, and may not even know what the WLM's demands are.

The Charter has been adopted by 14 unions at national level, as well as by hundreds of other organisations — union branches, trades councils, political groups and women's groups.

We should use this fact to take feminist issues to working



Celia PUGH

class women who have had little contact with the WLM — or who may even distrust it. Of course, paper support for the Charter is useless.

But we can use a union's commitment to its demands as a lever — trying to force the union leaderships to implement their policies.

If the campaign is not very active, is it a good lever?

Yes. Take last year's

conference of the health workers' union COHSE. It adopted the Charter, but rejected support for a campaign against the Benyon anti-abortion Bill.

Union members then discussed how they could use the conference's commitment to the Charter's demand for free abortion to challenge their union's reluctance to fight on the issue.

In many unions and trades councils, support for the Charter has been used to win aid for struggles on nurseries, abortion and equal pay. Now that the Charter has quite a bit of paper support, we need to go further than placing demands on conference agendas.

The TUC Women's Charter has not been taken up actively by any unions, let alone by the TUC itself. The Working Women's Charter has a different history.

It has supporters who are active in both the women's movement, and in most national unions. A united campaign is vital so that activists can pool their resources and experiences, and take joint initiatives back into their unions and women's groups.

### CRISIS

If there is such a potential, why is the campaign in crisis?

We have to put things into perspective. The Charter campaign isn't alone in facing difficulties and defeats.

Resolutions adopted by Charter conferences have been very clear in their opposition to Government policies. But any actions taken have met the heavy fist of the trade union leadership. It's a difficult and frustrating battle.

The campaign has specific problems, too. Much has happened since it was launched in 1974.

The women's movement has organised impressive campaigns, such as the abortion campaign. And women have also begun to organise through rank and file women's groups, action conferences, and official union structures.

The Charter can't 'compete'

with these kinds of structures. It would now be absurd to insist on the geographical and workplace Charter groups that we originally envisaged.

What changes would you see in the campaign?

We need to take the campaign into the structures where women are active.

To move away from a campaign organised around groups, to one based on a network of supporters of the Charter newspaper — whether they are in the community, in unions or in women's groups — who are united in their commitment to fight for the Charter.

Can the paper play this role?

When it was appearing regularly, *Women's Fight* sold about two thousand with little effort. It needs a new life. I hope the conference will decide to have a national meeting in the autumn to relaunch the paper so that it can meet the real needs of women.

What else will the conference be discussing?

We hope Charter supporters will go back to their organisations and fight for support for women involved in struggles, such as the Essex bank note strikers, or the campaign against the closure of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital.

The November trade union conference called by NAC gives us a real chance to take this issue further into the labour movement.

The success of the Charter newspaper and the activities of supporters of the Charter itself can be measured by one yardstick — whether they help to strengthen the independent actions taken by women throughout the labour movement.

# Women's Voice rally A frustrating day

OVER A thousand women gathered in Sheffield last weekend for the 'Women's Voice' Rally, ERICA BARNETT reports.

The atmosphere was one of expectation. The first impression was that women members of the Socialist Workers' Party and Women's Voice supporters

were discovering the solidarity and sisterhood that comes from 1000 women gathered together. And what a welcome start that was!

# International Campaign on Abortion

WOMEN from all over the world met in London last weekend to launch the International Campaign for Abortion Rights. SUE WATKINS, national organiser of the National Abortion Campaign, reports.

They came from the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Colombia and the USA.

The Campaign called for an international day of action next spring to demand 'A Woman's Right to Contraception and Abortion, No Forced Sterilisation'.

The need to coordinate struggles for women's control over fertility at an international level became very clear; Colombian women described Agency for International Development plans for the sterilisation of 100 million women and an American woman said that half the women of childbearing age in

Puerto Rico have already been sterilised.

In Spain, by contrast, families with over 20 children are given prizes, and 80 per cent of women in Spanish jails are there for having abortions.

The Spanish women at the meeting pointed out the importance of the ideological struggle for a woman's choice. A large proportion of the half a million women who have abortions every year in Spain think that they themselves are against abortion and should be punished.

The next meeting in Brussels on 23 September will discuss in more detail the international day of action and an international statement, as well as hearing reports from international campaigns and groups.

In the meantime the British national Abortion Campaign has undertaken to coordinate the campaign.

Everyone seemed set for a fascinating and fundamental discussion of the Rally's theme, 'For Women's Liberation and Socialism'. But many of us were to leave feeling sad at a good opportunity lost.

The introductory session was called 'Up Against the Wall'. Judith Condon in the chair asked for speakers to talk about their personal and practical experiences in struggle, and to avoid 'abstract debates'. This led to a number of interesting reports from women involved in struggles, including Mel Bartley of the EGA, Beryl Reilly of the bank print workers, and Anita Richards from the Oxford Nursery Campaign.

After the opening session there were 20 workshops, in two sessions of one hour each.

Those on women's health, nurseries, school students and love and the family were particularly useful. In the most heavily subscribed workshop, on love and the family, women brought forward diverse personal experiences of marriage, children, relationships with other women and raised the whole question of independence, including all the problems that it raised.

### UNUSUAL

It was very much like consciousness-raising discussions in the women's movement. So many women were facing up to the oppression that they experience in their everyday lives, and developing their first feminist ideas. Many participants had dealt with their situations and problems in unusual and thought-provoking ways.

The workshop on women's liberation and socialism, introduced by Anna Paczuska, concentrated on Eastern Europe. Again interesting ideas were raised. However, the absence of any systematic political approach to Eastern Europe was revealed when women left thinking we were better off in Britain than in Eastern Europe.

What weakened the workshops was the structure and conception of the conference. A generalised discussion, which could have begun to draw all this experience together into a framework and strategy, didn't take place. The debate in the Women's Voice workshop at the Birmingham Women's Liberation Conference raised the relationship of Women's Voice to the autonomous women's movement and its campaigns. This important debate was not developed in Sheffield.

The final plenary session was entitled 'How to get over the Wall' but neither a framework nor a strategy — both suggested by the title — were developed.

In fact the whole thing was summed up by Maggie Renn, SWP women's organiser and editor of Women's Voice. In her concluding speech, she talked about all the wrongs women suffer and why we need socialism.

Her conclusion was that 'Through the SWP we can bring together the battle for socialism and for liberation'. In other words, the way to really fight back is to build Women's Voice groups, she argued. And that was all the answer we got.

Many women had gone to the Rally hoping to thrash out

important questions, particularly about the independent women's liberation movement; what is meant by 'independent', and how does the movement relate to the organised revolutionary left? These debates were unfortunately avoided.

There was a good attendance, and women in Sheffield

were enthusiastic. But after the Rally, when Women's Voice supporters and others suggested that another conference was needed to have these discussions, they were pointing to a real weakness of Saturday's meeting. Socialist Challenge supporters, who shared their frustration, couldn't agree more.



Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

# Armed police raid Swansea militants

THE mystery of a Fiat 124 car found at the bottom of a 40-50 foot cliff at Pennard in the Gower nature reserve near Swansea caused armed police to raid three houses in Swansea last week and to put new fears into the local Chilean community.

The Chileans have been tangled up with a supposed bomb conspiracy, despite the fact that not one shred of evidence was found, very little was removed and no charges were made.

### RAIDS

The raids hit the houses of Socialist Challenge and Big Flame supporters, as well as the home of Hilary Creek, jailed in the 1971 'Angry Brigade' trial and now on parole.

The Special Branch must be rather stupid if they think that

Hilary Creek would bring all this upon herself by pushing a car over a cliff near to her parents' house on the Gower.

Neither can the police seriously suspect IMG militants whose political activity is openly conducted in the local labour movement and whose press constantly warns against the politics of despair of the Red Brigades, Baader-Meinhof, and the Angry Brigade.

Swansea socialists are convinced that the people raided are not connected with the alleged conspiracy in London for which two people are now facing trial.

Iris Miller and Ronan Bennett were arrested on 24 May under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and have been charged with conspiracy to cause explosions.

But there have been no explosions to charge them with — only 'chemicals and wiring' found in their Bayswater flat.

Both have been arrested before under the PTA, but released without charges.

### DOUBT

Militants in Swansea believe that the overtly political character of last week's raids casts doubt on the charges against Miller and Bennett.

A defence group for the two has been formed to 'expose the blanket "conspiracy" laws where police need no evidence to frame up anyone they want and to expose the activities of the Special Branch as Britain's Political Police.'

The defence group can be contacted at Box 123, 182 Upper Street, London N1.

# Socialist Unity contests Scottish by-election

FOR the first time Socialist Unity hopes to contest an election in Scotland. This year's regional elections showed the failure of the left in Scotland to present an alternative to the policies of both the Labour Party and the SNP. PAT KANE reports.

The by-election in the Crosshill/Prospect Hill seat of Strathclyde regional council gives Socialist Unity an opening to contest its first seat. Socialist Unity will stand Chris Bambery, a trainee teacher and local militant. The Communist Party has also announced a candidate.

Socialist Unity aims to campaign for an out-patient abortion clinic in Glasgow, and to help to establish an Anti Nazi League in the Crosshill area. It will also be campaigning for an end to army recruitment in schools, and the withdrawal of troops from Ireland.

From this by-election Socialist Unity hopes to prepare the way for a successful campaign in the general election.

Contact Socialist Unity at the campaign headquarters in the constituency at 209 Calder Street, Govan Hill, Glasgow or through Scottish Socialist

Books, 64 Queen St, Tel. 221-7481.

Socialist Unity filmshow, Tues 20 June, 'Home Soldier Home' a film about Britain's role in Ireland, 7.30 St Bridges Primary School, Glenmore Ave, Tory Glen, Glasgow, Adm. 30p.



Photo: ANDREW WARD (Report)

### Print / Media workers to tackle NF

The campaign to stop the media treating the National Front as a legitimate political party received a powerful boost last week, reports JOHN THACKARA.

At a meeting of nearly a hundred in Fleet Street, a Print and Media Workers Against the Nazis (PMWAN) campaign was launched to unite journalists, printers and broadcasters against the possibility of an NF 'party political broadcast' at the General Election.

The presence of Bill Keys (SOGAT), Gerry Fitzpatrick

(NATSOPA), Dennis Macshane (NUJ), and George Jerrom (NGA) on the platform indicates the limited but unprecedented cooperation developing among media unions on this aspect of editorial content.

The NGA and NUJ have already agreed a code of practice on race reporting which includes provision for the withdrawal of labour and other print unions could now follow suit.

With the unions affiliated to the ANL (or considering it) now including the TV unions ACTT and ABS, the basis exists for a powerful education and propaganda offensive against such programmes as the infamous Ludicrous Kennedy 'Tonight' interview with

Webster.

The Campaign Against Racism in the Media and PMWAN have already agreed to cooperate in setting up meetings to discuss the media, publicising the NUJ/NGA agreement, and campaigning against the NF getting TV time.

The results of CARM's monitoring of the BBC and ITV, now getting underway, should provide extra information and ammunition. PMWAN is planning a delegate conference for mid to late summer to work out a plan of action, so local groups requiring speakers or information should contact PMWAN at the ANL address, or through CARM at PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

### ANL Conference

THE Anti Nazi League is holding a national conference in Rochester Hall, London on Saturday 8 July. All ANL groups, anti fascist committees and labour movement bodies should send delegates. Credentials are available from the Anti Nazi League, PO Box 151, London WC2H 7JQ.

### ANL Northern Carnival

PLANS are well underway for a Northern Anti-Nazi League Carnival in Manchester on 15 July. Since the Carnival in London, Anti Nazi League groups have sprung up

throughout the north of England. All of them are aiming to make the Manchester carnival a successful event.

Already there are predictions that over 10,000 people will go to hear the Buzznicks, Steel Pulse and other bands in Alexandra Park.

Sponsors include the North West TUC and the Miners' Union, which will be bringing lodge bands. The day will start with a march from Strangeways Prison at 12 noon.

Students Against the Nazis

STUDENTS Against the Nazis have called a day of action on

Wednesday 28 June. That day supporters will be leafletting schools and colleges. 100,000 leaflets will be distributed nationally.

Oldham SKAN

AFTER the suspension of two school students for wearing ANL badges, Oldham School Kids Against the Nazis are planning a series of modest activities. Eight schools in the area are involved, with at least 60 school students taking part in the activity.

Planned so far are a Rock Against Racism social, a meeting at which Tariq Ali will speak, and a mass petitioning of schools to demand the right to wear ANL badges.

## WHAT'S LEFT

Rates: 5p per word, Display £2 per column inch. Deadline: 3pm Saturday before publication. Payment in advance.

ISLINGTON SWP/Women's Voice presents the film 'Take it like a man, Meam' at North London Poly, Holloway Rd, London N7 on Mon 18 June, 8pm. Entrance 75p (50p unemployed).

LEVELLER/PEACE NEWS benefit, Fri 16 June, Colonel B's Ball, Ladbroke House, Highbury Grove from 8pm, Dead Fingers Talk, John Cooper-Clark and Blood Donor. Tickets £1.50, donations £1, from 155A Drummond St, London N1.

MALE COMRADE seeks accommodation preferably in mixed house, north or west London. Ring 0703 553861.

RAIL AGAINST the Nazis, founding meeting Mon 19 June, at The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road (nearest tube, Warren St), London W1. Speakers include Mike Callour, Anti Nazi League and Terje Robbant, chairperson of Wood Green ASLEF. 8pm, all railway workers welcome.

TEESIDE Socialist Centre planning discussion meeting 8pm Mon 19 June in the Cleveland Hotel, Linthorpe Rd, Middlesbrough.

NON UNIONISED Asian 'David' confronting mighty multinational 'Gonath' seeks advice/help on Employment Protection Act. If you can help please contact Socialist Challenge, P.O. Box 50, London N1.

PICKET GARNERS: Main pickets every day, noon to 3pm and 5.30 to 11 pm at 399 Oxford St, London W1 (opp. Selfridges), 243 Oxford St, Oxford Circus, 40-41 Haymarket, 56 Whitcombe St (Leicester Sq.), Mass picket every Saturday at noon, 399 Oxford St. Donations urgently needed as strike pay is only £8. All donations to Garners Strike Fund, c/o TGWU, Rm 84, 12-13 Henrietta St, London WC2. 01-240 1068.

HELP Socialist Challenge by giving your jumble to the Hackney Supporters Group. If you want your jumble collected, ring Debbie on 358-8180 or bring it into the paper's offices within the next fortnight.

BROADSIDE Mobile Workers Theatre require a versatile actor and actress. Both full time. Long term commitment. Write 58 Holborn House, Holborn Pl., London WC1. Phone 01-450 6952/01-730 5396.

FOUR SOCIALISTS looking for a roomed flat/house in North or East London. Phone Mick 01-358 8301.

CLEVELAND Anti Fascist Committee's Rock Against Racism with live groups and reggae disco — Thurs 26 June at the Rock Garden, Newport Rd, Middlesbrough. Bar till 2am. Tickets 75p from Teesside Poly SU, Southfield Rd.

HULL Rock Against Racism presents Misty and local band Probe at the Stevedore and Dockers Club, Postern Gate, on Fri 20 June at 8pm. Tickets £1 at door or ring Hull 25925.

COMRADE SEEKS accommodation urgently, would prefer NW London in flat share. Please phone Ashok 263 2231.

COMMITTEE to Defend Czechoslovak Socialist presents a special screening of 'Hopeless in Twenty Years', a documentary compilation on the years 1948-68 in Czechoslovakia. Sun 18 June, 3pm at the Scala Cinema, Tottenham St, London W1. Tickets £1.50 or in advance from the Other Bookshop at £1.20.

WALES WOMEN'S Liberation and Socialism Conference, Sat 24 June at 10am, Students Union Building, Emylly St, Newport. Registration £1 (non wage 50p). Bring food. Speakers include: Jenny Lynn, Dr Bery Beaumont and Pam Reynolds. Workshops, creche, evening social for Women's Aid.

SPARTICIST public meeting. The Leninist position on immigration and the national question. Trotskyism against liberal gull. 7.30pm, Fri 23 June, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

MANCHESTER Rock Against Racism presents The Cimarrons and China Street, in the Manchester Poly Students Union Cavendish House, All Saints, Manchester on Sat 24 June at 8pm. Advance tickets 75p or £1 on the door.

WOMAN, 30, seeks woman to share house and garden, circa Clapham Junction, from July-December. 280pm inc. 01-228 9688 evenings.

MOZAMBIQUE, ANGOLA and Guinea-Bissau: Problems of the Transition to Socialism. One day conference, Sat 24 June, 10am to 5.30pm, Africa Centre, 38 King St, London WC2. Sessions introduced by: Ruth First, Michael Wellers, J. Snegppard. Plus film on Mozambique: 'The People Organised'. Registration £1 from Mozambique, Angola and Guinea Information Centre, 34 Percy St, London W1.

FOCALIN — brand's only serious magazine. 30p for specimen copy to 134 Derby Lodge, Wicklow St, London WC1.

FEMINISTS and Socialists who want to build a militant campaign against all aspects of commercial advertising meet on Mon 19 June at 7pm at 8, Endsleigh St, London WC1. All welcome.

GAY SOCIALISTS seek accommodation for 2, 3 or 4 in Central London. Ring Roland 01-359 5043.

WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER Campaign national conference, Manchester Poly 17 and 18 June. Further info from: Pat Cross, Flat 2, 4B Spring Bank, Hull. Tel: Hull 443 243.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION badges, not on white available from J. Wilson, SC Badges, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Cost: 15p each plus 7p p.p. or 11p each for orders of 10 or more.

GARNERS STRIKE. Conference to discuss how to win it. Thursday 22 June, at 7.30pm, Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1. Supported by the SE Region TUC, Region 1 TGWU, Greater London Trades Council, and the strike committee.

THE OTHER BOOKSHOP needs a full time wage clerk to take over responsibility for its accounting. Wages are £40 per week plus travel. Applicants must be prepared to work their share of Saturdays. Positive discrimination applied. Further details from Sara, Sheila or Alan on 01-228 0571.

SOCIALIST FEMINIST seeks own room in shared flat/house in Camden/Kingscross area. Ring Merge 01-402 9273 (day).

ORGANISING against racism in education. A day conference to be held at Abraham Moss Centre, Crescent Rd, Manchester B on Sat 24 June, 10am to 5pm. Sponsored by ANL and NUSS. Decals CARE, c/o JB Harold St, Prestwich, Manchester 25.

ROCK AGAINST RACISM benefit for Loughborough School Defence, Adam and the Ants, Crisis, the Enchanters. Carnival video, 17 June 5pm, South Bank Poly, Rensley St, Elephant and Castle, London, E1 2S.

'FIGHT RACISM' badges and T-shirts (badges black on white, shirts black on red) available for all anti-racists. Show where you stand during the long hot summer. Order yours now. Badges, 15p each plus 7p p.p. or 11p each for orders of ten or more. T-shirts, £2 each plus 15p p.p. From J. Wilson, SC Badges, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST Alliance Conference, 17-18 June, Africa Centre, King St, London WC2. All ex-IS members welcome and others sympathetic with the aim of setting up a new unified revolutionary organisation. Creche facilities. Credentials and documents (£1.50, or documents only at 50p) from R. Kuper, 45 Falkland Road, London NW5.

PORTSMOUTH Anti Nazi League demonstration. March leaves Victoria Park in city centre at 10.30am to Lambport area for a mass leafletting of the estate, 24 June. All anti-racist/anti-fascist groups in South should come.

NEWHAM Anti Nazi League together with Redbridge Campaign against Fascism and Racism are organising a demonstration for 24 June. Punk, reggae and an Asian rock group. Social in the evening in East Ham Town Hall. March from Valentine's Park in Ilford to Flatish Park in East Ham.

**Socialist Challenge**  
wants a  
**Designer**

A comrade is needed immediately to work full-time on 'Socialist Challenge' and to do additional design work for it.

Litho. Previous experience in any design or printing process is desirable, but training will be given.

Full details of conditions will be given on application.

Apply with full curriculum vitae to the Manager, F1 Litho Ltd., 318/9 Upper Street, London N1. (Positive discrimination will be applied).

**SOWETO COMMEMORATION MARCH**

Friday, 16 June, 5.30

Malet Street, London WC1

March to rally at Central Hall, Westminster

Called by African Students' Union

Backed by Anti Apartheid Movement

## IRELAND

Last Thursday something quite extraordinary happened. Television technicians working on the Thames Television programme This Week went on strike in protest against political censorship.

They refused to put out a substitute comedy programme after the Independent Broadcasting

Authority had banned the transmission of a This Week programme on the Amnesty International report detailing the treatment of suspects in Castlereagh interrogation centre near Belfast.

This action of the technicians was the first time any such political protest has been held by television

# IRELAND'S TORTURE A

## Amnesty Report

# From brain damage to rape threats

AMNESTY International is a conservative organisation. It does not enjoy taking 'democratic' countries such as Britain to task for their behaviour. It took a long time before it decided to investigate the persistent reports of torture by Britain in the North of Ireland, and even then limited its 'mission', and did not, for instance, investigate allegations against the British Army.

Despite all this, the report unreservedly confirms the various 'allegations' it investigated. In the process it all but accuses Northern Ireland Secretary Roy Mason of covering up the 'maltreatment'; says the police authorities in the North of Ireland lied consistently; and accuses the Northern Ireland judicial overseers of disregarding even their own illiberal 'rules' concerning the treatment of suspects.

The Amnesty mission looked at 78 cases, a random sample and only a very small proportion of those who have said they were beaten up, tortured or mentally assaulted by the RUC. In half of these cases medical evidence was available and, says Amnesty, 'this report places great emphasis on medical evidence and in particular the reports of doctors who examined the complainants'. Amnesty adds that 'in no case (was there) reason to disbelieve any of the medical reports'.

## EVIDENCE

The report details a number of the cases examined for which there was corroborative medical evidence. For example:

**Case No 62: Male, arrested 1977 and brought to Castlereagh Holding Centre and detained for three days before being released without charges.**

**Maltreatment alleged:** beating in face, stomach and head. Bending of wrists, bending of arm against his back, being thrown against a wall, choking to the extent that he became unconscious, hair pulling.

**Signs:** haematoma involving the pinna of the left ear, traumatic perforation of the left eardrum with blood staining in the auditory canal.

Several bruises over the left sternomastoid muscle, left shoulder tip, right forehead, left eyelid surrounding area, right trapezoid muscle, right shoulder, on the back, right elbow, left elbow, teeth rib in the left side, ninth rib at eternal end, upper abdomen and below left knee.

**Conclusion:** There is consistency between the alleged maltreatment and the signs.

The effect this type of 'questioning' had on the individuals is illustrated in case No. 74, in which the man arrested — held for three days in Castlereagh and then released — stated he had received the following treatment:

...physically exhausting procedures. General beating. Fingers pressed under ears. Was spun round and round, head banged against a wall. Threats to kill him.

One of the interrogators rode on his back as if he was a horse and forced him to count holes in the wall. One of the interrogators forced him to eat mucus from his (the interrogator's) nose.

**Symptoms:** patient stated that while he was in Castlereagh he was mentally unbalanced to the extent that he tried to bang himself.

After examining the medical evidence in this case Amnesty conclude: 'There is consistency between the alleged maltreatment and the signs'. And this phrase, or a similar one, is repeated often in the vast majority of the case studies.

It is the conclusion to the study of Case No. 71 in which the following allegations are supported: threats, beating, hairpulling, direct trauma to the head, head banged against a wall. Kicking. Thrown to the floor, one of the interrogators jumped on his back. Choking. Penis and testicles twisted. Beaten in kidney area and on his back with a chair.

## BRAIN DAMAGE

Five cases 'were examined in detail by the mission's medical delegates'. The subject in one of these, Case No. 3, alleged 'psychologically exhausting procedure, threats, beatings, humiliation, attempts to suffocate him'. The medical evidence, says Amnesty, 'strongly corroborates the case that maltreatment took place'.

In this case the consequence of the treatment was especially serious, with the victim 'suffering from some degree of organic brain damage'.

This terrifying phrase also occurs in Case No. 27, in which during

questioning, the victim tried to commit suicide. He ended up in a mental hospital.

Women prisoners were also subject to psychological terror. The woman in Case No. 12 alleged: 'Threat of rape. Threats that her child would be taken away from her. Threats that her husband would be told she was unfaithful to him. Threats of electroshock... Degrading treatment (her skirt was lifted), intimidating procedures... the light in the interrogation room was turned off and she was threatened with rape'.

The small number of 'self-inflicted' injuries were caused, say Amnesty out of desperation — in the hope that the victim would be transferred to hospital. Doctors Amnesty spoke to confirm that 'the simulation of injuries for the purpose of defaming the police was very rare'.

The Amnesty mission also severely criticise the North of Ireland

authorities for blatantly disregarding judges rules in that the 'denial of access to solicitors to persons arrested... is standard practice'. Similarly attacked is the system by which the police handle complaints against them. These, says Amnesty, are 'deficient in practice'.

While Amnesty chose their words carefully, while their recommendations are somewhat mild — although even those, including the demand for a public enquiry, have been rejected by Mason — the truth is not hard to discover.

Britain is torturing its political opponents in the North of Ireland on a persistent and regular basis. It is disregarding even its own limited legal safeguards and its policy makers have lied to all and sundry about what has been going on.

Such is Britain in Ireland in 1978, as it has been for many years previous and as it will be for many years to come. Until, quite simply, they get out.

## Enquiry farce

# Who's for a Widgery?

SOME SAY Britain has only contributed starvation, death and torture to Ireland. This is not true. British presence there has also extended the English language.

The present troubles have produced a new phrase heard in the North of Ireland: namely, to do a 'widgery'.

The term means to 'whitewash', and is derived from the public inquiry Lord Chief Justice Widgery held into the events of Bloody Sunday, January 1972. That was when 14 civilians on an anti-internment march in Derry were gunned down by British paratroopers.

Widgery's enquiry produced remarkable conclusions. He agreed that all 13 (the fourteenth was later to die in hospital) had been killed by British Army bullets.

Former Army officer Widgery could only suggest that at the most three of the 13 had ever been in contact with a firearm, and that even then the evidence was far from conclusive.

And yet, said the Lord Chief Justice, 'There is no reason to suppose that the soldiers would have opened fire if they had not been fired upon first'. (Not one soldier received any injury.) 'Soldiers who identified gunmen fired upon them in accordance with standing orders... There was no general breakdown in discipline,' he concluded.

One of the more truthful journalists who has covered Northern Ireland, *The Guardian's* Simon Winchester, was an eye witness to the events. Indeed he was shot at himself by the Army on the day.

He disagreed violently with Widgery and was later to comment (not in *The Guardian* of course), 'Bloody Sunday, thanks to the propaganda merchants

and a half dozen lazy (journalist) hacks, was now a closed book with the Irish fully to blame'.

Widgery was following a well-trodden path. The previous year another British Government enquiry headed by Edmund Compton looked into Army and police brutality against the early victims of internment.

For its 'evidence' the committee relied upon 143 witnesses, all but three from Army, police or prison staff. Not surprisingly, the conclusion was that there was no brutality.

The findings were to be totally discredited by the European Court of Human Rights, which despite many failings did say that Britain was guilty of 'ill-treatment', 'inhuman and degrading' punishment, and of violating the Charter of Human Rights. This, for the same practices Compton had vindicated.

There is already evidence that the latest enquiry will be following this tradition. It will not look into case histories, but only 'police procedure'. And according to the Northern Ireland office it is unlikely that the enquiry will even consider whether this 'procedure' is adhered to in practice.

Most predictable of all the enquiry, to be held in secret, will be chaired by a British judge. But even this latest cover-up has already over-done Widgery. Derek Wilford of Bloody Sunday was awarded an OBE after the Widgery enquiry, but last week a certain Michael McAtamney was awarded an OBE. McAtamney is Assistant Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

# How to censor This

BILLY BLEASE became a baronage in What, you may ask has the of This Week? Quite a bit

Bleas was formally the Northern Ireland Officer of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) and has been a leading official in Northern Irish trade unions for more years than many trade unionists in the North of Ireland care to remember.

His governorship of trade unionism in Ireland has born predictable fruits. Unemployment at three or four times the 'British average', wage rates at less than two-thirds the British average, strike rates the lowest in the UK, and Catholic unemployment two and a half times that of Protestants.

No-one could accuse Billy Bleas of having the imagination, the ability, or the power to be responsible for all this. But he had done little to change it or to fight against it. During his leadership trade unionism in Northern Ireland has avoided taking any political position on the national question or the activities of the British Army.

Such is the record of Billy Bleas with one omission. Bleas is also a director of the Independent Broadcasting Authority, and the only member of that body who lives in the North of Ireland. He is looked to by the IBA as the 'Irish expert'. And he was present last week when the IBA directors banned the This Week programme on the Amnesty Report.

Another director is Tom Carbury, a former Lt Colonel in the 'Public Relations' directorate of the British Army in India; there is Christophe Bland who as a former director in the Government's Northern Ireland Finance Corporation and a former officer in the British Army's Ulster regiment, the Royal Inniskilling Dragoons, has an impressive Loyalist background.

## CABAL

There are the usual bunch of Lord and Ladies and the whole cabal headed by Lady Plowden, former director of Trust Houses Forte whose union-busting activities have become something of a legend in right wing circles.

This bunch of establishment figure was one ingredient in the late example of censorship on Ireland, but it would be wrong to think that it was the only one, or even the most important. Both the IBA and the Northern Ireland Office told *Socialist Challenge* there was no direct contact



workers. Their action was later supported by the technicians' union and by the National Union of Journalists whose executive bitterly attacked the censorship and has called for the resignation of the IBA's chairperson, Lady Plowden.

But upon reading the Amnesty International

Report, the action of the technicians is not surprising. It is a truly damning document confirming that the police in the North of Ireland have indulged in all manner of physical and mental assaults on political suspects.

GEOFF BELL reports on the Amnesty findings and on the censorship of This Week.

# AND BRITAIN'S SILENCE

## They Censored This Week

... a Lord last week. He  
... the Birthday Honours list.  
... to do with the censorship

... between them over the Amnesty  
... programme. They are probably telling  
... the truth.

As far as the Northern Ireland  
Office is concerned the need has long  
gone for such direct interference. This  
Week has been a favourite target for  
the British Government and Tory  
opposition for some time. Its reporter  
Peter Taylor presented three pro-  
grammes towards the end of last year:  
on the Queen's visit, on conditions in  
Long Kesh and on Ian Paisley. Only  
the one on Paisley escaped virulent  
criticism by the Government or  
censorship and delay by the IBA.

But the programme which angered  
the authorities most was on the  
treatment of suspects in Castlereagh  
screened last October, in which a  
number of doctors, lawyers and  
suspects detailed the type of treatment  
which Amnesty has now enlarged on.  
The reaction of the authorities to the  
programme was immediate.

### 'VERY ANGRY'

Northern Ireland Secretary Roy  
Mason sent an official letter of protest  
to the IBA, and a statement from the  
Northern Ireland Office added that he  
was 'very angry indeed'. In parliament  
Mason elaborated: 'I do not think  
reporters or television producers  
should operate in this fashion. Thames  
Television are members of the IBA  
who have a code of conduct... I am  
sorry they (the IBA) allowed the  
programme to go out.'

The RUC joined the attack, saying  
'We all feel that Thames Television is  
guilty of extreme responsibility, which  
has put the lives of policemen here at  
additional risk. Our Chief Constable  
will not let them get away with it.'  
Other public condemnations followed  
from Airey Neave and John  
Biggs-Davison of the Tories, and in the  
next couple of weeks the pressure on  
Thames Television and the IBA was  
increased.

On 2 November, Kenneth Newman,  
the Chief Constable of the RUC, had a  
special meeting with Lady Plowden on  
the Thames programme and five days  
later Airey Neave had a similar  
meeting. These meetings, taken with  
the official letter of protest from  
Mason, were clearly designed to  
impress on the bosses of the IBA that  
such a programme should not be

screened again.

The official excuse for not screening  
the programme — that the Amnesty  
Report had not been officially  
published — is a cover up of stunning  
ineptitude. The report was due to go  
out after Mason had made a public  
statement on the Report and by this  
statement the whole affair became  
public knowledge.

Neither can the IBA excuse that the  
programme will be shown at some  
future time be any justification.  
According to the IBA the programme  
will not be shown this week when the  
report does 'officially' come out, and  
any future programme can only have a  
minimal impact as the Amnesty Report  
will be then old news.

But despite the fumbling excuses of  
the IBA, the television authorities  
were only instruments. They were  
instruments of the Labour Govern-  
ment and Roy Mason in particular,

who for over 18 months have been  
threatening television authorities with  
all sorts of reprisals if they dare to  
question the British propaganda  
machine which operates in the North  
of Ireland.

For example, last January, Mason  
threatened the BBC with the  
imposition of 'D-notices', whereby the  
Government would impose blackouts  
on newspaper, radio and TV coverage  
of certain events in the North of  
Ireland. At the same meeting,  
Mason reminded the BBC governors  
that he was one of the people who  
decided whether the Corporation  
should get a new charter and what its  
future income should be.

Those less knowledgeable of Irish  
affairs might, until last week, have  
wondered 'What have the government  
got to hide?'. Last week the Amnesty  
Report gave the answer, but answers  
are only effective if they can be heard.

## Censorship— the record

GEORGE GALE, a columnist  
on The Spectator, published a  
bloodcurdling IRA oath on 15  
May which he claimed came  
from an army source. When it  
was pointed out that the oath  
was entirely bogus — it had, in  
fact, been faked in 1920 to  
justify the activities of the  
Black and Tans! — Gale  
'regretted' its publication the  
following week.

LIZ CURTIS reviews how  
the media has been manipu-  
lated thanks to the efforts of  
the Government and the Army  
in the last decade.

The Army began to manipulate the  
media for propaganda purposes as  
soon as soldiers arrived on the streets  
of the North of Ireland in 1969.  
Brigadier — now General — Frank  
Kitson became commander of the  
Belfast area early on in the war.

In his book *Low Intensity  
Operations*, published in 1971, Kitson  
spelled out the strategy for winning the  
propaganda battle: 'The Government  
must promote its own cause and  
undermine that of the enemy by  
disseminating its view of the situation,  
and this involves a carefully planned  
and coordinated campaign of what for  
want of a better word must regrettably  
be called psychological operations.'

By February 1976 the Army had  
more than 40 press officers in the  
North, with a back-up staff of over a  
hundred. In addition, the RUC had 12  
full-time press officers, and the  
Government had 20 Belfast-based  
public relations officers.

The effectiveness of their efforts was  
shown when Ian Smith needed an  
overseer for his propaganda battle  
against Zimbabwe liberation forces,  
Smith hired former Major Richard  
Stannard. From 1973 to 1975, Stannard  
had served in Belfast and, according to  
the 5 February, 1977 issue of *The  
Guardian*, 'masterminded a highly

successful propaganda campaign as  
the high level press contact for "off  
the record briefings"... mixing closely  
with journalists based in Belfast.'

The pressure exerted by the Army  
and the Government on the media has  
had its effect. When the BBC recently  
censored the seven-part series 'The  
Irish Way' — resulting in producer  
Colin Thomas' courageous resignation  
— one of the scenes they cut was,  
significantly, a shot of a mother  
placing flowers on her son's grave. The  
grave was inscribed 'Murdered by  
British Soldiers'.

Among the films that have never  
been shown are Kenneth Griffith's  
film 'Hang Out Your Brightest  
Colours' about Michael Collins and  
the 1920 War of Independence made  
for ITV, and a recent play 'Willie'  
made for the BBC. 'Willie' is the true  
story of a boy now in Long Kesh,  
convicted in the North's no-jury courts  
for a crime he never committed.

In the aftermath of internment in  
late 1971, 200 leading journalists came  
together in London to protest against  
the censorship of disclosures about  
torture and at the banning of  
programmes about the IRA. One of  
those at the meeting was Jonathan  
Dimbleby — another was John  
O'Callaghan of *The Guardian*, later to  
resign over the paper's editorial policy  
on Ireland.

A long public silence on the question  
during the following years was only  
broken in 1976 by Jonathan Dimbleby  
and the subsequent formation of the  
Campaign for Free Speech on Ireland.  
This year the issue has really opened  
up. Colin Thomas and Thames TV  
producer David Elstein have resigned.  
A resolution condemning censorship  
on Ireland was passed by a two-thirds  
majority at the NUJ's annual  
conference. And now last week  
Thames TV technicians took an  
anti-censorship strike action.

Media workers are finally breaking  
free of their reticence and inhibitions,  
and are at last prepared publicly to  
stand up for the right to report Ireland  
as they see it.

## Censored journalist 'It stinks'

PETER TAYLOR is the  
journalist on This Week who  
was responsible for the  
banned programme. He told  
Socialist Challenge his re-  
action.

It was a disgraceful act of  
political censorship. This is  
the third programme on  
Ireland which I have had  
banned or interfered with, but  
this is the most serious.

We did the original investigations  
into Castlereagh last October and  
received a huge amount of political  
flak for it. But what Amnesty has  
said not only vindicated our  
programme, it went beyond it.

The Northern Ireland Office got  
wind of our programme, and then  
issued a 12-page statement. This was  
before the programme had gone out  
and before the Amnesty Report was  
officially published.

To issue a statement in this context  
is unprecedented. The Independent  
Broadcasting Authority then banned  
the programme without even seeing  
it. Thames Television protested  
strongly. They have stood by us  
throughout.

The whole thing stinks and it's a  
matter of huge public concern.  
People just have to wake up to what  
is happening, both in regard to  
censorship and to Castlereagh.

Ireland is the most sensitive of the  
lot. But people have the right to  
know what's going on in Ireland.  
There's been a cover-up about the  
whole situation.

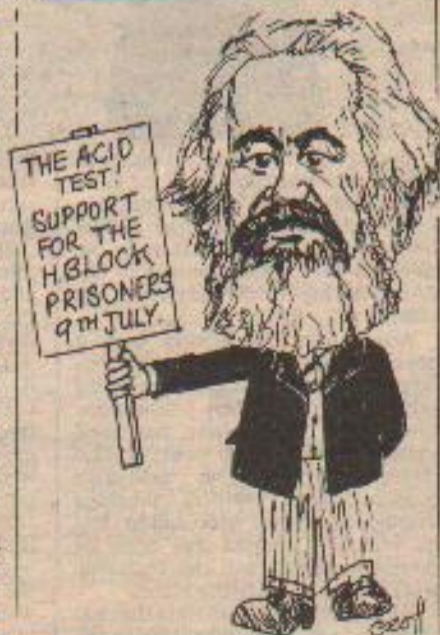
When we try to shine a chink of  
light we are immediately put under  
enormous political pressure and  
although the Amnesty Report  
vindicated our original position, the  
banning of the programme shows the  
pressure is effective.

The action of the technicians was  
courageous. That was the best news  
of the week.

## What you can do

The Amnesty Report has already  
been attacked by the British  
Government and there is no sign that  
the techniques used at Castlereagh and  
elsewhere will be stopped.

This is not because Roy Mason is a



sadist, but because through beating and  
torturing suspects this is the only way  
Britain can get the 'confessions'  
necessary to 'prove' they are winning  
the Irish War.

Fortunately there are already plans  
well under way to hold the type of  
public enquiry Amnesty has been  
refused by Mason. This is the  
International Tribunal on Britain's  
Presence in Ireland which is backed by  
leading trade union organisations in  
Ireland and Britain, as well as a host of  
international figures. Socialist Chal-  
lenge asks all its readers to build this  
Tribunal, which can be contacted c/o  
182 Upper Street, London N1.

More immediately on 9 July a  
demonstration takes place in London  
on the treatment of Irish political  
prisoners and on their right to political  
status.

The Amnesty Report gives all  
Socialist Challenge groups and all  
readers of the newspaper a great  
opportunity to build this demonstra-  
tion into the largest protest against  
British policy in Ireland which this  
country has seen for a number of years.

Build for the demonstration, order  
coaches, pass motions of support in  
trade union, Labour Party and student  
union branches.

End the Silence!  
End the Torture!  
Britain out of Ireland Now!

IF WE were to draw up a list of the major world 'hot spots' over the past year, one of its most striking features would be the number of African countries on it. South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zaire, Angola, the Horn — all have vied with that traditional 'crisis zone', the Middle East, for the attention of imperialist policy makers and diplomacy.

Little wonder that, in the wake of the recent struggle in the Shaba Province of Zaire, the coordination of imperialist and African counter-revolutionary efforts has become a cardinal international issue.

Is it just a coincidence that all these things should be going on in the African continent at the present time? Certainly, every African country has its individual features and problems (and more so the various regions of the continent).

But even in Europe, the particular conditions of each country do not override the fact that they are part of a world capitalist system: the penny off the income tax, the French votes, and the bullet in Moro's brain all reflect the crisis of capitalism.

**IMPERIALISM**

How much truer this is in Africa, where social forces and problems agitating the continent stem from a single, central source: a century of colonial domination followed by continuing exploitation at the hands of imperialism.

The most graphic example of this is the fact that the boundaries of almost every African country south of the Sahara (except Ethiopia) reflect not the history of the people of that country, but the economic interests of and diplomatic manoeuvres of the imperialist powers 100 years ago. Africa bears the stamp of colonialism and imperialism in a far deeper and more evident way than even the rest of the 'third world'. This is the starting point for understanding the present crises in Africa and the imperialist preoccupation with them.

When imperialism began its expansion it encountered people in various states of social development. Some were organised on a scale sufficiently limited that the 'civilisers' could do their work in the simplest way — through physical or cultural extermination. Elsewhere they encountered important states and civilisations. Here they needed — and generally were able — to make deals with the local ruling classes, who brought their subjects into the imperialist system in exchange for a share of the loot. Africa fell between these two extremes.

**DEVELOPMENT**

The African people were 'permitted' to remain in possession of their lands (once imperialism had creamed off all that it needed in the way of human power for its plantations in America, and grabbed some choice plots for its 'kith and kin' in the South and East), but were brought wholly and directly under the tutelage of the imperialists' colonial administration.

The long period of colonial rule brought many changes to African society, as it was remoulded in the interests of imperialism. Communal villagers became producers of cash crops for the tables and factories of Europe. Cities grew up along railway lines or at river mouths, with a new class of proletarians.

These changes opened up Africa to new ideas and aspirations, such as nationalism and socialism, and, as in the rest of the colonial world, eventually forced imperialism to cede independence.

In many ways, the development of Africa simplified this task. The colonial domination of African society had meant that there was no class within that society capable of leading a serious struggle against imperialism.

Apart from a small number of wealthy farmers or urban traders (many of whom, encouraged by imperialism, came from outside the continent, such as the Asians of East Africa), there was no local ruling class. And the cramped and deformed nature of economic development under colonialism meant that the working class was still very tiny.

But if there was no one to oppose imperialism's manoeuvres, there was also no one to stand between imperialism and its local agents and the pent-up frustration of the

# Africa: the colonial legacy

**TWO YEARS** after Soweto, Africa is in the headlines again. **ROY ALEXANDER** examines why this continent should be so explosive and explains how the struggles in southern Africa have to be seen in the context of the continent as a whole.



exploited African masses. If the quiet independence ceremonies of the Gold Coast and Nigeria represented one side of African reality, the violent revolts of the Kenyan masses in the 50's and the popular revolts in the Congo during the 60's expressed the other.

Africa has thus always been a continent in which imperialism has bought freedom of manoeuvre at the price of permanent insecurity. Imperialism in its time has used various weapons to counter this threat, ranging from deliberate economic and political sabotage through to military intervention. But its principal weapon has been its economic power, and the economic weakness of the African states.

Almost every African state that has taken an 'anti-imperialist' turn to the left has sooner or later to come to grips with the fact that imperialism controls the markets for its goods, the

technical knowledge needed to extract them, and the capital required to carry out effective production and distribution.

If this has not led to a voluntary retreat (as in Guinea) then economic and social chaos has ensued, in which the well-timed military coup has closed the matter (as in Ghana)...

The reason for this failure of the African nationalist politicians lies in the fact that they have all been drawn from the tiny middle class that developed under colonialism, and have reflected the interests of this group.

Born and bred out of colonialism, they have been unable to challenge it — as reflected in their inability to alter the imperialist-drawn boundaries, which fragment African states and minimise their economic and political strength.

This has meant that independence has not produced any major changes

in the development of African economies and societies. Today, as 100 years ago, Africa remains predominantly a producer of raw materials — agricultural and mineral — for American and European industry.

Imperialist capital and know-how (and technical personnel) continue to dominate African production. Investments continue to flow into 'infrastructure' — ports, roads, railways — that expedite the plundering of African natural wealth, leaving only small sums to develop other sectors of the economy.

The profits earned in Africa continue to flow into the coffers of London, Paris, New York, Brussels. Indeed the trade of most African countries continues to be dominated by whichever power previously served as their colonial master.

As a result Africa remains deeply impoverished. Food production has

stagnated, actually falling behind population growth, so that many African countries are in the absurd position of growing cash crops for export in order to pay for the imports of food!

**AID**

Western 'aid' — most of it devoted to meeting imperialist needs — includes a large loan element, which has pushed many African countries so deeply into debt that they have to devote the majority of their tax revenues to paying off the interest.

In the decade after independence many of these problems were hidden by the growth of the world economy. The rapidly rising demand for African raw materials boosted economic growth and state revenues, so that even with imperialist super-profits and self-enrichment of the local elite, the masses received some benefits.

But with the end of the imperialist boom trouble started to set in as the demand for African products declines. Relief was provided for the oil-producers by the shift in world oil prices and the others received a short breathing space from the 'commodities boom' of 1973/74.

But for the past 4 years the scene has been steadily growing more gloomy, as export incomes fall while the cost of imports from the imperialist countries continue to climb. Even one of the most powerful and best-placed African states — oil-producing Nigeria — is in trouble. Its current five-year economic plan, based on rising oil revenues, has been badly upset as the latter have started to fall. As a result the Government has been forced to tighten the people's belts for them, producing mass student demonstrations over such measures as the tripling of university fees. Plans for switching from military to civilian rule and sewing up the precarious unity of the country cannot but suffer.

**DECLINE**

In many ways the present situation resembles that of the era in which the independence struggles broke out — an important period of economic growth followed by a sharp economic contraction.

But many things have changed since the 1950s. Socially, the forces that could produce an alternative to imperialism and its allies — the urban working class and unemployed, the rural proletariat, the mine and transport workers — are far stronger.

Economically, imperialism is no longer a system in growth, capable of providing even limited material benefits or a convincing model for solving the problems of the masses. (The insistent pounding of imperialist creditors upon African doors are a constant reminder of that).

Politically, the old nationalist ideas of working within the imperialist framework are thoroughly discredited. The new generation of African militants emerging across the continent is looking for more radical solutions, and is aware of the need to base their efforts upon the exploited masses.

Moreover, imperialism's capacity to intervene militarily, given the presence of new anti-imperialist powers (such as Cuba), its defeat in Vietnam, and the continuing disillusionment with imperialist policies in its own heartland, is severely limited.

**EXPLOSIVE**

Africa will be one of the most important centres of world revolution in the coming decade. Struggles and crises will break out across the continent, but the solution lies in breaking the imperialist-imposed horizon and developing a continent-wide struggle.

In no part of the world are events in different countries so interdependent as in Africa. The key to the whole situation lies in the southern region, where the most powerful working class forces, the greatest economic power, and the most strategic resources are concentrated.

It is in this southern area that British imperialism continues to hold the front-line, thus placing a special responsibility on the left in this country to fight for the defence of the African revolution.

Chile

# Round one to hunger strikers

HUNDREDS of Chilean hunger strikers around the world have won the first round of their struggle to discover the whereabouts of their missing relatives. The junta has told Chilean bishops that it would look into the cases.

In a press statement on 8 June the hunger strikers in Santiago announced that they were suspending their strike for 30 days on the strength of this.

Other hunger strikers around the world, including those in Britain, have followed suit.

But the statement also stressed that they will not accept anything less than a full inquiry into the 'disappeared' prisoners which would place the blame where it belongs.

The statement named Manuel Contreras, head of the secret police, as one of those responsible and indicated that

the disappearances had been sanctioned by the Government. The hunger strikers also thanked the Church and the international solidarity movement for their support.

Solidarity in Britain has gained an important victory with Foreign Secretary David Owen's support for a Parliamentary delegation to investigate human rights in Chile. Speaking to a meeting of

the Parliamentary Labour Party, he also agreed to meet a deputation of the hunger strikers.

The hunger strikers in London, weak from their two week strike, nevertheless emphasised the need to continue with the maximum international solidarity at a moment when the opposition inside Chile was gaining strength.



## Videla releases Blanco

THE international campaign for the release of Peruvian Trotskyist Hugo Blanco ended in success when he boarded a plane for Sweden earlier this week.

According to an Argentinian Government communique, political asylum has been granted to 11 of the 12 Peruvian oppositionists deported to Argentina with Blanco. A thirteenth, Ricardo Diaz Chavez, a miners' union lawyer, has asked to go to Mexico.

Even after Blanco had been granted a special passport by the Swedish government, the 13 were still held in the infantry barracks at San Salvador de Jujuy. 'Jodged under the protection of the government' was the official description.

The release was testimony to the strength of the international campaign rather than the generosity of the Argentinian junta.

The 13 were deported from Peru after last month's general strike against price rises in essential goods.

In Britain the campaign for the restoration of democratic rights in Peru won't let up, despite Blanco's release.

It looks unlikely that the elections in Peru, now postponed to 18 June, will go ahead. Even if they do they cannot possibly be democratic, with opposition candidates imprisoned or in exile.

Copies of the appeal for restoration of democratic rights are still available from Socialist Challenge. Latest signatories include Yorkshire miners' leader Arthur Scargill and the following MPs: Dennis Skinner, Joan Maynard, Stan Newens, Martin Flannery, Frank Allaun and Neil Kinnock.

## Argentine CP 'Critical' support for junta

THE following interview with Roberto Vallarino, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Argentina, is reprinted from the French magazine 'Le Nouvel Observateur'. It was carried out by Bernard-Henri Lévy.

How do you see the relationship of forces inside the army?

Very briefly, I would say that on the one hand there are Pinochet-type elements, ultra-reactionary; on the other, progressive elements whose

tendency is democratic. That is the basic reality which no analysis can avoid.

Who are these progressive elements?

If you want names, I would say, Videla, Massera, Agosti, Suarez Mason, for example.

In other words, the entire leading apparatus of the junta? In one sense, yes. But I would specify that it's a question of progressive elements and tendencies.

That means, all the same, that the trend of the present government of Argentina is progressive?

It's a government where there exist progressive elements who are, in fact, currently

dominant. Therefore you support the junta?

Not exactly. Let us say rather: critical support.

The equation that Videla equals fascism is therefore an error in your opinion?

A classically adventurist error, which can only set the Argentinian people back.

Back in relation to what?

In relation to the recent gains of the workers and democratic movement.

Such as?

Well, for example, the fact that Argentina today accepts trading relations with all countries whatever their ideological regime. But there are also, don't forget, Pinochet-type elements who are opposed to that.

Progressive nature therefore means trading with the USSR?

In the circumstances, it means conducting relations with states on the basis of the principles of peaceful coexistence.

And the violations of human rights, that doesn't worry you?

Yes, of course it does. Seventy-one of our own militants have disappeared.

Out of a total of at least fifteen thousand, according to Amnesty International.

That's an exaggerated figure which doesn't correspond to reality. Besides, on this question of human rights, one must also be careful to draw a dividing line. There is a right-wing approach to this question and a left-wing approach.

When the USSR opposes any condemnation of Argentina at the United Nations, that is a left-wing approach?

Of course, for to do otherwise would lead to the isolation of our people. And a reinforcement of the Pinochet clique.

Tell me who makes up this Pinochet clique?

There follows a list of totally obscure names....

## French footballer says: 'Boycott campaign has been useful'

THE French team in the World Cup have distinguished themselves by a high standard of play. But they have also distinguished themselves in another respect: their willingness to listen to opponents of the Videla regime and to commit themselves to try to raise the question of the repression while in Argentina.

The boycott campaign must take much of the credit for this, as the Trotskyist daily Rouge discovered when it spoke to one of France's leading players,

**DOMINIQUE ROCHETEAU** just before he left for Argentina.

You are aware of the situation inside Argentina?

Yes, I think I know about it. It is clear that human rights aren't respected there. We have received a dossier on the subject from Argentinian exiles.

In March you said to us that a boycott of the World Cup wasn't a solution. You haven't changed your mind?

I have always thought that the



French team in training

objective of a boycott wouldn't achieve its aim. But what I'm sure of is that it's been useful, that's undeniable.

The boycott campaign has been able to enlighten people on the situation in Argentina. The players have been made aware of it. Many of them didn't know about the situation. Now they know where it is they're going. It's perhaps a good opportunity for the players to demonstrate their support for the French citizens who have been imprisoned in Argentina...

We'll see when we get there. I don't know if I would feel able to do so on my own. With several players, one could try to do something.

It would be necessary for the

players of several teams to agree to act together. But we certainly won't have much possibility for contact.

An action undertaken by several players would be more effective than an individual action. You understand: everything depends on the reaction of the players.

All eyes will be focussed on them. It will be difficult, but I hope that we will be able to act. Don't you think, finally, that you are going to take part in a competition which the regime intends to use to refurbish its image?

Yes, that's certain (a long sigh...). I'm afraid that the World Cup will benefit the Argentinian government. That's how it seems to me.

## French Government catches chill

THE defeat of the left in the French elections encouraged the Government and bosses to step up their attacks on the working class, writes **MARTIN METEYARD**.

A series of measures have raised charges for public services such as transport and electricity by 10 to 20 per cent. Controls on industrial prices have been loosened and will be removed altogether by 15 October.

Controls have only been maintained on one item: wages. With inflation likely to reach 12 per cent or more by the end of 1978, and a 20 per cent leap in unemployment also predicted, a big cut in living standards is clearly on the cards.

The leaders of the major union federations, the CGT and the CFDT, have preferred to chat to President Giscard d'Estaing rather than mount a challenge to these attacks. But workers on the shop floor can't afford to shrug them off so

lightly. Last week they started to fight back, occupying two plants of the state-owned Renault motor corporation.

The Renault workers, the majority of whom are immigrants, are demanding a big rise in the minimum wage to keep pace with inflation, a 35-hour week, and longer holidays.

Realising that these demands could catch on elsewhere, the Government sent the police in last week to evict the strikers at the Flins plant. They went quietly enough — but then came back on Thursday to reoccupy the plant!

Latest news is that strikers at the other occupied plant at Cléon have also been evicted by police.

The saying goes that 'when Renault sneezes, France catches a cold'. The question is whether the leaders of the union federations and the Communist and Socialist parties are prepared to resort to the only cure: a campaign to kick out the Giscard-Barre government through extra-parliamentary struggle.

May 68 - inside the French Communist Party

# Garaudy spills the beans

ROGER GARAUDY was a member of the Political Bureau of the French Communist Party (PCF) in May 1968. However, he came out against the PCF's line on the May events, the mildness of its criticism of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, and its stance on a growing number of other questions. In April 1970 he was expelled from the party.

On the tenth anniversary of May 1968, the French Trotskyist daily Rouge asked Garaudy to recall the debate in the PCF at that time. The interview, published in its 25 May issue, caused an immediate storm.

Next day's issue of L'Humanité, the PCF daily, carried a prominent reply by the Political Bureau which accused Garaudy of inventing differences inside the leadership. The party had been completely united then, and still was except for a handful of intellectuals. As for the charge that the PCF had any control

over what happened in the CGT union federation — what a slander!

The fact that the party leadership was forced to respond immediately to an article in a small Trotskyist newspaper shows the depth of its internal crisis. What really enraged the PCF Political Bureau was that Garaudy added fresh fuel to the disputes which have flared since the March election defeat.

Can the leadership really claim that the party is united when the number of signatories on an opposition petition has shot from 300 to over 1,200 in two weeks? When a growing number of militants are asking why it was that the supposedly 'unanimous' Central Committee meeting after the elections had to be extended for an extra day, and why no report of the proceedings has been made available to party members?

Equally, was it really just coincidence that the CGT came out

so strongly in support of the PCF's position after the split in the Union of the Left last September? And why was CGT leader Georges Seguy able to call publicly for a vote for the PCF in the elections while local CGT leaders who are members of the Socialist Party had to keep their mouths shut?

Moreover, in attempting to dismiss these questions, the Political Bureau statement completely ignored Garaudy's basic charge; that the PCF leadership tried to call off the May 1968 general strike as quickly as possible against the resistance of the workers.

How could a Communist Party turn against its own supporters like this? We think all CP members have an interest in searching out the answers. We therefore reprint the bulk of the interview with Garaudy below as an important contribution to this debate.

Interview with Roger Garaudy, member of the Political Bureau of the French Communist Party in 1968.

Translated from Rouge, 25 May 1978.

**Did the existence and strength of the May movement greatly surprise the French Communist Party (PCF)?**

Nobody foresaw these events. Therefore one cannot reproach the party for not having done so. However, its reaction was negative from the outset.

That was not accidental, even if certain events afterwards justified it. The party had not (and still hasn't) made a serious analysis of what I call, to paraphrase Gramsci, the 'new historic bloc'.

It did not analyse what would be the particular links between the working class and social layers who have the same historic goal. I am thinking of white collar workers, technicians, and engineers. Aren't

students the future white collar workers?

This, in my opinion, is the basic mistake. The party still retained the old idea of the anti-monopoly alliance, the all-inclusive coalition, a sort of 'block of antis'.

Its animosity towards the student movement developed after Pierre Juquin had been pushed out of a window at Nanterre and Roland Leroy had been expelled from the faculty of sciences at the Halle-aux-Vins (both were Central Committee members — eds).

When I was invited to speak at the Sorbonne the Political Bureau sent me a strict order, even when I was at the gates of the faculty, not to speak. Having discussed with a few comrades, who taught in the faculty, I spoke all the same...

This was the first row. The reason I could speak at the Sorbonne was not accidental. In *Démocratie Nouvelle*, the magazine edited by Jacques Duclos, I had just published an article contradicting the official line on the student movement.

Its central theses analysed the common denominator between the

demands of the workers and the aspirations of the students. It could be summarised as a wish to participate, and what were later called qualitative demands. This article enraged the Political Bureau to such an extent that the magazine was suppressed....

**Your disagreements with the majority of the Political Bureau gave rise to numerous arguments. At the time the press even said that you, along with Roland Leroy and Louis Aragon (a prominent PCF intellectual — eds), protested against the policy adopted towards the intellectuals.**

I am not a historian. But there is one thing I recall perfectly, and that is Leroy's hostility to my proposals...

At the Central Committee meeting in Nanterre in July, when I attacked Marchais for his editorial on 3 May (which denounced 'the activities of pseudo-revolutionary grouplets' and the 'German Cohn-Bendit' — eds), Leroy was the first to reply. He was very violent.

Several others then intervened to repeat, like him, that I was capitulating to our opponents' propaganda against Marchais. As for Aragon, he said nothing in particular.

I should also cite what happened when we met the intellectuals on 1 and 3 June. They sent a letter to the Central Committee on 26 May. A delegation, of which I was part, met with them.

In the course of this meeting, in a very undisciplined way, I sided with the intellectuals. There again, Leroy and Juquin unanimously disowned me. The liberalism of Leroy is a pure myth...

The revolt of the intellectuals hardly reached the base of the party, who were tied up in the strike. But this revolt sufficiently bothered the leadership for this meeting to take place. My attitude therefore appeared as completely scandalous.

This was my first important break. The second came over Czechoslovakia and brought a public censure.

The third was my criticism of the *Champigny Manifesto* (adopted by the PCF Central Committee in December 1968 — eds).

There, I was completely alone. Marchais came up with this definition which I find admirable: 'You are a right-wing leftist'.

**What discussions occurred on the general strike?**

What happened with the CGT leaders was much the same as with the



Gilbert Hecet (Unified Socialist Party), Roger Garaudy, and Alain Krivine (Rev)

teachers. The union leaders most directly linked to the masses sensed that the movement was very, very strong.

It is necessary to be exact. The Political Bureau, and notably Marchais, said to Seguy (the CP leader of the CGT — eds): 'You must find a way out. The strike must be stopped.'

Seguy pointed out that it could be done, that the CGT had sufficient authority, but that they would lose some militants. His relation to the workers gave him a clearer understanding of the importance of the events.

And in fact some militants were lost. In absolute terms the CGT won some new members, but these were generally from the most backward layers of the working class, such as the textile industry in the North.

Against that, the CGT lost out in the traditional vanguard layers, especially in the Paris engineering industry. This is very significant.

The worst paid workers could perhaps find some positive aspects in the outcome of 1968, but the professional workers, for example, realised that we had not gone far enough.

**Wasn't Marchais's position discussed on the Political Bureau?**

We met every day and the meetings were often very heated. Those who were in direct contact with the movement never ceased explaining that it was not possible to get people to go back like that — under a pretext.

On this point the two Georges (Marchais and Seguy — eds) opposed each other. I remember that even a year later Marchais let slip at a

meeting: 'Perhaps we stopped the strikes too soon.'

Seguy got very angry: 'Well, it was you that demanded it... It was a decision of the Political Bureau. You shouldn't blame the leadership of the CGT.'

And he was right. For Marchais, to continue the strike would have been an adventure.

According to him, the students were isolated, and the working class, if it went on, would be equally isolated. It therefore had to stop as soon as possible....

The basic difference between Marchais and Seguy is that Seguy knows what a mass movement is. Even I, an intellectual, led strikes among the miners in 1947-48; we have all been denounced many times for that.

We have been in contact with the masses, Marchais never. It is the first time that this sort of militant has led the party. Since he has taken things in hand he has very strongly personalised authority. He lays down the line.

**1968 was also the year of the Warsaw Pact's intervention against the Prague Spring. A very important date for the party?**

At the time I was in the USSR...

As I was a member of the Political Bureau, a member of the Central Committee of the CPSU came to give me a communiqué announcing the Warsaw Pact intervention, 'called for by the majority' of the Czechoslovak people...

I demanded to return at once. In Moscow I met Jeannette Verniersch who had telephoned Gaston Plissonnier (both members of the



Discussion at Fête Rouge



olutionary Communist League) at the Fête Rouge.

## Lessons of the French debate Bursting out of the straitjacket

THE PRESENT debate in the French Communist Party (PCF) is not just important because of the questions of political strategy it raises. It has also begun to break down many long-standing restrictions and taboos on the scope of the debate inside the left.

One sign of this is the refusal of the dissident currents inside the PCF to be silenced. If the leadership will not circulate their criticisms inside the party — by means of an internal discussion bulletin, for instance — or give them space in the party press, then they have shown that they will go outside party channels if need be to make sure that this debate is aired.

At the same time, there has been a conscious effort not to exclude any on the left who want to contribute to this debate. The first moves in this direction could already be seen during the elections. Then there were joint meetings before the second round in some constituencies at which representatives of the far left were invited to speak as well as members of the Communist and Socialist parties.



JEAN ELLENSTEIN (CP)

time when the labour movement is at a crossroads — when the trade union leaders who were supposed to guarantee a 'left policy' have all lined up behind the right-wing policies of the Labour Government without even the suspicion of a struggle.

Our policy for the next phase of the class struggle can be summed up in one phrase: 'Unity in action, freedom in criticism'. We fight to unite in struggle all those who are prepared to take action against the Government's policies on such questions as living standards, unemployment, racism, women's rights, and Irish self-determination.

That means that we are not prepared to ditch present struggles in favour of some mythical 'unity' with the Labour and trade union bureaucrats — what even Aneurin Bevan once described as 'the unity of the graveyard'.

### CRITICISM

But at the same time, we say that such unity in action can only be built if every current in the workers' movement has the right to put forward and argue for its policies without exclusion and intimidation.

That, in our opinion, is one of the lessons of Portugal, and we are glad that some members of the Communist Party are now prepared to criticise the ultra-sectarianism of the Portuguese CP as well as most sections of the far left towards the Socialist Party (see articles by Paul Fauvet and Ted Slade in recent issues of *Marxism Today*).

Along with this, however, there must also be a freedom of criticism inside each workers' organisation and party. Trotskyists have been almost alone in fighting for this principle over the last fifty years. Critics inside the social-democratic and Communist parties have been silenced or expelled with monotonous regularity.

### RESPONSE

But the opening up of the debate inside the French Communist Party — and the fact that the PCF leadership has been forced to rule out the weapon of expulsions — shows that today the situation is changing.

Socialists should never overlook the vital questions of political strategy at stake, of course. What is fundamentally involved is whether socialism will be achieved through class struggle against the capitalist class or class collaboration with a section of it. On this there must be no confusion.

But to begin to establish a framework inside which these questions can be freely debated out would be a massive step forward. The working class can only come up with the right answers in its struggles if it knows what all the questions are.

Today it is happening in France. Will it, can it happen in Britain tomorrow? That is the problem which faces the left in general, and the Communist Party in particular. The response should not be a negative one.

### POSSIBILITIES

This process has gone further in the last three months. A remarkable example of the possibilities was shown at a two-day festival organised by the French Trotskyist daily, *Rouge*, at the end of last month.

Among speakers from the PCF at this event were historian Jean Ellenstein, Jean Rony (an editor of the party weekly, *France Nouvelle*), Jacques Frémontier (who recently resigned as editor of the party's industrial weekly), Christine Buch-Glucksman (a well-known party intellectual) and Nicole-Edith Thevenin (one of the signatories of a new document criticising the party's policy on women).

Other speakers included Gilles Martinet, a national secretary of the Socialist Party. Loud applause greeted his statement that no current in the workers' movement should be excluded from its debates: 'I have always thought that anti-Trotskyism is the anti-semitism of the workers movement'.

### FRANK

Also present at what the PCF leadership described as a 'factional undertaking' was an official delegation from the Spanish Communist Party, as well as independents like Roger Garaudy, Soviet dissident Leonid Plyushch, and members of most of the far left groups in France.

As a result, the weekend of the *Rouge* festival gave rise to some of the most open and frank discussion among different currents on the left for many years. We think the same possibilities also exist in Britain today.

In our own small way, we have tried to assist this process. We have, for instance, printed contributions by Communist Party members among others in *Socialist Challenge* and in *International*, the theoretical journal of the International Marxist Group.

### RANGE

A similar range of speakers will be invited to the Marxist Symposium which is being organised by *International* in September. In this respect we also have to recognise the role played by the CP's Communist University in opening up its discussions to speakers from the far left.

We note, however, that the People's Festival being organised in London by the CP on Sunday will not see any debates at which such a genuine non-exclusive airing of differences can take place.

This is particularly unfortunate at a

Political Bureau — eds). She read me the communiqué of the PCF, and at the word 'disapproved' I said 'bravo'. Very annoyed, she replied, 'Allow me to be less happy than you at this decision'.

It was in this context that the Central Committee met the following day in Paris. The Political Bureau text was approved fairly unanimously — except by Jeanette, who thought it went too far, and myself, who said the reverse.

On this, I wrote a communiqué with the Czechoslovak ambassador in France, in which we went further. We questioned the USSR.

What irritated me at the time was the talk of an 'error'. It was necessary, in my opinion, not to doubt socialism, but to question the Soviet system. It was that which led to the intervention.

I recall a very important conversation with Waldeck-Rochet (then PCF general secretary — eds) to whom I was explaining, once again, this point of view. He said to me:

'Perhaps you are right on certain points, but even so I cannot follow you without risking a split in the party.'

'I have made an enquiry in the federations, and it transpires that hardly half the comrades approved of the Political Bureau communiqué. Around 50 per cent. Thirty per cent shared Jeanette's opinion and thought we had been wrong to condemn the USSR. Around 15-20 per cent followed your viewpoint and thought it was necessary to go further and question the system.'

Do you think that the reaction to the Soviet intervention reflected the attitude in the party over May?

Yes, I think that, overall, the 15-20

per cent who agreed with me were those who thought that we hadn't taken the May movement sufficiently seriously.

I think that the 30 per cent who shared Jeanette's opinion represented in Paris those elements impervious to all new experience and all self-criticism.

And that the 50 per cent corresponded to the very solid, permanent nucleus of the party, for whom the existence of a powerful party and a well-implanted CGT is a condition for winning respect in everyday life.

Did these differentiations produce a debate about May?

Of course, but you know that in the PCF the impact of events is in inverse proportion to where one is in the hierarchy. These discussions didn't affect the leadership.

I am not certain one could have made a revolution at this time. However, it's clear that the party could have had a different attitude and that it would have been essential to initiate a change. It did not, and that is why, from that moment, the party lost contact with the base and the simplest historic reality.

How do you explain that 1968 only produced a 'disturbance' while the defeat last March in the elections seems to have created a deep crisis?

I think the present crisis is exaggerated. At the 23rd Congress it is not out of the question that there will be some changes in personnel, that a few scapegoats will be found. Marchais's tactic consists in

allowing people to speak without that having any influence on the orientation. It is a formal democracy.

The present crisis is, quantitatively, more important than 1968. But it will not lead to structural changes. There lies the paradox.

One could understand that May '68 or Czechoslovakia traumatised the militants, there were mass movements. It makes you think. But for thought to be provoked by an electoral defeat is really extraordinary!

It is because all the party's politics centre on the elections: you vote, we will do the rest — still bourgeois democracy. This also confirms that the changes of the last ten years have not gone in the right direction.

'Ten Years After May 1968' is also the title of the main feature by Ernest Mandel in this week's issue of *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor* [Vol. 16, No. 23].

Also included in this issue are a major feature on 'Cambodia — Empty Cities, Crowded Fields'; an analysis of the recent German metalworkers' strike; documents from the underground in Iran; an interview with Hugo Blanco plus coverage of the Peru general strike; and an interview with two leaders of the Movement for a Socialist Republic in Ireland.

Single copies are 30p plus 10p p&p, but why not take advantage of the favourable subscription rates: £9 for one year (48 issues), £5 for six months (24 issues), or £2.50 for an introductory offer of 10 issues.

Write now to *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, PO Box 50, London NE2Xp. All cheques/POs should be made out to *Intercontinental Press*.

## Heads, I lose

Congratulations on your predictability! You've done exactly what some of my less naive friends told me you would do.

I received a copy of the Bahro appeal the day before the Socialist Challenge issue attacking Communist Party members for not responding to the appeal. Having already signed and sent it off I expected some form of apology in the paper.

Not a bit of it! Instead I find in last week's issue (1 June) that in company with Geoff Roberts I have apparently been stung into signing by your reproaches. The whole thing has the air of a cleverly worked manoeuvre of the 'heads I win, tails you lose' variety. Searching around for an explanation, I see that this business coincides with something of a propagandistic offensive against the Communist Party.

This offensive contains two main elements that perhaps explain my predicament. The first is that anti-CP opportunism reflected in Bob Pennington's article, 'Vote Labour, but fight Labourism', where he states that candidates should not be stoned against the CP where this may be seen as sectarianism.

The issue for Pennington, then, is not whether Socialist Unity is sectarian, but whether certain 'class struggle elements' will think they are! This type of logic would justify any nitpicking or distortion, and it becomes small wonder that the Socialist Workers Party want nothing to do with it.

The other element, also present in Pennington's apology for an analysis, is the strategic aim of 'taking advantage of the crisis in the CP'. In this context, the above-mentioned opportunism requires that we forget the need for unity over matters such as Bahro, or that we indulge in ludicrous NAFF-type juxtaposition (such as that of Videla and Berlinguer in your World Cup spoof), so that we can vilify the Communist Party.

It would seem that Socialist Challenge, after a relatively bright start, is sinking back into swamp politics. My recommendation to anyone asked to sign an SC appeal or join in an SC campaign is: don't be surprised if you find that your part in it all is somewhat different from that advertised.

**DAVE AARONOVITCH** (Manchester)

If readers refer to the 1 June issue, they will in our opinion find no suggestion that comrades Aaronovitch and Roberts were 'stung into' signing the Bahro appeal [certainly none was intended]. We simply stated the undeniable fact that two CP members had signed the appeal since our previous report and that none of the prominent CP members approached had done so. Happily many more rank and file CP

members have since signed! But there is another undeniable fact that comrade Aaronovitch overlooks. Yes, we are very much in favour of 'unity over matters such as Bahro'. But two CP signatories out of a party of some 25,000 members, neither of them from its leadership, hardly makes a united campaign. Will Monty Johnstone sign the appeal — or Gordon McLennan, for that matter? That is the real test of who is politically sectarian.—EDS.

## Nothing to say

**CONGRATULATIONS** on a good idea — a page 'decoding' adverts. Sadly the product didn't match up to the concept. I just about managed to work out what the article was on about — and it was totally banal.

Two hundred words of pedantic explanation did nothing to illuminate the Freezomint ad. The introduction was even worse. It moved from bland assertion — advertising 'adds value to the products advertised' (how?) — to complete gobbledygook: '...advertising also produces ideological value'.

And what is ideological value (since it certainly isn't a Marxist concept)? It seems to boil down to the profound discovery that 'advertising is constant in everyday life.'

Then we are told, out of the blue, that 'Ads are the strongest cement of capitalist society.' Not the state, not bourgeois ideology as a whole, not the political system... but advertising.

I have long suspected that incomprehensible verbiage conceals a lack of anything to say. Now I'm certain of it.

**JUAN AGUIRRE** (Battersea)

## Savage abuse

WHILE supporting your excellent coverage of capitalism's exploitation of workers, we feel you have shown pitiful neglect of a huge area of exploitation in Britain today — the abuse of animals in factory farms, circuses, vivisection laboratories, zoos, and in the hunting field.

You might argue that capitalism is responsible for all this, but we are not convinced that socialists are even aware of the sickening cruelty and its scale. Go to your local abattoir or broiler-house and find out what goes on.

You won't, however, be allowed into a vivisection lab to see the LD50 test, the standard test for toxicity. A batch of animals is force-fed with lipstick or shampoo until half of them die — which can involve up to three weeks of suffering. Five million animals undergo live experiments

every year. As animals have no voice to protest, so it is all the more important for us to fight needless cruelty. But Socialist Challenge seems sadly reluctant to take up issues which have not been specifically mentioned in the works of Trotsky and Marx — such as nuclear power and animal exploitation. A broader approach would drag Trotsky out of the past and show the commitment of socialists to a world free from exploitation of humans and other animals.

**M. SMITH, C. SAVAGE, C. WADDELL, P. ABBERTON** (St. Johns College Readers Group, Oxford)

## World cup politics

I AM disgusted by much of the left's completely apolitical analysis of the World Cup. Not only do they not attempt to consider football as it is — a commercialised, escapist culture used by the bourgeoisie for the cultural domination of the working class — but they actually encourage us to look at it as a pro-proletarian sport, political by its very nature.

The call for a boycott has hardly been raised except in Socialist Challenge. Yet this call has received much support internationally in the workers movement and has allowed revolutionaries all over the world to intervene in a political way against the junta.

The idea expressed against the boycott, that 'If you refuse to play against a country because it's repressive, you'd never play anyone', could equally be expressed on the economic field: 'If you refuse to trade with a country because it's repressive (South Africa), you'd never trade with anyone.'

A victory for the struggle for a boycott need not even necessitate the refusal of players to participate in the World Cup. The campaign succeeds to the extent that it raises the question of repression in Argentina, international working class solidarity, and adds more legitimacy to the idea of boycotts in sport, economics, or any other plane on which we're fighting.

If we are trying to train a cadre in this country and internationally to lead the working class in revolution, we need far more politics. Otherwise we'll have to conclude that much of the left thinks that us workers are blockheads, incapable of revolutionary consciousness and a class understanding of all phenomena in our society — including how to make propaganda through tactics like the boycott. In case some haven't got the point yet, how do we feel about African or other countries that refuse to play South Africa in the Olympics? Or about the Black Power salutes which two black American medal-winners made magnificently in the 1968 Mexico Olympics, for which they were victimised? They obviously hadn't understood

the line, 'Enjoy the sport (but remember the repression)'. They acted positively and in open defiance!

**PAUL ANDREWS** (South London)

## Vote for the CP?

BOB Pennington's article in last week's Socialist Challenge was very good. However, it is a shame that he committed the IMG to such a unilateral position on voting for the Communist Party in elections.

Bob correctly argued that it would be wrong to call across the board for a vote for CP candidates, as the party in this country is not a mass party which millions of workers support in the struggle for socialism.

However, it is one thing to refuse the CP automatic support and quite another to say that in no situation would we vote for CP candidates. This is surely implied when Bob says that in certain circumstances we might not stand against the party if activists would see it as sectarian, yet we would still not call for a vote for the CP candidate.

Bob himself argues that the dividing line for socialists in electoral work today should not be the general one of 'reform or revolution' but the particular one — for or against the bosses' offensive? Surely this implies that while the CP has a general reformist programme we might vote for individual militants if they are actually organising political activity to defend workers' interests?

There is today a very lively discussion going on within the Communist Party. Some members hanker after the days of Sid French, others long for the status of Berlinguer, others read Gramsci, collect lecturers' wages, and are merely en route for the Labour Party and Parliament.

However, mixed in with the chaff there are many honest intellectuals and workers attracted by the 'new democratic face' of the CP and the verbal radicalism of parts of its programme.

In this situation, it is surely inconceivable that there will be no forces in the Communist Party interested in joint work with the far left. Surely no real fightback against the bosses' policies will take place without the CP militants and supporters of today playing a leading role in it.

The best way to influence those

militants is a consistent attitude to the CP — support where they defend our interests; unremitting criticism if they don't — and united work wherever possible. That would not make electoral support out of the question — it was a weakness of Bob's article that it seemed to do just that.

**STEVEN DAVIS** (Wolverhampton)

## Remember the shop stewards

YOUR article 'The bureaucracy — not just misguided workers' (1 June) reinstates the worst vulgarities of the organisation of which I was until recently a member (Socialist Workers Party — eds).

To discuss trade unionism simply in terms of 'bureaucrats' and 'rank and file' is to misunderstand the complexity of unions today, and thus to suggest dangerously inadequate strategies for socialist involvement in the industrial struggle.

The wage curbs of the last three years have been able to bite, not just because of the machinations of the TUC brass, but because most ordinary members have acquiesced in the official policies and because their relations with the national leadership are mediated by an elaborate network of local representatives who have failed or refused to mount a serious and concerted resistance.

Of course the national bureaucracy is important. But there are now more full-time convenors in British unions than full-time officials outside the workplace.

Any adequate socialist analysis would need to understand the nature of the influence and control which such shop steward leadership can exert over the membership, and the character of its relationship with the external union hierarchy. It would also need to take account of the debilitating effects of reformist ideology (whether of the Labourist or CP varieties) on trade union action as such.

To make the 'bureaucracy' the scapegoat for all the problems of trade unionism — rather than recognising it as merely one of the obstacles — is to reduce the possibility of socialist advance.

**RICHARD HYMAN** (Coventry)

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# SOCIALIST CHALLENGE EVENTS

## NORTH WEST

**WARRINGTON** Socialist Challenge group meets regularly. Ring Manchester Socialist Challenge offices for details. 061-236 2352.

**GREATER MANCHESTER** Socialist Challenge School students who support the paper and would like to get involved in anti-fascist activity please contact Chris 273 5947 (daytime), or Steve 226 4287 (evening), or write to Manchester SC Centre, c/o 14 Piccadilly.

**PRESTON** Socialist Challenge supporters can be contacted by ringing Preston 54616.

**LIVERPOOL** Speke Socialist Challenge group meets every Wednesday evening at Noah's Ark pub. Speke, Liverpool 8pm.

**SOUTH MANCHESTER** Socialist Challenge group meets every other Thursday at the Albert Inn off Wilmslow Rd. Help sell Socialist Challenge between 11.30am and 1pm at Moss Side shopping centre or Longsight Market. Diocencor Rd. Further information from 061-236 2352.

## LONDON

**HARROW** Socialist Challenge sup-

porters meet regularly, details from PO Box 50, London N1 2PX.

**GREENWICH/LEWISHAM** Socialist Challenge group meets fortnightly. Details from Ray on 01-859 1187.

**NEWHAM** Socialist Challenge Forums occur regularly. Details from PO Box 50, London N1.

**WALTHAM FOREST** paper sales every Saturday, 11am-noon outside the post office, Hoe St., Waltham-stow, London E17.

**LONDON CPSA** Socialist Challenge readers. We are establishing a CPSA supporters group to work in the union and Broad Left if you are sympathetic to Socialist Challenge's ideas, write to London SC organiser, c/o PO Box 50, London N1.

**CAMDEN** Socialist Challenge group meets next on Wednesday, 21 June, 7pm at the Cock pub, 2 Diana Place, NW1. Mike Cooley speaks on 'The Lucas Workers' Alternative Plan'. Next meeting, 5 July on workers' control with Dave Bailey. Plan to make both meetings!

**CAMDEN** Socialist Challenge supporters sell papers every Saturday at Ipswich St market in Camden Town from 11-3pm. Join us every Saturday 12-3 on the Garners' picket at the

Oxford Circus branch, and on Mondays at the EGA picket.

**BRENT** Socialist Challenge Open Forum, Monday 19 June, 7.30pm. 'A Socialist Policy for the unions'. NUPE dispute continues, ring Teasa for venue on 065-0897. All welcome.

**SOUTH-WEST** Socialist Challenge meeting, Wed, 21 June, 7.30pm, at St Anne's Community Centre, Venn Street, SW4. The National Abortion Campaign and the light for daycare abortion facilities.

**HACKNEY** Socialist Challenge supporters meet next on Wednesday, 21 June, Britania Pub, Mare Street, 7.30pm. Ray Alexander on 'Zaire, imperialist hands off!'

**HACKNEY** Socialist Challenge supporters sell the paper regularly at Dalston Junction, Fridays (4.30-6pm) and Saturdays, Stamford Hill (11am).

## YORKSHIRE

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

**HUDDERSFIELD** Socialist Challenge supporters meet next Thursday, 22 June, Friendly and Trades Club, Northumberland St (opposite station). 'Building a left opposition in

the unions'. Speaker: Steve Blandford, (TASS), personal capacity.

## NORTH EAST

**DURHAM** Socialist Challenge Supporters Group. For details contact: Dave Brown, 2 Planer Cottages, Low Pitlington, Durham.

**DARLINGTON** Socialist Challenge sales on Saturdays outside Northern Rock on High Row, 11am-1pm.

**MIDDLESBOROUGH** Socialist Challenge sales on Saturdays outside Boots at Cleveland Centre, 11am-1pm. Socialist Challenge is also available from Harrison's (newsagent) in Linthorpe Street.

**NEWCASTLE** Socialist Challenge local supporters are active! If you want to join them, phone Pats on (0632) 29057.

## SOUTH WEST

**BRISTOL** Socialist Challenge public meeting 20 June, The Swan, Spokes Croft, 7.30pm. Alan Thorne speaks on 'Revolutionaries and the Trade Unions'.

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

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

## SCOTLAND

For information about the paper or its supporters' activities throughout Scotland contact Socialist Challenge Books, 64 Queen St., Glasgow. Open Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday afternoons. Phone for detailed arrangements (22-7481). Wide range of Fourth International publications.

**EDINBURGH** Socialist Challenge supporters group meets regularly. Phone George at 031-346 0465 for details.

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

## SOUTH EAST

**COLCHESTER** Socialist Challenge supporters sell the paper every Saturday outside Caters from 10.45am-1pm. Further information of local activities from Mike, 11 Angelsea Rd, Wivenhoe.

**BRIGHTON** Socialist Challenge sales regularly on Saturdays at the Open Market, London Road, from 11am-1pm.

**COLCHESTER** Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly. Details from Steve, 1 Abigail Street.

## WALES

**CARDIFF** Socialist Challenge Forum, Friday, 16 June, 7.30pm at The Four Elms Pub, Elm Street — off the Newport Road. Discussion on Women's Liberation and Socialism.

## MIDLANDS

For details of activities of local supporters throughout the Midlands contact the Socialist Challenge Centre, 76a Digbeth High Street, Birmingham. (021) 643 9200.

**BIRMINGHAM** Socialist Challenge Supporters Forum, 22 June. Socialist Challenge Centre, 76B Digbeth, 7.30pm, 'The politics of the IMG'.

**LEICESTER** Socialist Challenge group meets next on Thursday, 29 June, Highfields Community Centre, 7.30pm prompt. 'Nuclear Power'.

# Images of Chile

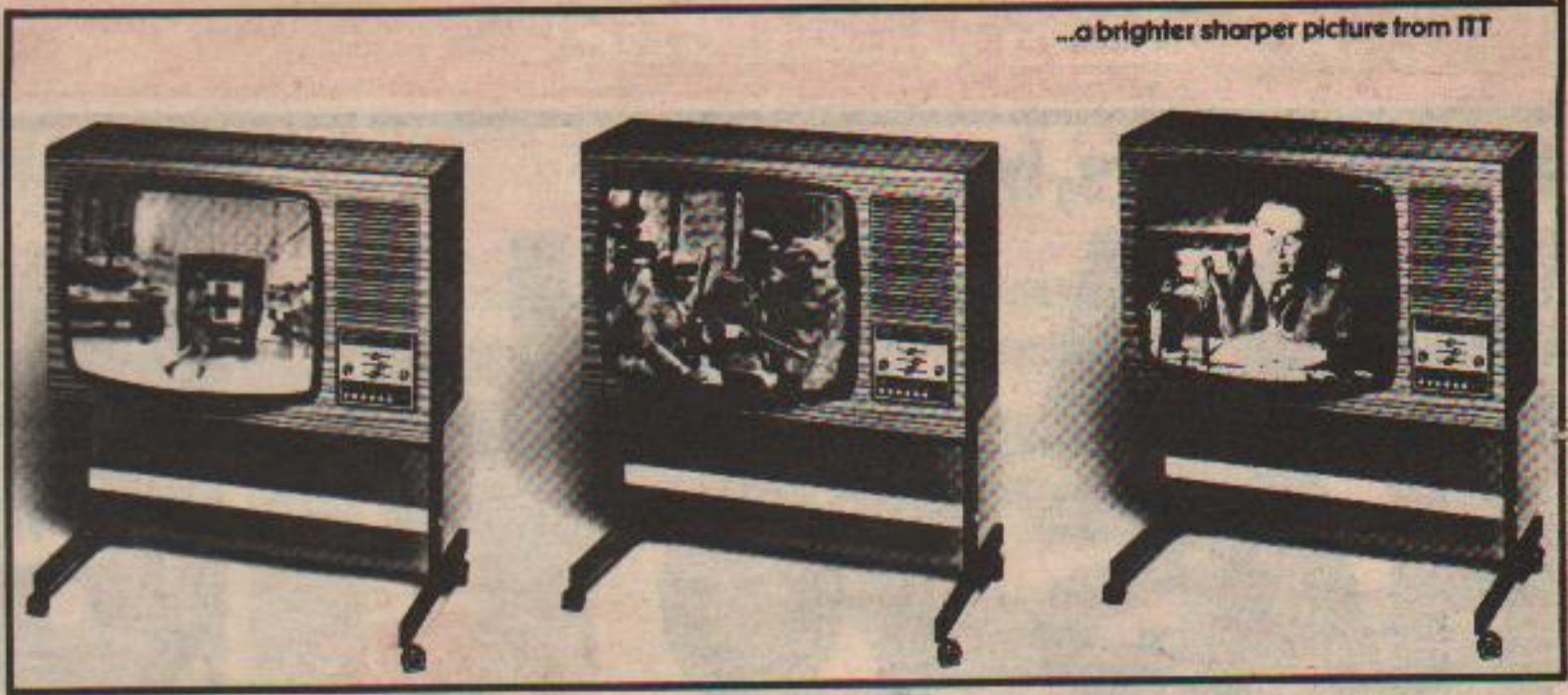
A DOCUMENT ON CHILE is an exhibition which has just opened at the Half Moon Gallery in the East End of London. The photomontages, by Peter Kennard, and the texts, by Ric Sissons, trace the recent history of Chile. They show the economic, political, and social structures surrounding the military coup of September 1973, giving birth to a barbaric regime.

The thirty works of photomontage and text fall into three groups; the years prior to the 1970 presidential election victory of Allende; the three years of the 'Unidad Popular' Government of Allende that culminated in the armed forces seizing power through a coup d'état; and the years since the death of Allende which have witnessed terrible repression against the Chilean workers and peasants.

The works selected here deal with the attitude of various international companies and governments to the post-Allende military dictatorship. They show their complicity in the activities of the ruling junta.

The exhibition is showing until 5 July at the Half Moon Gallery, 27 Alle Street, London E1. Monday to Saturday, 11am to 6pm. Admission is free.

After July, the exhibition is available for hire at a small fee. It is easy to transport and mount, and is ideal for display in schools, colleges, libraries, factories and clubs. For full details contact: Ed Barber, Half Moon Photography Workshop, 119 Roman Road, London E2 0QN. Tel 01-980 8798.



...a brighter sharper picture from ITT

Photomontage: PETER KENNARD

**MULTINATIONAL INTERVENTION (above)**

OF ALL the multinational firms which actively sabotaged the Chilean Government in the three Allende years, International Telephone and Telegraph was always the most forthright.

After Allende's election victory, it offered the CIA a million dollars for its anti-Allende activities. It initiated an ad hoc grouping of six important multinationals, whose interests had been nationalised in Chile, to lobby for and organise economic sanctions against the 'Unidad Popular' Government. ITT further sent \$350,000 to fund anti-communist campaigns in Chile. The action of firms such as ITT prepared the ground for the military coup in September 1973. In 1976 ITT investment in Chile was estimated at \$153 million.

**'THE LIMITS OF MORAL SUASION' (below)**



Photomontage: PETER KENNARD

**BRITISH COMPLICITY (above)**

THE BRITISH Labour Government has no reason to be proud of its stance in relation to Chile. The Chilean and British Navies have always maintained close ties. In 1975 British shipyards were building the Chilean Navy two submarines, repairing two frigates and delivering 11,000 spare parts.

The Labour Government refused to block their despatch. Officers of the Chilean Armed Forces are still trained in Britain. Trade continues with the dictatorship. In 1977 British exports to Chile totalled £39.4m. Imports included fruit, vegetables, shoes and copper. One fifth of British copper imports come from Chile. 85,000 tons are landed yearly in Avonmouth, Liverpool and London.

The Times, on 13 September 1973, welcomed the coup d'état. Since then, with the scale of the repression, the British press has distanced itself from the junta. However British firms have no qualms about trading with and investing in Chile.

'The Government believe that the proposal to prevent the Chileans from taking delivery of their submarines oversteps this line and could be seriously damaging to our own interests. This is why we have consistently said that the existing contracts for naval sales would be allowed to go through.

'To seize or to refuse to permit the export of the submarines could not be justified in international law, quite apart from exposing us to allegations of bad faith. As a major trading nation, we have a strong interest in upholding international law, whatever others may do.'

Ted Rowland, Labour Government Under Secretary at the Foreign Office, November 1975, in a letter to the Chile Solidarity Campaign.



Photomontage: PETER KENNARD

**CHINA LENDS A HAND (above)**

THE CHILEAN junta has found friends in the most unlikely quarters. Following the coup, China — unlike the East European states — refused to break off diplomatic relations. The Chinese went still further by rejecting political refugees. This diplomatic manoeuvre culminated with the removal of Allende's ambassador in Peking and his replacement by a representative of the junta.

In 1976, despite the repression in Chile, China stepped up its trade with the military dictatorship by increasing its copper imports.

Discussions were also underway for a \$58m loan from China. In its stand against the two world 'superpowers' and in its efforts to end its economic isolation, the Chinese bureaucracy has been prepared to deal with one of the world's most brutal regimes.

'China has behaved well,' said Pinochet, the Chilean dictator.

'Chilean Deputy Interior Minister Enrique Montero declared September 12, 13 and 14 as days of official national mourning for Chairman Mao Tsetung with flags on public buildings to be flown at half-mast.' Hsinhua, the official Chinese news service, 10.9.76.



Photomontage: PETER KENNARD

## Chile: safety zone for foreign investors

ALL INVESTMENT FUNDS AND 'ELEGANT PORN' THEM, WHY NOT ALLEGORICALLY INVEST IN CHILE!

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# Socialist Challenge

Ennals retreats, but

# EGA STILL HAS TO STAY!

THE BATTLE to save the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson has yet to be won. That's the view put by militants from the women's hospital at a conference last Saturday.

DOMINIC COSTA, chairperson of the London health shop stewards organisation CLASH, reports.

Health Minister David Ennals has once again been forced to retreat in his attempts to close the EGA.

Just three weeks after announcing that the hospital would definitely be shut on 21 July, he has now announced that it won't!

At a conference of 40 shop stewards from health service unions in London on Saturday, called by the EGA stewards, NUPE steward Arthur Churchley from the women's hospital described how Ennals had been obliged to back away from a head-on confrontation.

## UPGRADE

No doubt the run up to a General Election was not the

best time to take on the forces determined to save and upgrade the EGA.

## EXAMINE

But the setting up of a working party to examine alternative accommodation — without any commitment to accept its recommendations — spells danger, Churchley argued.

A speaker from St Nicholas Hospital in Plumstead, SE London, explained just how much Ennals' promises are worth. In December, widespread strike action had extracted from Ennals a promise to reverse the closure plans of their area health authority. Now the Minister has accepted a regional plan to

close three-quarters of the hospital's 350 beds, together with the casualty service.

Shop stewards at St Nicholas are leaving to rebuild the campaign to save the hospital.

The lessons are clear for the EGA. As supporters we will be fighting on the working party to demand that the lift which long ago put the upper floors of the hospital out of action is mended before discussions begin.

The campaign to build for strike action if the EGA out-patients are removed has to be developed.

## COMMITTED

In London, the COHSE branch at St Pancras Hospital has already committed itself to all-out strike action. And divisional council No 8 in ASTMS has set up a committee to organise support, following its call for national strike action.

The battle for the EGA also

means strengthening union organisation within the NHS. Last Saturday's conference called for the development of district and area shop stewards committees into an all-London stewards organisation for health workers.

## SUSPENDED

\*BEFORE THE EGA stewards agree to Ennals' working party, they are demanding that their supporters at the Emergency Bed Service should be immediately re-instated.

For refusing to co-operate in a lock-out of patients at the women's hospital, six COHSE members at the EBS have been suspended, and the rest threatened with disciplinary action.

A picket of the first disciplinary proceedings was held yesterday.

Unless the EBS workers win their demand to refer patients in the future to threatened hospitals, the fight to stop closures will lose one of its

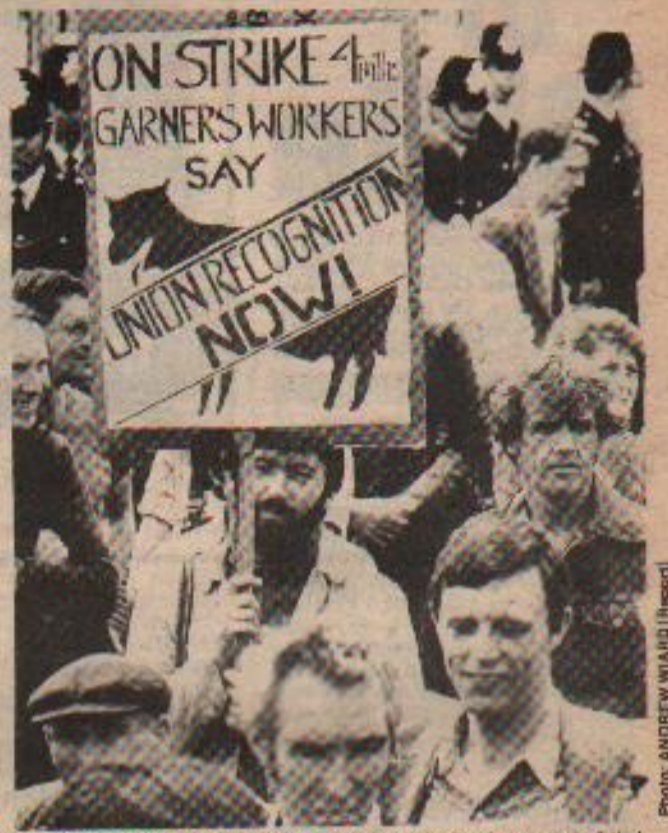


Photo: ANDREW WARD (Report)

SUPPORTERS of the Garners strikers demonstrating in support of their demand for union recognition. On Tuesday, a deputation of Labour MPs led by Jo Richardson joined the lunchtime picket at the Garners Steak House in the Haymarket in London's West End.

A report by the Low Pay Unit says: 'Figures on the level of the minimum wages and earnings for the catering and hotel industry confirm that the union's task of eradicating low pay in the industry is a massive one.'

All the more reason to join the Garners pickets (see What's Left for details) and attending the Garners conference, Thursday, 22 June at 7.30pm, Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1.

strongest weapons.

CONFERENCE to defend London's hospitals. Called by EGA stewards, jointly sponsored by Greater London Association of Trades Councils and NUPE London Divisional Council. Speakers from: EGA, St. Nicholas, Bethnal Green and other threatened hospitals. Saturday, 1 July, 1-5pm, Portwater Hall, Queenway, London W2. Adm 50p. Delegates credentials from: EGA, Euston Road, London NW1.

TORCHLIGHT VIGIL to celebrate 30th anniversary of NHS with resistance! Tuesday, 4 July, beginning at 8pm at the EGA and will then tour other threatened hospitals.

SUPPORT the Emergency Bed Service workers who are being victimised for defending the EGA. Donations and messages of support to: COHSE EBS Branch, Flixton House, 28 London Bridge St, London SE1. Messages urging the support of the COHSE

Officers Branch to: SE London Officers Branch, c/o P Rankin, Branch Secretary, Guy's Hospital, London SE1.

DYLAN Tickets. The following ticket numbers to see Bob Dylan have been drawn in the lottery.

First prize: No 001441. Winner lives in Hackney, London E8. Second prize: No 000804. Winner lives in Muswell Hill, London N10. They should call at the Socialist Challenge offices to receive their prize tickets.

The financial results of this very successful lottery will be announced next week.

## OUR FUND DRIVE

£1,100 in three weeks. That is what Socialist Challenge needs to make this quarter's fund drive. The fate of your paper lies in your hands. We appeal to all our readers and local supporters groups to dig deep into their pockets and rush donations to Socialist Challenge.

We need on average nearly £400 every week!

Over this last seven days £240.50 came in. That by previous standards is a good week — but is still not good enough. An American reader led the way by sending \$250 for four subscriptions, which left nearly £90 for our fund drive. Our regular financial backers

contributed £98 in bankers' orders for May. This week we are writing to our subscribers — all 700 of them — asking them to give us a regular bankers' order of at least £1 a month.

This week our thanks to:

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| M. Whyte           | 10.00 |
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| F. Field           | 87.00 |
| A. Fagan           | 5.00  |
| A. Warren          | 1.00  |
| Nottingham readers | 4.00  |
| M. Tucker          | 2.50  |
| C. Carter          | 5.00  |
| Anon.              | 4.00  |
| May Bankers orders | 98.00 |

## Stamp Collectors

THE IDEA of our Leicester supporters to collect stamps and sell them to philatelists for the fund drive has been a great success. Hundreds of stamps have poured into our office which have been forwarded to the East Midlands.

However this week two readers donated their entire collections. Two albums are on their way for valuation and sale. John and Adrienne Fitzpatrick have set an example.

Have a look in your old drawers or in the attic. Maybe you will get a pleasant surprise?

This week's Socialist Challenge features the work of Peter Kennard. In conjunction with him the paper has produced a set of postcards featuring six of Kennard's photomontages.

In black and white, the six cards relate to South Africa,

Ireland, Chile, Seveso, the 1974 miners' strike, and repression in the USSR. Each card is 7 by 5 1/2 inches, and printed with all the normal postcard requirements — in French, English and German.

The cards are a unique collection of modern political photomontage. They lend

themselves to mounting and display. Order your set now!

The cards are 15p each (very cheap), plus 7p postage and packing. The complete set of six is yours for £1, incl. p&p, to: Photomontage Offer, Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1.

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sure of receiving Socialist Challenge during the summer. If you are a student you might not be near to your normal sellers in those months. To avoid missing issues take out a subscription.

When you go on holiday it is quite possible you will be

unable to find the paper — we do not have sellers in Skegness, Torbay or Majorca. Take out a subscription, and when you get back you can catch up with all the latest news.

So don't delay fill in the form below and rush it back to Socialist Challenge.

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