

# Socialist Challenge

## OUR TIMES

### Workers' control is the answer to the newspaper crisis

The lockout imposed by the management of Times Newspapers was defied by the workers in Printing House Square in the early hours of this morning. Taking over the presses, they launched 'Our Times' — the first Fleet Street newspaper to be produced for and by the working class in our times.

### Crowds welcome elected editorial board

In the early hours of this morning, an unprecedented development took place in the troubled district over the future of the Times, the Sunday Times, and the three newspapers published by Times Newspapers.

Following the lockout of 4,300 employees, which management had announced on Monday, a quarter of its workforce agreed to quit for good, the buildings in City's last hour, London W.C.1, were occupied by a large contingent of their suspended fellow employees.

By Jan, two hours after the occupation began, the first edition of Our Times, which you are now reading, was streaming off the presses.

A manifesto issued by the provisional editorial board, elected on a temporary basis by ballot on the part of the workers, stated:

The Thomson Organisation, former owners of this newspaper, will this year make a profit of more than £100m from North Sea oil.

It chose to use this wealth to shut down newspapers until such time as its workforce agreed to accept a virtual end to union organisation.

Our refusal to accept this capitalist ethic is what has led us to take over these newspapers and their assets under workers' control. The launching of Our Times is more than a means of winning support in the workers' movement for our own struggle.

We believe that the millions who have never had their views represented by the mass media — all those, that we say, to the left of Mr James Callaghan — will welcome the establishment of a Fleet Street newspaper which seeks to apply the principles of real press freedom.



No longer will workers in struggle and all those who reject the 'bourgeois' solutions to their crisis find themselves the victims of distortions, lies, and baroque by their press.

This statement was greeted with loud acclaim by some thousands who gathered in Printing House Square as news of the occupation spread through the capital.

Heard discussions took place among the crowd and in the Times building itself as to how Our Times should deal with questions of women's oppression, the war in Ireland, the black struggle, Iran, and similar matters.

The provisional editorial board declared that it was anxious for such debate to be published in the columns of Our Times, so that the development of its editorial policy could be carried out on the widest basis in the workers' movement.

To this end, the editorial board considers that it should operate in a temporary capacity until elections can be carried out on the widest basis in the workers' movement.

Socialist Challenge runs interesting editorial on the Times, page 2



### Crisis in the Communist Party of Great Britain

The perspectives of the outgoing leadership were rejected at a recently held London District Congress of the Communist Party. The vote reflects a general crisis in the Party. Page 2

### Disabled at work.

The problems faced by the physically handicapped are particularly severe in the workplace. Personal experiences reflect the difficulties. Page 14

### Two divers drown as bell floods in rescue

Two divers drowned when their damaged diving bell flooded in a rescue attempt in the North Sea off the coast of the North Sea off the coast of the North Sea off the coast of the North Sea.

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### Evidence that Christians harassing peacekeeping troops are receiving outside support UN commander accuses Israel of impeding Lebanon role

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### Bank clerks uncover removal of £1bn by Iranian elite

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From Richard Carver, Tehran, Nov 29

Striking workers at the Central Bank of Iran have released documents showing that it is trying to raise the question of how the transferring funds out of the country Members of the family of the Shah, Mr Reza Pahlavi, with such speed.

The alacrity with which the Shah's supporters have channelled their funds into the safety of Swiss bank accounts casts doubt on their claims to patriotism and devotion to Iran's interests. It also implies a certain lack of confidence as to Mr Pahlavi's future.

Sources here compared the situation to Portugal after the April 1974 coup. Those who claim interest in the first to return when all is not right.

Certainly Iranian workers have recently become more audacious in their demands. It is now commonplace for strikers to demand free transport to work and even wage payment from the moment they leave their home until their return from work.

This establishes the principle that payments should be on the basis of need, not productivity. In some places workers have even demanded time off for political discussion in company hours.

The regime's supporters were tonight none too optimistic about their future. A reported 40 members of the royal family have left the country, lock, stock and barrel, in the words of one diplomat.

Mr Pahlavi was not available for comment.

What future for Lord Callaghan? Iranian journalist interviewed, page 11.

### Maze prison deputy governor killed

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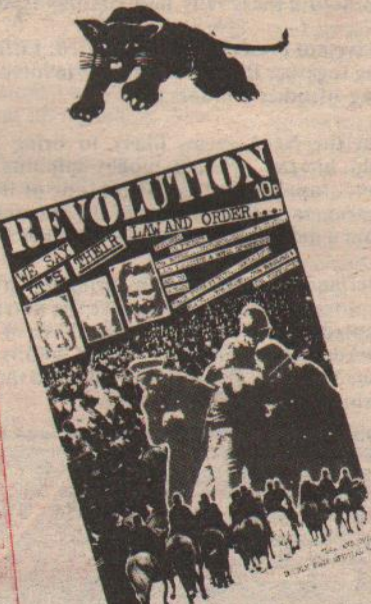
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REVOLUTION 10p  
ORDER FROM P O BOX 50, LONDON N1.

Table listing various articles and their page numbers, including 'Crisis in the Communist Party of Great Britain', 'Disabled at work', 'Abdication papers', 'The conditions of Chilean refugees', and 'Labour facing critical Ford sanctions vote'.

## EDITORIAL

Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.  
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### Fighting the Times' lockout

THE PROUD boast of The Times is that for 170 years—from 1785 to 1955—it was published without interruption. Those years include 1926, which saw the General Strike when most of Fleet Street's presses were brought to a halt.

The General Strike had been occasioned by the refusal of printworkers on the Daily Mail to handle an anti-union editorial, and it resulted in an unwritten agreement between the press barons and the print union leaders: that there would be no editorial interference by printworkers in the bosses' press.

The concordat stands virtually intact to this day, and on the few occasions when printers have stopped the presses over a particularly vicious article or (more correctly) demanded that there be a right of reply, they have usually faced disciplinary action from their union.

The barons were prepared to pay a certain price for their freedom of the press. The print chapels on Fleet Street have gained a degree of organisation scarcely to be equalled anywhere in British industry. Their wage levels attest to this fact.

But the barons are now anxious to call a halt. The growth of television as a major purveyor of the ruling class's ideas and the passing of the ownership of almost all the Fleet Street papers into the hands of multi-national corporations has meant that the need for bigger profits is at the top of the agenda.

The new technology offers this in abundance — if the printworkers agree to go quietly; a prospect which their leaders are willing to face. A couple of years ago they put their signatures to 'Programme for Action' — a plan for mass redundancies drawn up in negotiation with the press barons.

It was thrown out by the chapels. Now Times Newspapers, on behalf of the Thomson Organisation (expected profits this year: £126m) and the rest of Fleet Street, is attempting to implement it.

The lockout scheduled to begin today is simply the capitalists' time-honoured way of demonstrating that they 'mean business'. The business in hand is to eliminate a quarter of the 4,300 jobs on The Times and the Sunday Times, together with big penalties for taking unofficial action.

As Jake Ecclestone, the journalists' father of the chapel at The Times, said on these pages last week, there is great potential in the new technology.

For the workers in the industry, the streamlining of production techniques could mean a shorter working week, longer holidays, and higher pay. For the working class as a whole, it makes possible numerous publications at relatively low cost.

None of this, needless to say, is in the minds of the bosses. As with automated techniques in other industries, the objective is higher profits — which will be accompanied by longer dole queues.

The Royal Commission on the Press estimated that for an investment of £50m (including redundancy payments), Fleet Street could scrap 7,000 jobs and save £20m a year. Silicon chips brought in elsewhere, according to a report prepared by the Department of Industry, will mean 3½m unemployed in the next two or three years.

The plans of the print union leaders to confront the lockout at Times Newspapers are largely a matter of rumour, not least among their own members.

The £5 a week levy on printworkers in Fleet Street to support those locked out is one of the few positive measures. The decision of NATSOPA to hold a mass rally last Tuesday is another.

But demands have not been clearly formulated. Little has so far been done to bring together the various unions involved, and little to win the backing of other workers.

The strike that the NGA seems likely to bring throughout Thomson's would hit the group's money-spinning provincial papers. A complete stoppage on Fleet Street (one of the rumours) would locate the struggle on the doorstep of the managements who would benefit from a defeat of the workers at Times Newspapers.

More boldly, defiance of the lockout by bringing out The Times under workers' control would vividly expose the narrow political spectrum represented by the national press. Even if this is not possible printworkers and journalists should jointly produce a daily bulletin ('Our Times?'). For this they will need the support of the rest of the printworkers in Fleet Street.

## THE FIRST WORD

# London leadership's proposals rejected Communist Party crisis deepens

THIS MONTH has seen the Communist Party holding a number of district congresses. CLIVE TURNBULL attended the one in London on behalf of Socialist Challenge.

Here he looks at the CPGB one year after its 25th Congress, when it formally became 'Eurocommunist'.

The London District Congress of the Communist Party produced an unprecedented result. The perspectives of the outgoing leadership were rejected.

### ALTERNATIVE

Instead a series of branch amendments which had been composited into an alternative set of proposals were presented to the congress. These were 'referred back' by an alliance of the hard-line Stalinists and the London party leaders.

The London District Committee document was slated as being timeless: 'It could have been written at any time in the last ten years'.

Sue Slipman described it as 'pre-British Road to Socialism' — 'it didn't reflect the thinking of the new draft', adopted at the November 1977 National Congress.

The 'campaign proposals' it put forward could be generously described as banal. For example all it said on racism was: 'Pay particular attention to the importance of the fight against racism in every sphere of life.'

On local elections the message was: 'Prepare in good time for the next round of GLC and Borough Council Elections'.

In political terms the alternative resolution was not qualitatively different. It merely pointed out the obvious steps that would be needed to take up the fight against racism or to prepare in good time for elections.

### DECLINE

It certainly contained nothing that will reverse the party's continuing decline in London — paper membership has fallen from 4,124 in November 1977 to 3,762 today.

The congress, however, provided an object lesson in bureaucracy and manipulation by the outgoing leadership.

After a clear vote (126 to 107) against a motion moved by District Secretary Gerry Cohen to reject the alternative proposals, there were repeated attempts to overturn this decision.



Another sign of the crisis in the CPGB is the latest issue of Comment, which includes a section from a critical work on the USSR by French CP members plus 'what we have said' — CPGB statements in 1937, 1956, and 1978.

These were aided by the partisan chairing of the congress by Mick Hicks. Even the Morning Star report noted: 'The congress was marked by lively and sharp discussion, with some delegates making extremely strong criticisms of the district leadership.'

This was so much the case that the Sunday morning closed session had to be extended to the whole day.

Attempts were made on the one hand to reverse the defeat

of the day before; and on the other, to change the composition of the District Committee, including the District Secretary.

At the end there wasn't time to complete the elections, leaving the outgoing leadership to organise the counting of the votes! The amended draft itself was 'referred back', leaving the London District without any perspectives.

The ban on tendencies and factions meant that clear

alternative political positions could not be presented.

Party members, let alone branches, were not able to circulate alternative documents to those of the leadership, to meet and organise how best to present different political alternatives.

Instead debate is confined within a constitution which gives a monopoly to one permanent faction — the leadership.

The commission on 'inner party democracy' established from the national congress has yet to make any report. This makes it even more likely that its role will be to present a few cosmetic changes, as with the Morning Star report.

The decline of the CPGB over the last year has been dramatic. Party membership in June this year stood at 21,145; 4,148 down on the figure in November 1977.

### SOLUTIONS

The politics of the party's 'Eurocommunist' critics offer no solution to this crisis. On the main issues of the class struggle in Britain they are, if anything, to the right of the leadership.

From no section of the CPGB is there a socialist alternative being offered which bases itself on the consistent defence of working class interests.

However, the 10 November issue of Comment did carry a discussion article by Jon Bloomfield which took up a number of criticisms that revolutionaries have made of the CP's practice in relation to building the self-activity of the working class and oppressed.

Bloomfield called for 'much more emphasis to grass roots, rank and file movements', which 'must become a central ingredient of our work'. He commented:

'At present our practice suggests we see rank and file groupings as adjuncts to the official movements. This is inadequate.'

### BREAK

'They must be encouraged as vigorous, independent forces in their own right, vital to the struggles on wages, employment, cuts, alternative plans, etc.'

But unless such proposals are accompanied by a break with the policies of class collaboration — import controls, participation, etc. — there will be no adequate basis for building a socialist alternative to the Labour leadership.



Delegates vote at the CPGB congress in November 1977

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

- \* I am interested in more information about activities in my area.
- \* I would like additional literature and enclose 50p to cover costs.

(Delete if not applicable)

NAME

ADDRESS

Send to Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper St, London N1.

## 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.

## Remember how they feted the boat people...

# Here's how they treat Chilean refugees

By DAVE HAYES

THE press has smothered us with pictures of Frankie Howerd, Pearly Kings and heroic English sea captains clutching Vietnamese refugees.

This has alternated with tales of gifts of bread and toys from businessmen overcome with emotion at the sight of children fleeing 'communist' tyranny. All that seems a long way from the damp walls, rotten wiring and families in one room at a Notting Hill refugee reception centre.

No teams of photographers or exclusive interviews with the people who rescued these refugees — they are Latin American exiles. They fled from countries turned into prison houses with the compliance of international capital.

Their rescuers aren't doughty English sea captains but thousands of rank and file trade unionists and others who fought to get the Labour government to accept Chilean refugees.

Since 1974 nearly 3000 Chileans have been resettled, 500 more are expected within the next year and possibly several thousand Argentinians when Videla opens his jails.

### UNFAVOURABLE

The Labour government, pushed by the action of the solidarity campaign, has received more political prisoners straight from prison than any other country. But the programme still compares unfavourably with similar ones in Holland and Sweden.

Processing of visas often takes six months, forcing people to stay on in bad conditions. We know of one or

two cases where people waiting have 'disappeared'.

From the beginning the programme has been dogged by inadequate funding and uncertainty of finance. Money comes via the Voluntary Services Unit which is a last resort financier for projects not linked to any one government department.

Money is received in six month hand outs which makes any long term planning impossible. Without the internationalist response of many volunteers the programme would have faltered badly.

This year the Joint Working Group for Latin American refugees asked for £216,000 and was offered £137,000 — part of which is supposed to cover the £9000 deficit of last year.

### SHORTFALL

Why the shortfall? One obvious reason is Labour's lack of consistent solidarity.

Another is a very 'narrow' government conception of what resettlement involves. The immediate reception of exiles is only a small part of the problem.

A person arrives usually straight from prison, not speaking the language, having to find a job in a country where there are 2m unemployed and a house where there are 1m homeless. You can't sort it out in a couple of weeks.

One of the refugees told me: **'It isn't easy adjusting to a new country. There's the everyday racism. The local newspaper stories about "Chileans taking our council houses." The difficulty of finding a job in your own skill. Living on social security when you arrive here with nothing. But it's not much worse than a lot of blacks and many workers**



'Damp walls, rotten wiring and families in one room.'

here have to put up with. Leaving Latin America doesn't solve workers problems with capitalism — that's an international struggle.'

Most of the Latin American exiles are active in the solidarity and labour movement. Over the last few years they have enriched that movement. Perhaps that's why they aren't Fleet Street's favourite refugees.

You can help defend Latin American refugees improve their conditions:

\* Support the Joint Working Group campaign. Contact JWG, 21 Star Street, London W2 (01-262 4926) for leaflets and information.

\* Support the campaign to adopt Argentinian political prisoners. Contact Committee for Human Rights in Argentina, 1 Cambridge Terrace N1.

\* Come to the British Argentina Campaign Conference, 2 December, Liverpool University.

\* Discuss in your organisation campaigning for the implementation of some sort of refugee charter, guaranteeing right of entry and security while here. As a first step, implement the UN provisions in British law. This campaign could be organised internationally through workers' organisations.



### The Windsor Connection

THE ATTRACTION of fascism in the Thirties for sections of the British ruling class is an established fact.

What is less well-known is that a British monarch, Edward VIII, who later was forced to relinquish the throne, was a strong admirer of the Nazi regime.

A TV documentary shown last year carefully omitted this fact lest the present-day occupier of the throne was embarrassed in her jubilee year.

In reality the main reason for abdication was not the issue of marrying a 'divorced commoner', but the fact that the commoner in question had been an intimate of the Nazi ambassador in London, Ribbentrop. This, coupled with the known Nazi sympathies of Edward, made the marriage a dubious political proposition.

In the year preceding his abdication the monarch was not shown any state papers relating to British defence and intelligence operations. Even after his abdication he was sent off to the Bahamas during the war for fear that if he remained in Europe the Nazis might use him as a Quisling King after they invaded Britain.

The researchers who uncovered these facts were politely told to keep their mouths shut.

\* This appeared in NfN in our first issue. We thought it worth reprinting in light of the current TV serial on the subject.

### Scenes from Irish life (Glasgow)

#### SCENE ONE, Wednesday 15 November

Three members of the International Marxist Group meet in a cafe to discuss solidarity events for Irish prisoners. In the middle of their discussions two young men sit down at an adjoining table.

Both are wearing blue shirts, both have short hair. They sit staring into the middle distance, saying nothing but with heads inclined towards the three members of the IMG.

The three leave the cafe. The two listeners follow, and are joined by a third colleague. They attempt, without success, to follow the IMG members when they split up.

The IMG members had only arranged to meet 20 minutes beforehand, on the phone.

#### SCENE TWO, Thursday 16 November

Two punks, Revolution supporters, are returning home after leafleting a school in the Gorbals for a showing of the film Home Soldier Home.

A police landrover pulls up and two cops get out. They ask the punks: 'Was it you who was leafletting those kids?'

The two punks, both Sham Army members and well used to police harassment, walk on. One of the cops shouts, 'Right c--t, come here'.

The two punks are searched, a leaflet is found, a cop says 'Get to fuck, you papist bastard' and kicks one of the punks.

The two are taken to a police station, but finally released without charge.

### The last time

READERS WILL recall how another death followed in the East End after the poisoned umbrella killing of the Bulgarian emigré Markov. A Bulgarian exile was found dead at the bottom of the stairs, and Fleet Street immediately jumped to the conclusion that Zhivkov's agents were at it again.

Speculation was rife. But the coroner's report revealed that the dead Bulgarian had a heart condition and had died of shock.

It was later revealed to the press that he had been masturbating when he suffered the attack. This information was also given to Fleet Street, but it was dutifully ignored. Victorian morality? Hardly. More likely embarrassment that their attempts to pin this one on the Bulgarian secret policy had backfired in such a fashion ...

### Clash of interests

RECENT visitors to Glasgow were the Clash. On tour in Scotland and stopping off in Glasgow to promote their new album. GED of Glasgow's Sham Army takes up the story.

When the Clash put in an appearance at a local record shop, me and me mates in Sham Army and Revolution got on to Joe Strummer (lead singer of the Clash for all you BOFs) asking how he felt about the under 18-year-olds, the non-students, who wouldn't get into their gig at Strathclyde University.

To which Strummer replied they would get in because it was an open gig. Which we told him was bollocks, 'cos a couple of our mates had tried to get tickets and were knocked back 'cos they didn't have a student card.

Strummer didn't believe it, so we asked him to come up to Strathclyde and see if he could buy a ticket. Off he went on someone's motor bike and we ran up after him.

Ten minutes later back he came and stormed in shouting, 'the gig's off, someone's being telling lies'. He'd been refused a ticket himself when he tried to buy one.

Strummer explained it all to the rest of the group who agreed to call it off. Strummer promised an alternative venue would be arranged as soon as possible.

But it's not so easy with the Clash not playing the Apollo 'cos of the bouncers who are notorious for their violence.

Anyway we look forward to seeing Joe and the rest. Thanks mates.

**ERNEST MANDEL** will be the main speaker at a day school on **'The revolutionary alternative to Eurocommunism'** Saturday 13 January Holborn Assembly Rooms London Full details in next week's **Socialist Challenge**

AGAINST THE 5%, FORD WORKERS  
ARE FIGHTING FOR EVERYONE

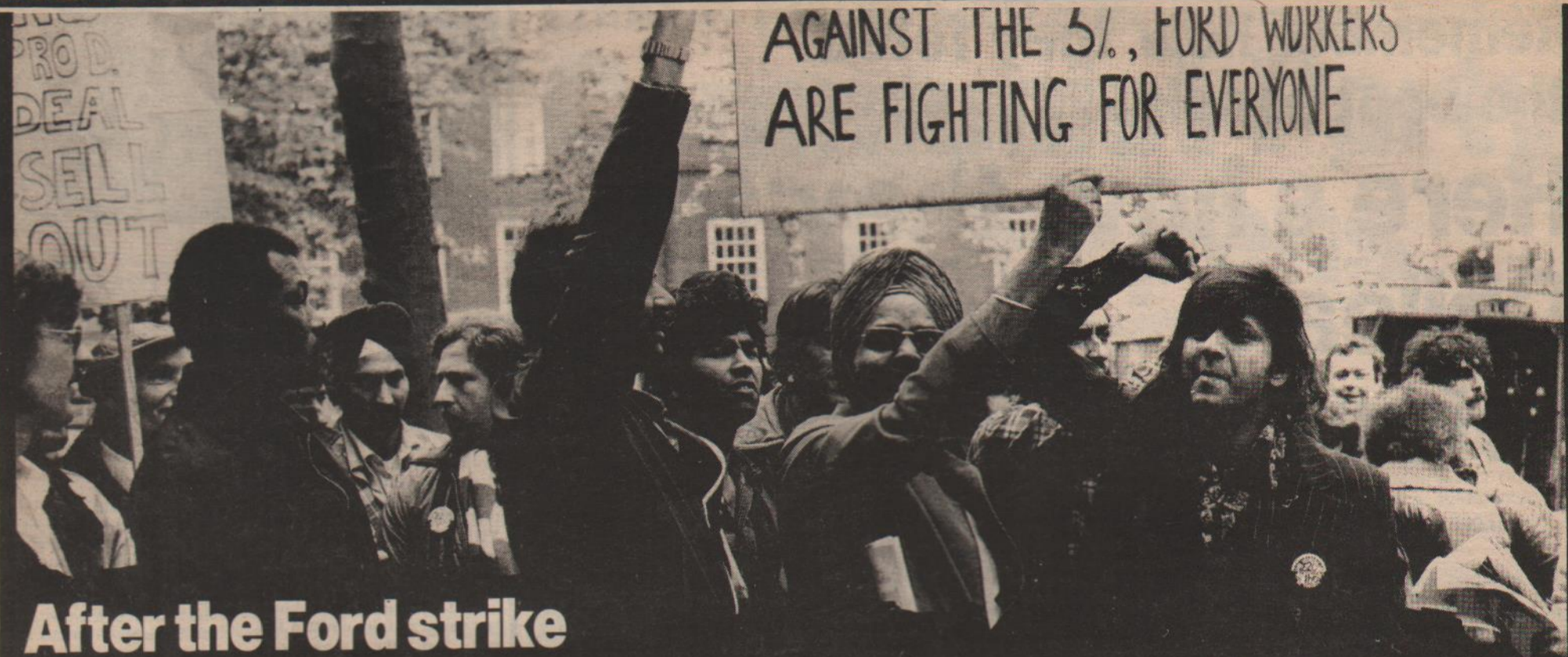


Photo: BOB MURPHY (Socialist Challenge)

After the Ford strike

# The socialist alternative to Labourism

**CALLAGHAN's decision to postpone the general election was a calculated risk.**

The Labour Government was clearly aware that maintaining industrial peace would not be easy. Nonetheless it was prepared to take the risk.

Why? Because it had enormous confidence in the ability of the trade union leaders to deliver the goods, writes **BRIAN GROGAN**.

If Scanlon and Jones had painlessly gone along with the 'social contract', then surely their more moderate successors would prove to be even more pliable.

So Callaghan's entire project has been based on the following formula: use the political weakness of the British working class to dissipate and contain its economic strength.

The Ford workers' strike has demonstrated that incomes policies can be destroyed by the solidarity and determination of powerful sections of workers.

## PENALTY

The full demands of the strikers were by no means met. The penalty clauses, in particular, will hang over their heads. But for the rest of the working class they have scored an impressive victory against management and government.

The gains at Ford will without a doubt encourage rank-and-file workers in other sectors.

An important qualification needs to be added immediately, however. One major reason for the determination of the Ford workers was clearly the fact that Ford is a highly profitable multinational venture.

All the workers realised that it could afford to pay without closing down factories or threatening mass redundancies.

## SOLUTION

In that sense it would be extremely foolish to expect that this form of trade union militancy will become general over the next period.

In other words, calls for more and more militancy are not seen by an

overwhelming majority of workers at this particular time as offering a real solution.

## BACKBONE

Those who thought that the Ford strike was the harbinger of a return to the golden period of post-war industrial militancy (1969-74), and acted accordingly, have already been proved wrong.

The case of Arthur Harper, the militant leader of the Drews Lane Leyland workers in Birmingham, is one example. The decision of the Vauxhall workers to reject recommendations by union officials that they should strike is another.

Those political currents who glorify rank-and-file militancy, and do not understand that what gives backbone to the hold of the treacherous trade union leaders is their political line, clearly have to engage in some serious rethinking.

We have consistently argued that the election of a Labour government in 1974 on the heels of a powerful working class offensive would expose the most vulnerable feature of the British workers movement: its politics.

## BURDEN

It is not that the organised working class is apolitical. What holds it back is Labourism — a weak and sickly ideology at the best of times, but cancerous in periods of grave social and economic crises.

Labourism in office defends the capitalist economy in the name of the 'national interest', it produces austerity measures which put the burden of the crisis on the backs of the

working class. It explains that a 'tightening of the belt' is necessary in order to save 'democracy', but what it means is that workers must accept sacrifices to save capitalism.

It furthermore argues that Labour in office is the soft option for workers. Unless they're careful they might get Thatcher — and then where would they be?

These views are accepted by an overwhelming majority of workers. The alliance of the trade union leaders and the Labour government enables them to be put into practice. Labour continues to win by-elections!

For all these reasons, the government and the trade union bureaucracy have been able to seal off the Ford strike as an isolated gain. The decision of the Ford convenors to present their claim as a 'special case' further aids this view. Nor will it harm the Labour government's electoral chances.

What is of crucial importance for Labour are the public sector claims which are due to come up in the New Year. A prolonged strike by dustmen, sewage workers, etc., could well entail the use of troops to maintain public hygiene.

But it is one thing to put out fires, quite another to keep the shit off the streets. The situation could become nasty. Whatever the ultimate outcome, it could cripple the Callaghan regime.

Accordingly all the efforts of the government and a bulk of the TUC are now devoted to preventing such a strike from taking place.

The General & Municipal Workers leader, Basnett, has already suggested that public sector wages should be linked to the lowest increases in the private sector, i.e. shopworkers! This is what gave meaning to the abortive TUC-government declaration.

Whether Callaghan can offer enough to prevent public sector strikes still remains to be seen. Though the Tory about-turn on incomes policy (itself brought about by Heath's bold defence of the 5 per cent limit) can only aid the Labour government.

In other words, what we are suggesting is that any euphoric assessment of the political situation at the moment would be misguided.

Till the next general election the situation is likely to remain one hedged with a host of uncertainties — not just for socialists and the working class, but for Labour and the ruling class as well. The only guarantee of a generalised counter-offensive is the emergence of a class struggle alternative to the five-percenters.

Given this over-riding objective, socialists in this period have their tasks mapped out for them. First, we must avoid any impressionistic 'readjustments' of our overall strategy and tactics under the pressure of media propaganda and the predictable polarisation between Labour and Tories as the election draws near.

Whilst standing unconditionally for the return of a Labour government, the necessity to stand candidates to the left of Labour on the basis of a programme for taking the class struggle forward remains a key task.

It is an important way of projecting our socialist alternative, popularising the main elements of an alternative class struggle leadership in the unions, and challenging Labourist politics. In this regard the decision of the SWP leadership to overturn the decision of its last conference and not stand any candidates at all can only be regarded as a short-sighted response to the political conjuncture.

Secondly, we must acknowledge that the decision of Callaghan to postpone the election and press ahead with the 5 per cent has certainly created a new awareness amongst more advanced sections of workers. This means that the struggle to build class struggle tendencies in the unions acquires a certain urgency.

The task of such tendencies is to link workers who are prepared to fight for common objectives, regardless of their political affiliations. Such a tendency is the concrete application of the tactics of the united front in today's conditions in Britain.

The example of the Anti Nazi League (in a broad sense) should be applied to re-building the left in the trade unions. The experiences of both the Liaison Committee for the Defence of the Trade Unions and the Rank & File groups are extremely instructive in how not to engage in such an operation.

The emergence of the Ford Workers Group (Combine) shows that it is possible to lay the basis for the development of such tendencies which are prepared, when the occasion demands it, to take initiatives independently of the will of the trade union leaderships.

The 35-hour week, nationalisations, the struggle against racism are all issues which could unite broad sections of workers in the coming period.

The whole discussion on alternative plans is the clearest indication yet of a certain mood amongst many shop stewards throughout British industry.

The point is not whether this plan or the other has certain pitfalls. What we have to grasp is that the attraction of the plans lies in the fact that they have emerged as the main alternative option to syndicalism and the more-more militancy syndrome.

The far left will ignore these debates at its peril. They allow a crucial opening for projecting overall solutions to the crisis centred on workers control demands.

It is for this reason that the next Socialist Challenge Trade Union Conference in March will make these questions a central part of its deliberations.

In addition to the obvious importance of developing alliances within the unions, there is the task of combating the consensus foreign policy of the British state. In recent years we have seen a real absence of initiative by left social-democratic MPs in the sphere of foreign policy.

In the old days there were a vociferous band of left MPs who opposed the cold war. However they tended to fellow-travel with the Soviet bureaucracy. The post-1968 situation has seen a decline of interest in 'foreign' questions.

## PRIORITIES

Socialists have to re-insert these questions into the heart of national politics. Iran and southern Africa are the major priorities at the moment.

If left social-democracy had any fight left it would have organised a campaign of civil disobedience in Parliament on Iran and Zimbabwe.

Left Labour MPs should have threatened a withdrawal of support from the government unless it stopped arms shipments to the Shah. They have not done so.

So here too the burden falls on the shoulders of the socialist left outside the Labour Party. We must make every Labour MP and Cabinet Minister know what we feel on Iran and southern Africa. This means an audacious campaign on both issues (Anti Apartheid please note!).

To conclude: our strength lies in our ability to offer a socialist alternative. In that sense we must continue to struggle for a principled regroupment of the far left, a vigorous Socialist Unity intervention in the elections, a non-sectarian approach to alliances within the unions, and an obstinate internationalism.

For it is on these questions that revolutionary socialism will build in the coming months.

### WHY PAUL FOOT SHOULD BE A SOCIALIST

The case against the Socialist Workers Party

A recent Communist Workers Movement publication 'A clearly, sometimes amusingly, written contribution to the debate on 'socialism and how to get there'. **Time Out**.

'A serious critique of the politics of the Trotskyist tradition... Doing this in an amusing and readable style (another first for a Marxist-Leninist group), they at the same time give a clear outline of their own politics.' **The Leveller**.

A 'devastating critique'. **Undercurrents**. Reprint. Still only £1.20 (200 pages). All good bookshops, or by post from October Books, 4B Temple Court, Liverpool 2. (25p p&p, trade terms available.)

# Police lay into bakers' pickets

**ALL ROUND** the country the bread workers know that their strike is solid. But there is no real shortage of bread in the shops.

The reason? The absence of support from other unions and police support for management on the picket lines.

**JUDE WOODWARD reports.**

In Birmingham bread workers at ten bakeries are on strike, and at all the plants the strike is nearly 100 per cent solid.

Thirty women rejoined the strike last Friday, so from the point of view of the Bakers Union the strike is strengthening.

The problem has largely been with the police.

One of the worst scenes of violence has been at the West Bromwich bakery in Birmingham.

One bread worker had his nose broken on the picket line last week, and on Friday morning 'the police just went berserk', in the words of the branch secretary. This led to another arrest.

## ARRESTS

In Coventry, the police have played a similar strike-breaking role at Suttons bakery. Last Thursday there were three arrests after police violence against the pickets.

In one bakery the police were in direct communication with

management through their walkie-talkies.

In Manchester, a picket buster was reported to the police for brandishing a gun at the strikers. The response of the local police was: 'It's okay. He's got a licence for it.'

But police violence is not dividing the strikers. When the bread workers become aware of the kind of harassment that pickets are facing it tends to strengthen the picket lines.

After a mass meeting to discuss the strike and a report on police behaviour, the regular picket at Sharrocks bakery in Manchester increased in size from 15 to 60.

Bread workers around the country have expressed particular anger with the drivers' unions, which have not instructed their members to refuse to cross picket lines.

Brother Olgiati, regional officer for the Bakers Union in Birmingham, explains: 'We are not getting any support from other unions. We are particularly disgusted with the TGWU.

'They just say: "The drivers are doing their own jobs". But they're not doing just their normal jobs. They are bringing in yeast and flour which they don't normally do.'

The Bakers Union is organising flying pickets to the major flour mills up and down the country to help strengthen the strike.

What does the TUC say? 'We have sent a circular to all the unions concerned informing them that the bakers are on strike.'

'And we have passed on a request from Sam Maddox — general secretary of the Bakers Union — for the other unions to stop at the picket lines and to support the strike.'

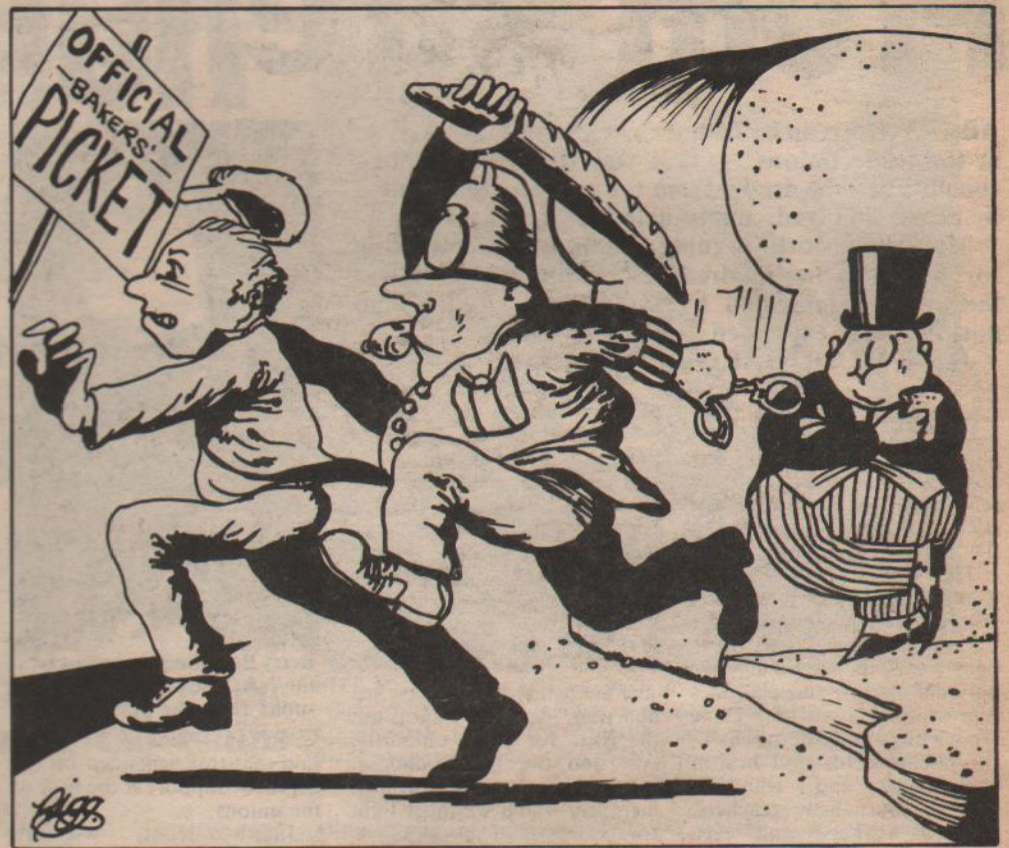
'That's about as much as the TUC can do.'

## PICKETS

The TUC has not been helping to organise the flying pickets. It has not threatened the United Road Transport Union with expulsion from the TUC if it continues to ignore the strike.

It has not strongly recommended ASTMS workers to stay out of the bakeries in support of the strike, or told the TGWU to keep its drivers on the right side of the picket lines.

Bringing forward settlement



dates and striking now against the 5 per cent, and organising joint actions through local pay action committees would aid all those the Government hopes

to defeat. Other workers should organise solidarity with the bread strikers wherever they can — through meetings,

raising the strike in their union branches and on trades councils, and by supporting the flying pickets and those at the bakeries.

# Journalists set for all-out strike



Journalists, like the bakers, may soon have to confront police on the picket line again if the strike goes ahead.

MEMBERS of the National Union of Journalists at the Bolton Evening News were locked out last Friday in the union's battle against the 5 per cent limit.

Journalists on provincial and local newspapers are now set for an all-out strike to win their demand for a £20 increase across the board, reports KATHY LOWE.

The first offer from the employers' association, the Newspaper Society, was only 5 per cent. But they hinted at a possible improvement after they had 'looked at the national situation' (i.e. whether Ford and other workers were going to make mincemeat of the 5 per cent limit).

Two weeks ago the NS upped their offer to 9 per cent (a mere £2-3 before tax on the average senior wage). But even this, they stressed, depended on Whitehall's approval.

## SANCTIONS

A national delegate meeting earlier this month of NUJ chapels (workplace branches) threw out the offer and voted

by 4 to 1 for the current campaign of hard-hitting sanctions, to be followed if necessary by an all-out strike.

The problem, however, is that journalists on their own cannot stop papers. Their disruptive action can be undermined by non-union editors, and they need the backing of NGA and SOGAT printworkers to make any strike action bite.

What is more, the NUJ leadership is dragging its feet over strike action. They have failed to set a deadline for the end of sanctions and the start of a strike, claiming that the union can't afford a strike because its

strike fund is at an all-time low.

But events are overtaking them. On Monday a 200-strong mass meeting in London voted unanimously to fight for immediate strike action in their chapels. Journalists in the Hornsey Journal/Camden Journal/Islington Gazette group have already come out.

As North London branch chairperson Howard Hannah said: 'We must be out on the picket line in order to get NGA and SOGAT to help us stop our papers. We must strike now, before our managements can bring out the profitable pre-Xmas issues.'

# Public sector campaign in Bath

HAD THE TUC agreed to the government proposals on wages, workers in the public sector would have been hit particularly hard.

Who says so? Alan Fisher, general secretary of the National Union of Public Employees.

He argued that the proposed principle of comparing wages in the public sector with those in the private sector would mean a comparison with industries 'which have scandalously low rates of pay'.

Undoubtedly Alan Fisher made a good point. But what about the battle against low pay by his own members?

A public meeting in Bath on 9 November showed what is possible. ANNE CHESTER-TON, a member of Bath Trades Council and a NUPE shop steward, explains.

A Socialist Challenge supporter from NUPE (ambulances) put forward the idea of a campaign against low pay at a NUPE meeting, and afterwards it was taken up by the trades council.

A group of activists then built the meeting using NUPE and our own leaflets and

posters, by getting in contact with unions in low pay sectors. A lot of personal contact was involved.

The response was far better than we had expected. A hundred and thirty people turned up, which is incredible for Bath.

There was tremendous militancy, and a very strong dissatisfaction with the union leaders was expressed because of the way the previous claims had been handled.

We hoped the campaign would argue the case for a £60 minimum wage and a 35-hour week. We wanted to build inter-union solidarity, especially for the coming public sector pay claim.

These ideas were widely supported. The sentiments from the floor were distrust of the union leaders and the need for unity to defend living standards.

A steering committee was set up, but the campaign is being run by rank-and-file unionists from many different sectors.

The campaign can be contacted via: Alan Davis, 120 Holcombe Vale, Bathampton, Bath, Avon.

# NHS ancillaries push for action

THE GOVERNMENT will be replying next week to the NHS ancillary workers' claim for a fully consolidated basic rate of £60 per week, a 35-hour week with no loss of pay, four weeks annual leave after 12 months service, plus fringe benefits — all protected against inflation.

PATRICK SIKORSKI, East Birmingham Hospital branch secretary for the health service union COHSE, reports.

The government is certain to offer 5 per cent, though it may add in a few sops (bonus payments, etc.) to try to keep the public sector quiet until the more militant sections in the private sector have gone back to work.

The National Union of Public Employees is playing

right into the government's hands. Its full-timers are being instructed to ensure that all the public sector claims pile up in January.

But no public sector worker can afford to play a waiting game. The present back-room talks must be broken off now.

Already NHS ancillaries are

virtually bottom of the 31 grades that make up the manual workers pay league. An ancillary's basic pay is now at least £10 below the government's official poverty line!

NHS workers in the West Midlands are beginning to organise now for the claim. NUPE district and divisional committees have been discussing which sections of workers they will bring out if action is called.

The COHSE Pay Action Committee has organised ten mass meetings in hospitals in the region, and distributed 30,000 leaflets explaining the claim. Most importantly, it has called a picket of the negotiations on 8 December.

An impressive mobilisation of workers from all the NHS unions then will encourage inter-union co-operation in the localities in the fight for the claim.

This fight must also include demands for a stepping up of the campaign against the cuts and cash limits, in order to counter the idea that excessive wage claims will eat into the money available for the patient.

The outcome of the ancillaries' claim will determine the outcome of all the other claims of NHS workers. So all NHS workers are being asked to join the picket on 8 December at the DHSS, Elephant and Castle, London.

# Union conference on abortion From strength to strength

**ABORTION is an issue that can and must be taken up in the trade unions — that was the overwhelming conclusion to be drawn from the conference attended by nearly 500 trade union delegates last weekend.**

**Months of work, arguing, discussing and fighting for delegates in hundreds of union branches was thoroughly vindicated by the militant feeling and positive ideas expressed at the conference.**

**JUDE WOODWARD reports.**

Outside the conference, held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, a handful of anti-abortionists holding their emotive and sensationalised placards made no impact on the delegates in the hall.

The conference, organised jointly by the National Abortion Campaign and the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign, was sponsored by five national unions, and delegates representing branches came from a huge range of unions — the public sector and health, engineering and transport unions, journalists, teachers, tobacco workers, and even miners.

An impressive platform of trade union leaders addressed the conference and called for an extension of abortion facilities,

together with a strong response to any attack on women's present abortion rights.

Alan Fisher, general secretary of the Public Employees Union, which has a large membership among health workers, made a fine, militant speech.

## BASIC

'I am neither for nor against abortion,' he said. 'That is not the issue for trade unionists. Abortion, the right to choose, is a basic right of our women members which we must fight for.'

Fisher pledged himself to ensure that the TUC's policy of calling for a demonstration against any restrictive legislation is implemented. But he



**Berry Beaumont, a doctor from the NAC Steering Committee, spoke from the platform.**

said that this depended on the degree of support at the base of the unions.

Judith Hunt, women's organiser of the Engineering Union's staff section, TASS, gave particular attention to the need to extend out-patient abortion facilities — to put up a

strong resistance to cuts in the health service.

But nearly all the trade union leaders dragged up the old metaphors about 'generals leading troops that are four miles down the road'. How many times has this stale cliché been used to justify inactivity by the labour leaders?

The conference clearly showed that a large current among the 'troops' was not four miles down the road at all.

## AHEAD

There were a large number of teachers at the conference, who were obliged to attend as observers because their union's official position is that abortion has nothing to do with teachers. In the NUT, as in many other unions, the troops are way ahead of the generals!

Many trade unionists feel strongly about a woman's right to choose — now we expect the leaders to use their position and influence to turn this into concrete activity: to build mass actions to extend and defend women's rights to abortion.

Alan Fisher led 70,000 public sector workers on a massive



**ALAN FISHER, general secretary of NUPE.**

demonstration against the cuts in November 1976, and then left them with nothing to do while the leaders went to do some parliamentary lobbying.

We don't want that on abortion too. As well as fighting for and helping to

build any demonstration, the union officials should take the lead in educating their members.

We expect to see a TUC leaflet explaining TUC policy on abortion.

Fisher is the leader of a union with many health service workers — it is particularly important that he takes a positive stance and makes the kind of speech he made on Saturday to the members of his own union.

He should be encouraging them to support campaigns for day-care abortion facilities and fighting cuts in the health service.

## SUCCESS

The TUC, Women's TUC, and the union leaders need to be encouraging local campaigns, providing material support for the National Abortion Campaign, and organising programmes of meetings and picketing of hospitals with inadequate facilities.

The conference was a big success. Let's ensure that the trade union leaders take us on from strength to strength.

Photo: BOB MURPHY (Socialist Challenge)

# Back to work at Ford Penalties and sanctions

**HAVING driven a coach and horses through the 5 per cent pay code, the 57,000 Ford workers are back at work.**

**ROB McCRAE, a press shop worker at the Dagenham plant, looks at what happens now.**

The company had originally proposed a 'phased' return to work. But union leader Reg Birch complained that this was a divisive tactic, so the company agreed to everyone going back together last Friday after the Wednesday mass meetings.

Not much was done on Friday. In one section of the body plant at Dagenham there was a walk-out because of the cold working conditions.

The walk-out symbolised the

situation in the factory. The 16½ per cent increase won through the strike has left the workers confident and strong.

## CONFIDENCE

That strength and confidence will be increasingly needed as the effects of some of the other aspects of the settlement are felt.

The first of these has already surfaced. Throughout the negotiations Ford refused to

consider the question of a shorter working week.

Now the company is going in the opposite direction and has instigated a drive for increased overtime. With a shortage of 1,200 workers on the Dagenham estate alone, the company is looking to overtime to shore up spare capacity.

The Joint Works Committee (JWC) at Dagenham has announced that, as part of the struggle for the 35-hour week, no 'excessive' overtime will be worked.

But while the unions didn't get the shorter week, management did win the penalty clauses against unofficial strikes. The company always regarded these clauses as crucial, arguing that elimination of unofficial strike action was a high priority.

A test will come sooner or later. Whether or not the unions and the JWC are serious in their opposition to the penalty clauses will be measured by how they seek to prepare that event.

But rather than launch a

campaign on these questions, the union leaders have joined the campaign by the company against the sanctions to be imposed by the Labour government.

The sanctions mean little in terms of their effect on Ford's profits. Their job is more political than economic.

The government is attempting to justify the stand it intends to make in the public sector over the 5 per cent by showing 'firmness' with private sector companies.

## ATTACKS

The workers in Ford have no interest in collaboration with the company against sanctions. Their only interest is to struggle for policies like the 35-hour week and against attacks on union organisation.

It is these questions which the left-wing 'Ford Workers Group' will be looking at in the coming weeks as part of the fight for a political alternative both inside and outside the stewards organisation in Ford.



**TERENCE BECKETT, Ford UK boss.**

# How to fight the government

**A FIRST step towards ensuring the success of the second Socialist Challenge trade union conference next March was taken in Leeds two weeks ago.**

A local conference of trade unionists attracted 25 people from a wide range of unions.

Members of the engineering and transport unions, from the public sector, teachers and technical staff discussed the implications of the Ford strike

and how to fight the government's 5 per cent wage limit.

Various different political tendencies on the left were represented, together with a large number of independent socialists.

The regional conference gave its backing to the projected national conference on workers' plans and workers' control next spring.

## SOCIALIST CHALLENGE TRADE UNION CONFERENCE 2 Our alternative to Callaghan

- \*The Lucas Experience, with Phil Asquith (exec. member, Lucas Combine)
- \* Workers Control in Iran, with a speaker from the Iranian workers movement.
- \* Closures and Workers Control, with Carl Brecker (Hounslow Hospital Occupation Committee)
- \* And more! (All speakers in a personal capacity)

Saturday 24 March at Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham

Tickets £1 from SC Trade Union Conference, PO Box 50, London NI 2XP.

**THE NEXT important state trial begins at Marylebone magistrates court, London, on Monday 4 December, writes PIERS CORBYN.**

It features 14 people charged under the 'Criminal Trespass Law' for resisting eviction at the Huntley Street mass squat.

Some 650 police, many Special Patrol Group with riot shields, bulldozers, pickaxes and grappling hooks, moved in to end the squat by 160 women, men and children on 16 August at a cost of £50,000 to the public.

The trial is the first large scale use of the new Criminal Trespass Law (part 2 of the Criminal Law Act, 1977). The signs are that the prosecution will attempt to set a precedent which establishes 'resistance' under the new legislation in the broadest possible way.

## BARRICADES

The arrests and charges do not appear to relate to specific activity at the barricades on the day of eviction, but are much wider in scope.

The 14 are charged with 'resisting the Sheriff in the execution of his duty between 26 July and 16 August'. One of the defendants was not even present at the eviction, but was picked up later.

The Huntley Street Defence Campaign is already backed by a sizeable list of trades councils, trade unions, community groups, and a number of Labour Party branches.

The Labour Party National Executive stated in debate at the Labour Party conference that it was 'very concerned

about the Huntley Street situation'.

The defence committee is calling a demonstration at 10am on Monday 4 December outside Marylebone magistrates court (Edgware Rd tube).

## FILM

A film of the eviction and background is also available. Further details from c/o Camden Law Centre, 146 Kentish Town Rd., NW1 (tel. 01-267 1456/01-701 5691).

# BRIEF

**NAN BAILEY**, a leading black militant of the US Socialist Workers Party, will be among speakers at the Socialist Challenge Day School on Racism and Black Liberation on 3 December in London. Contact your local group for details or ring Colin on 01-359 8371.

A ONE-DAY conference on 9 December has been called by the National Campaign Against the Supplementary Benefits Review. The review, published by the DHSS in July, proposes a system of 'rough justice' which includes things like no benefit for school leavers for the first three months of unemployment.

The conference is at Birmingham University Students Union from 10am to 5pm (£1 fee except for claimants) — details from: Jason Copeland (NCASBR), c/o Harlesden Advice Centre, 25 High Street, London NW10 (tel. 01-965 2590).

THE Garners Strike Committee, together with the Greater London Association of Trades Councils and TGWU No.1 Region, is organising a 'stake-out' of all Garners restaurants in London on Friday 8 December.

Turn up to the Haymarket restaurant between 12 and 3pm and from 5.30pm onwards for allocation to a restaurant by the strike committee, or ring them beforehand [240 1056].

THE Socialist Unity steering committee meets this Saturday, 2 December, at 11am at 328 Upper St., London N1.

ESSEX University Students Union is organising a one-day mass picket of the university on Monday 4 December after eight weeks of rent strike against a 19.8 per cent rent increase (grants only went up by 8.9 per cent) and for adequate accommodation. Students from elsewhere are being asked to join the picket.

ISLINGTON Campaign Against Racism and Fascism have called a demonstration this Saturday, 2 December, in response to fascist attacks by supporters of the National Front and British Movement in Chapel Market. Sponsors of the demo include 15 Labour councillors, the trades council, the Asian Centre, and the ANL. It assembles at 11.30am near Chapel Market to move off at noon.

POLICE were ordered to pay Brick Lane defendant Stephen Wright's costs on Monday after he had been cleared on appeal of a charge of 'threatening behaviour' carrying a two months jail sentence.

The next appeal comes up on 6 December and the defence campaign is again calling for a picket of Knightsbridge Crown Court (1 Hans Crescent, SW1) at 10am. A regular mobilisation every Sunday in Brick Lane is also being restarted.

THE charge of 'conspiracy to cause explosions' has now been dropped completely in the case against six anarchists arrested this summer. The charges have now been reduced to conspiracy to rob plus two of possession of explosive substances. Four of those charged are still being refused bail, however. Further details from: Persons Unknown, Box 123, 182 Upper Street, London N1.

THE Campaign Against the Immigration Laws (CAIL) is organising a day school on 'Immigration Laws — What They Are and How to Fight Them' on Saturday 9 December, 10.30am-5pm, at the Institute of Education, Bedford Way, London WC1. Admission £1 (50p non-earners). Details from: CAIL, c/o Box 133, 182 Upper Street, London N1.

# HOME NEWS

## ANL trade union conference

# Mass action needed to fight racism

THE ANTI NAZI LEAGUE holds its first trade union conference in Congress House, London, this Saturday.

It has a lot to do, argues RICH PALSER, in the light of the past attitude of the trade union leaderships to racism.

In 1924 the Trades Union Congress passed a resolution which 'protests against the continued employment of Chinese and cheap Asiatic labour on British steamers, and requests the General Council to approach the Government with a view to a Bill being brought in to make such employment illegal...to, at the same time, make arrangements for the repatriation of unemployed Asiatics'.

### RESEMBLANCE

As a resolution, this one from a congress with a left-wing reputation bears a close resemblance to the current politics of the National Front.

But just how far has the TUC itself gone in repudiating such

sentiments?

The report of the General Council to this year's TUC, for instance, pointed out that due to TUC pressure the government has further reduced the quota of work permits in the hotel and catering industry for foreign workers.

The quota, which stood at 8,500 in 1975, was only 2,061 this year.

Among the members of the hotel and catering industry committee of the TUC are such supposed lefties as Bernard Dix of the National Union of Public Employees and Harry Urwin of the Transport Workers.

They and others offer 'principled' reasons for seeking a reduction in the work permit quota in hotels and catering, citing the super-exploitation of workers in these industries.

Wretchedly low pay and abysmal working conditions do apply in such organisations as Trust Houses Forte. But cutting down the employment opportunities of foreign workers in the industry is hardly a solution.

### CONDITIONS

The problem of conditions in catering and hotels is two-fold: the insecurity of the work permit system, and the fear of victimisation among those who do work in the industry.

A campaign against work controls — coupled with a drive for and support to unionisation would be the positive solution to these problems.

The policy on work permits displayed by the TUC is just the worst example of a general



BILL KEYS, of the TUC equal rights committee, declared at this year's congress that 'action is needed now by the police, the Commission for Racial Equality, and the government', and thanked the print union NATSOPA for withdrawing a motion to support the ANL.

Photo: BOB MURPHY [Socialist Challenge]

attitude. Pious statements and little action is an accurate description.

When the fascists march to incite racial violence, the leaders of the TUC do not call for counter-mobilisations by the unions, they call for state bans which are being used against the left as well as the fascists.

When Thatcher whips up racist sentiments around immigration, they deplore her use of the issue to 'make political capital' and do nothing to mobilise pickets of the jails where the prisoners of race are kept under suspicion of illegal entry into Britain.

Instead of challenging institutionalised racism by affirmative action for more black teachers, more black journalists, more jobs for blacks, they

say that the Race Relations Act must be strengthened to halt racist outbursts — as if the reality of racism can be ended by a battle of ideas alone.

In short, they urge reliance upon the government, the police, and the courts rather than reliance on mass action by the labour movement.

### STARTING

As a campaign which has consistently stood for mass action against the Nazis, with massive support in the labour movement, the ANL can provide the starting point for a united movement to demand mass action against racism by the union leaders, and fight for that mass action to be undertaken by the rank-and-file now.

# 'A close look at fascism and racism'

'A CLOSE Look at Fascism and Racism' is a pamphlet consisting, in the main, of reprints from 'Big Flame'. JULIAN ATKINSON examines its arguments.

The most controversial article is the interview with A. Sivanandan, director of the Institute of Race Relations.

There is no doubt that the left owes a considerable debt to Sivanandan. His 'Race, Class and the State' explained the particular nature of the black immigration into Britain in the clearest terms.

### MUDDLED

Yet the most important insights can also be muddled up with impressionism, as when the impact of the projected 1976 Race Relations Act caused him to write: 'Racism dies in order that capital might survive'.

Sivanandan returns to this theme in the interview, when he explains that capitalism no longer needs institutional racism but has done nothing, until the rise of the NF as an electoral force, about racism within the working class.

Sivanandan attempts to underpin these views politically with a simplistic and dangerous analysis of class forces.

According to this, modern capital, and its tool the Labour Party, wants to get rid of

racism. Out-dated free enterprise capital and the Tory Party, on the other hand, play the racist card.

There are two failures in this approach. First, Sivanandan sees the Labour Party and the trade unions just as instruments of bourgeois rule rather than as contradictory organisations — both bourgeois and working class.

This approach makes him see Grunwick as a failure for the enlightened capitalists since a 'non-union black workforce spells danger for the system'.

The second weakness is that the obverse of this coin can be read — and in Italy at this moment is being read — to mean that the first stage of the fightback of the working class, after its 'historic defeat' in 1975, is to form an alliance with 'enlightened' capitalism against 'out-moded' capitalism.

In spite of these weaknesses, Sivanandan hits the target squarely when he argues the necessity of placing anti-racist activity in the anti-fascist struggle.

One omission from the pamphlet is a serious discussion on how an autonomous black liberation movement fits into the struggle against fascism.

We still have to defend the simple concept of autonomy against its detractors, but it is time that we clarified our ideas further.

The brutal fact is that the British revolutionary left has just about caught up with the refinements to Trotsky's work on black nationalism and self-determination that the American SWP made in the early 1960s when considering Malcolm X and the Black Muslims. And some have not got that far.

### AUTONOMOUS

The overall criticism that could be made is that the pamphlet is not more than the sum of its individual parts. This is not just a problem inherent in a collection of articles written at different times, but rather comes from the level of political strategy.

The role of the NF at this period of British history is not dealt with. Is it destined to be a repeat performance of the 1930s, or does fascism in this period gain its importance from moves towards the strong state?

Only Sivanandan raises these points, and his answers are not satisfactory.

The problem of how the autonomous movements relate together in the overall class struggle is scarcely broached.



MAY 1979

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27	28	29	30	31									

1979 Anti-Racist Anti-Fascist Anti-Nazi Calendar. 13 stunning poster-size prints — 17ins by 24ins — on historical, international, and contemporary anti-fascist and anti-racist themes.

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There is no master plan that decrees that the various components of the working class fit harmoniously together like pieces in a jigsaw puzzle.

It requires the conscious intervention of revolutionaries to fight against all forms of oppression within the working class and for the interests of the whole working class.

The June anti-racist, anti-fascist conference, when some of the women denounced the men present for their sexism, whilst some blacks denounced the women and gays for their racism, and some trade unionists denounced the 'middle-class' present for their petty-bourgeois deviations, should give us warning of that.

Que hacer?   
 Wochen   
 Organ der Revolutionären Marxistischen Liga

ST. PANCRAS Town Hall was packed. Twelve hundred people were present to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the Fourth International.

Outside there were the usual paper-sellers and distributors of slanderous leaflets [first prize again to the WRP: 'Supporters of Tariq Ali and Mandel — a party of the Establishment'].

Inside there were banners proclaiming solidarity with different struggles around the globe.

The first speaker was Nan Bailey, the

Detroit organiser of the American Socialist Workers Party. She stressed the struggle against racism and sexism, noting that Carter was not a real democrat.

Harry Wicks and Charlie van Gelderen spoke on behalf of the Veterans against Stalinism. Charlie had been a young delegate at the founding-conference of the Fourth International, Harry a founder of British Trotskyism.

Harry particularly praised the role of Socialist Challenge in fighting for far left unity in Britain today.

The high point of the evening was the speech of the Iranian revolutionary, Hormoz Rahimian. He described the developing tide of revolution struggle in Iran, explained the possibilities that existed for building a revolutionary party, and mercilessly assailed those who had collaborated with the dictatorship.

He appealed for the support of the British working class and ended by stressing the international character of the Iran revolution.

His speech, delivered without the slightest trace of demagoguery, received a



Photo: G.M. COOKSON [Socialist Challenge]

Left to right: Ernest Mandel, Hormoz Rahimian, Harry Wicks, Nan Bailey and Francis Murphy

# THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL 40 YEARS

## Hugo Blanco on Peru

IT IS possible to overcome sectarianism and division on the revolutionary left. And one place where that is successfully happening is Peru, which recently saw the formation of the Revolutionary Workers Party [RWP].

In an article which originally appeared in 'Combate Socialista', the party's paper, HUGO BLANCO explains how the unification came about and why it was necessary.

Che Guevara, the Latin American who said, 'Either socialist revolution or a caricature of revolution' fell on 8 October 1967.

On 8 October, 1978, the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores was founded. But it didn't begin from scratch. The RWP is the fruit of more than two years of unification efforts by several revolutionary Trotskyist groups.

Of course, not everyone agreed to a unification. There were those who remained behind, because it was difficult for them to abandon their sectarianism. But they will come around.

The groups that have unified are the FIR, the FIR-IV, the Combate Socialista Group, the Natalia Sedova Circles, and part of the PST. Now we are a party.

We are the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores, fighting for:

\*A government of the workers of the city and the countryside.

\*Factories into the hands of the workers, not the capitalists.

We do not believe any section of the

capitalists will fight together with us against imperialism. The workers must maintain their class independence.

We believe that workers throughout the world should join with us in the struggle against capitalism. This is why we are part of the Fourth International.

At first we thought we had to fully discuss our tactical differences in order to achieve unity. We wasted a lot of time and made very little progress this way. Then we changed our method.

While continuing to discuss our differences, we carried out joint activity in those areas where there was agreement. This helped us progress faster and cut through many misunderstandings.

We are still not finished discussing. But the differences are not so great, and they can be worked out within the unified party. The discussion is now much more fraternal in the atmosphere of joint activity.

Our congress will take place in three months, after we have fully discussed the most important political issues. If differences still exist, they will be discussed and voted on at the congress,

and the party will carry out the approved by the majority. This is democratic centralism; we discuss positions democratically, then we act on the line adopted by the majority.

We call first of all on the comrades of the PST who did not want to unify well as on the comrades of the PO to join us in forming one big Trotskyist party in Peru.

For now, we will work together with the PST and the POMR to strengthen the FOCEP and to make it a stronger organisation fighting for workers government and social with no alliances with any sectors of bourgeoisie.

And what about the rest of the

When these compañeros understand that the workers cannot join sectors of the bosses; when they understand that the bosses are against us; when they understand the only way to free ourselves from imperialism is to sweep away capitalism — when that day comes, we will form a single party of all the workers against all the exploiters.

As long as the compañeros of other left parties don't understand, we cannot form one single party. We will still work with them in activities that advance the workers' struggles, in favour of democracy within the mass movement, with a slogan of unity and without sectarianism. The slogan shall always be, 'The left will never be defeated'.

### ONE OF the features of the Fourth International rally was an appeal for funds to aid the development of the Iranian section of the Fourth International and the work of the International Marxist Group in Britain. DAVID JONES reports.

The only way revolutionaries can raise money is by appealing to their supporters. The IMG has decided to launch an appeal to raise £20,000 by May 1979.

Bob Pennington's plea for money at the rally went off like a bomb. He explained that a certain percentage would be given to the Iranian comrades so that they could produce a weekly newspaper.

It was the focus on Iran that began to empty pockets. It was the international character of the rally that made people go for their cheque books.

'We rely only on you', said Pennington. 'We have no other resources'. The response was impressive.

Pennington kept up a steady barrage. Here he polemicised with a sectarian, there he explained how the entire Central Committee of the Spanish section of the FI had been imprisoned under the dictatorship. After 45 minutes the fund appeal was ended. The total was staggering.

In tenners, fivers and humble pound notes £817 flowed in. Cheques totalled £1,507 and a further £101.72 was collected in coins.

French francs, German marks, and a few greenbacks also found their way to the collection buckets. There was

£1,243 in IOUs with names and addresses supplied. The total collected amounted to a staggering £3,747.16p.

In other words, we collected nearly a fifth of the total. Our supporters responded well to our practical needs.

The £20,000 has been earmarked for increasing our flow of pamphlets, regularising our journals, stabilising Revolution (widely recognised as the best youth paper on the left), and improving our own printing facilities. In addition we will be able to have political organisers in key regions.

So we appeal to Socialist Challenge readers to help the organisation which took the initiative to launch the paper.

#### IMG FUND DRIVE

I enclose a donation of £..... to the £20,000 IMG Development Fund Drive.

Name.....

Address.....

Post to: IMG, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Cheques should be made payable to 'The Week'.

بأعمال العالم أجمعاً  
 منسدين ماركسيين  
 ناطقة بلسان العصابة الشيوعية الثورية (الاممية الرابعة)

SÜREKLİ



spontaneous standing ovation amidst chants from the large section of Iranians ['Death to the Shah', 'Owen Out', 'Long Live the Fourth'].

In conclusion Ernest Mandel sketched out the gains of the International. It was still small in comparison to the tasks which confronted it, but its strength was based on the 'rock of internationalism' which had guided it since its foundation.

'The believers of socialism in one country are confronting each other on the Ussuri River', thundered Mandel,

'and on the border of Cambodia and Vietnam'. A tragic vindication of the theses of Trotsky.

Mandel stressed the need to build mass revolutionary parties throughout the world. 'Not just in one country', he said, 'but throughout the globe'.

'If you make a balance-sheet today and you are objective you will see who was right and who was wrong on how an International will be constructed.'

He ended by describing the inspiring meeting he had attended in West Berlin in solidarity with Rudolf Bahro:

'A resolution was passed at the end

with the signatures, of the Italian CP and SP, the Spanish SP, and the Fourth International. Yes, today there is no one who can deny that we are an indelible part of the international working class movement.

'It is the posthumous victory of all our comrades who were slandered and killed by Stalinism and the fascists.'

Amidst loud applause the International was sung. A careful ear would have heard its strains in Persian amongst the front of the audience. But it was also sung in Spanish, in French, in German, and in English.

**FINAL ON**



All photos: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

**Socialist Challenge**  
**WAS TUN**  
**DIRREKT ABEITUN**

## 10-part programme for European elections

WE WILL campaign in the elections to the European Parliament on a single international programme. We will submit this for discussion by all organisations adhering to the workers movement.

We call on them to discuss it and consider a common campaign on the basis of the essential points of this programme, which defends the point of view of the workers and the socialist revolution in these elections.

1. Against the austerity policy imposed by the bourgeoisie to make the workers pay for the crisis.  
For co-ordinated trade union action on a European scale to win the 35 hour week with no loss of pay or lay-offs.  
Against redundancies and factory closures, the workers' power of veto, confiscation of businesses which close down and their re-opening as nationalised enterprises under workers' control.  
Against the inflation which goes hand in hand with unemployment, a sliding scale of wages and social expenditure.  
Against the capitalist economic crisis, a plan of workers solutions elaborated by the workers' movement, oriented principally towards satisfying the needs of the masses, based on the nationalisation without compensation of large industry, the credit sector and foreign trade.  
Against discrimination against immigrant workers, women and youth, who are the principal victims of unemployment. Absolute equality of

- political and trade union rights.
2. For the complete equality of civil, political and trade union rights for immigrant workers. Against all racist or chauvinist legislation limiting the free circulation of workers. Against the racist and neo-fascist offensive, unity in action of the whole workers' movement to defend persecuted or threatened minorities.
3. Against neo-colonialism and the European imperialisms and their aggression in Chad, Sahara, Djibouti, Zaire and elsewhere. Solidarity with all the liberation struggles of the colonial peoples. Leave NATO.
4. Against the oppression of national minorities in Europe itself, such as the Basques and Catalans. For their unlimited right of self-determination. For an independent united Ireland. Withdrawal of all British troops from the North of Ireland.
5. Solidarity with the struggle of the masses of Eastern Europe and the USSR for their democratic, political, trade union and national rights.  
Warsaw Pact troops out of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic!
6. Against the pollution and threats to the environment caused by the system of profit and competition.  
Against the construction of nuclear power stations. Closure of all power stations in operation. The whole truth on the current risks from nuclear power

- stations must be brought to the attention of everyone.
7. For support for the struggle of women for equality of rights and in law. Free abortion and contraception on demand. Equal pay for equal work. Special measures to compensate women for the effects of discrimination in training and employment. For proper collective facilities to put an end to the double working day.
8. Against the increase in repressive laws such as the proscription from professional posts in the Federal Republic of Germany of 'opponents of the constitution'. Uncompromising and unrestricted defence of democratic freedoms and the right to strike.  
Against the European Anti-terrorist Convention which is not aimed at terrorism but at the radical wing of the workers' movement and which will tomorrow be used against the workers' movement as a whole. For the free traffic of people and ideas between the states of Europe and the world.
9. For the unity in action of all parties of the workers movement. Against any pact with the bourgeois parties. Total independence of the trade unions with regard to the state.  
To find a way out of the crisis of capital, capitalism must be overthrown, the road to socialism must be opened, the workers must take power.
10. Against the integration of

- Portugal, Spain and Greece into the Community of capital. Against the Common Market and the Europe of the trusts and big capital. For a United Socialist States of Europe. For the Republic of workers' councils.
- Organisations in the EEC member countries:
- Britain: International Marxist Group
  - France: Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire
  - Federal Republic of Germany: Gruppe Internationale Marxisten
  - Belgium: Ligue Revolutionnaire des Travailleurs/Revolutionnaire Arbeiders Liga
  - Netherlands: Internationale Kommunisten Bond
  - Italy: Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari
  - Luxembourg: Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire
  - Ireland: Movement for a Socialist Republic
  - Denmark: Revolutionar Socialistischer Forbund
- The campaign is supported by sections in the countries whose governments have demanded entry into the Common Market:
- Spain: Liga Comunista Revolucionaria
  - Portugal: Partido Socialista Revolucionario
  - Greece: Communist Internationalist Organisation of Greece [OKDE].

# IRELAND

## Armagh, ten years on

# MASON SUBMITS TO PAISLEY

LAST SUNDAY thousands of people defied a ban on demonstrations in Armagh City imposed by Northern Ireland Secretary Roy Mason.

The march, organised by the Relatives Action Committee, was in support of political status for Republican prisoners and in commemoration of a Civil Rights march held ten years ago in Armagh.

In this context Roy Mason's prohibition of Sunday's march has a particular significance, reports GEOFF BELL.

Roy Mason did what the Unionist government of Northern Ireland refused to do ten years ago: he directly prohibited a political demonstration in Armagh in the face of threats from Loyalists led by Ian Paisley.

Ten years ago the demonstration had been organised by the Civil Rights Association. It followed police attacks on the historic civil rights march in Derry on 5 October.

When plans for the Armagh march were announced, Ian Paisley — who was then making a name for himself as the leading 'hardline' Loyalist — demanded that the North of

Ireland government ban it.

He went to see Home Secretary William Craig, who had authorised the police attacks on the Derry march and was soon to be sacked from the Unionist government for being too right-wing and sectarian.

### REFUSED

But even Craig refused to bow down to Paisley's threats, and he allowed the march to take place.

Ten years later it was again Ian Paisley who demanded that the authorities — this time in the shape of Roy Mason and the Labour government — stop the Armagh march.

This time he found Roy Mason more obliging than William Craig had proved; on 21 November Mason duly issued his ban.

Paisley immediately issued a statement supporting Mason and claiming 'a victory'. Plans for a counter-mobilisation, a 'church service' along the route of the RAC march, were called off.

### INVADED

Ten years ago, when the Civil Rights march did take place, it was Paisleyite mobs who invaded the centre of Armagh determined to stop what Paisley called 'the rebels'.

The Loyalists plastered the centre of Armagh with posters headed 'Ulster's Defenders' with the advice: 'A Friendly Warning. Board up your windows. Remove all women and children from the city on Saturday 30 November.'

### BLOCKED

The invasion of the town centre by the Paisleyites

effectively blocked the route of the demonstration. The police asked the Civil Rights stewards to halt their march before they reached the Loyalist mobs.

### BIGOTS

The Civil Rights leaders agreed. The march had been halted by Paisleyite bigots.

Ten years later, it was the RUC and the British Army who fulfilled the role the Loyalists had played in 1969: stopping 'the rebels' from marching in a peaceful, political demonstration.

Remember how they used to promise that the British government was in the North of Ireland to ensure the rule of democracy?

### PROMISE

Remember how they used to promise that British troops were in the North of Ireland to defend Catholics from the Loyalist bigots?

Such promises seemed a long time dead in Armagh last weekend.



A SCENE from the Armagh Relatives Action Committee march on Sunday. 3,000 people took part.

# Long live Peoples Democracy

THE FIRST major fusion between two left-wing groups that Ireland has seen in the last ten years of struggle took place in Dublin last weekend.

The Movement for a Socialist Republic, the Irish section of the Fourth International, has joined forces with People's Democracy.

The new organisation is adopting the People's Democracy title — a name which has a rich history of struggle in Ireland.

This history of PD is taken from a longer article in the latest edition of 'Socialist Republic', the newspaper of the fused organisation.

People's Democracy was founded ten years ago on 9 October 1968. Its prime movers were the Young Socialist Alliance, formed in Belfast in June 1968.

On 5 October 1968, 40 YSA supporters went to the Civil Rights march in Derry and were in the front rank when the RUC baton-charged the protesters.

Four days later, 3,000 outraged students tried to march from Queens University to the City Hall in Belfast, but were stopped by the RUC. The students were frustrated and demoralised.

### VIGOUR

YSA members took the initiative and proposed the establishment of a permanent Civil Rights organisation. The People's Democracy was born.

PD was a mass democratic organisation modelled on the student/worker assemblies in Paris earlier in the year. The organisation was naive and confused at times, but it had all the vigour, energy and flair of the Paris upsurge.

PD quickly became the driving force of the Civil Rights struggle, participating in countless marches and protests, and turning out a constant stream of leaflets and posters.

Most dramatic was the Belfast to Derry march of January 1969, organised by PD and viciously attacked by Loyalist and state forces —

notably at Burntollet Bridge, just a few miles from Derry.

The following month eight PD candidates polled 23,000 votes in the Northern Ireland general election.

### BARRICADES

In August 1969 the Stormont government unleashed the RUC, B Specials and Paisleyite gangs to attack the Catholic ghettos of Belfast and Derry. The people responded by setting up barricades.

PD set up 'Radio Free Belfast' and produced a daily resistance paper. Both boosted morale in the ghettos and gave PD its first real roots in West Belfast.

Two months later PD formally committed itself to a Workers Republic and moved away from the University to establish itself in working class areas.

It also established Free Citizen as a regular weekly journal of agitation and propaganda.

### LEADING

Over the next year the organisation continued to play a leading role in the Civil Rights struggle as well as raising economic and social questions, both in the North and South.

In a sort of unintentional compliment to the organisation eight PD members were among those interned in August 1971. The paper changed its name to



2,500 participated in the Prisoners Aid Committee march in London on Sunday. The march was in solidarity with Irish prisoners and two thirds of the demonstrators marched in the United Troops Out Movement contingent.

Unfree Citizen, and members of the organisation took a leading role in organising rent and rate strikes in the first vital weeks after internment.

In November 1971, PD took the lead in setting up the Northern Resistance Movement, which took the struggle back to the streets and raised the clear and unequivocal demand to smash Stormont.

PD worked closely with Provisional Sinn Fein in setting up the NRM, thus becoming the first socialist organisation to reject the then fashionable critique of the Provos as green fascists.

Instead, along with the Revolutionary Marxist Group (forerunner of the MSR), PD insisted that the Provos were a major anti-imperialist force.

Following the suspension of Stormont in March 1972, PD

kept up a hectic pace of rallies and marches for the next nine months.

But the overthrow of Stormont, the ceasefire by the Provos which followed, and the collaboration with the British government by the reformist Social Democratic & Labour Party all sowed confusion and uncertainty about the way forward.

By mid-1973, support for marches was down to a couple of hundred of hard-line militants.

A power-sharing executive was set up in January 1974, with the full participation of the SDLP. When it was brought down in May 1974 it was by Loyalists, not the anti-imperialist forces.

For the rest of 1974 and most of 1975 the Loyalists appeared to be consolidating their

position, and there was demoralisation among the minority in the North.

Countering the arguments of the Provisionals, PD insisted that victory was not at hand; the organisation also warned against flirtations with 'working class' Loyalists.

But erring in the other direction, PD argued that a Loyalist take-over was imminent.

At the beginning of 1976, when it was becoming clear that there could be no immediate Loyalist take-over, political differences within PD came to a head and there was a serious split in the organisation.

This was partly over the take-over theory, partly over the correct relationship between the Republican military campaign and the overall struggle.

The organisation was seriously weakened by the split. Even so, it took some important initiatives.

PD was among the first organisations to raise the question of British plans to remove political status, and in May 1976 members of PD participated in the establishment of the Relatives Action Committee.

However there was still little support for mass struggle, and it wasn't until late 1977 that the tempo of popular protest again began to increase.

### REPRESSION

It was in October 1977 that PD and the MSR voted at separate conferences to begin discussions on fusion.

Both organisations played an important part in the Coal-Island anti-repression conference in January 1978. Attended by 700 people, this showed once more the potential support for a united campaign against repression.

The increasing mass demonstrations over the last nine months have been further indications of that potential — demonstrations in which PD and the MSR have participated and in which they have argued the value of united front activity.

### CONFIDENT

The anti-imperialist movement, and PD with it, has come through the worst period of isolation and demoralisation. In the words of PD:

'We are confident that in a fused organisation with the MSR, and in co-operation with fraternal Marxist organisations in other countries through the Fourth International, we will make an equally vital contribution to struggle as we have made in the past.'

'We hope as well to contribute to that struggle's ultimate victory.'

Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

## Interview with Iranian journalist

# TELL US THE TRUTH

THE ONLY question which now surrounds the future of the Shah is when, not if, he will be toppled.

At the weekend there were further massive demonstrations. Ayatollah Khomeini, the religious leader, made astonishing calls for industrial sabotage.

Striking bank workers have taken matters into their own hands and released information showing how the political and financial elite is organising the flight of capital from the country.

But what is it like to take part in these incredible events? Why is there such total opposition to the Shah? And what will follow his fall?

To find answers to these questions RICHARD CARVER met FEREDDOON GILANI, a leading Iranian journalist now in London.

IMAGINE the Archbishop of Canterbury telling the Ford workers to burn down their factories, and gentlemen in pinstriped suits and bowlers opening the financial books to the workers.

It is an indication of the social crisis in Iran when Ayatollah Khomeini and striking Tehran bank workers have done just that.

### HANDOUTS

In that context it was not so surprising that *Socialist Challenge* should have found itself interviewing the equivalent of the deputy editor of the *Times* — in this case Fereydoon Gilani, deputy editor of *Kayhan*, a leading Tehran daily.

Many of the journalists involved in recent struggles were once among the staunchest supporters of the regime — with good reason since, Gilani reckons, about 80 per cent of them were taking handouts from the bureaucracy.

His radicalisation has been less sudden: he has a long and distinguished career as a revolutionary poet and journalist.

More than once this has landed him in prison. Repeated torture has damaged his health and he tells harrowing stories of the SAVAK methods: beatings, crucifixions and the rest, all carried out blindfolded so that the victim could not report what implements were being used.

With such a history it is surprising that he should be allowed to hold such a senior position in the heavily censored Iranian press. Of course he has had to face repeated harassment and suppression of stories.

But what his position shows above all is the intellectual poverty of the regime's supporters. Or, more accurately, that any potential intellectual supporter of the regime would quickly be driven into opposition by its dishonesty and highhanded methods.

Gilani gives the example of how the Shah said in a speech that Iran's annual growth rate was 13 per cent. The actual figure was 11 per cent, but rather than contradict God's right hand man the monarch's minions altered every single book, paper and statistical abstract in the country to ensure that neither the Shah nor anyone else would ever discover his error.

### OFFICIALS

The press is run along the same lines: 'A minor official would phone me up,' Gilani says, 'and tell me what story to run, what page to put it on, even the point size of the headline.'

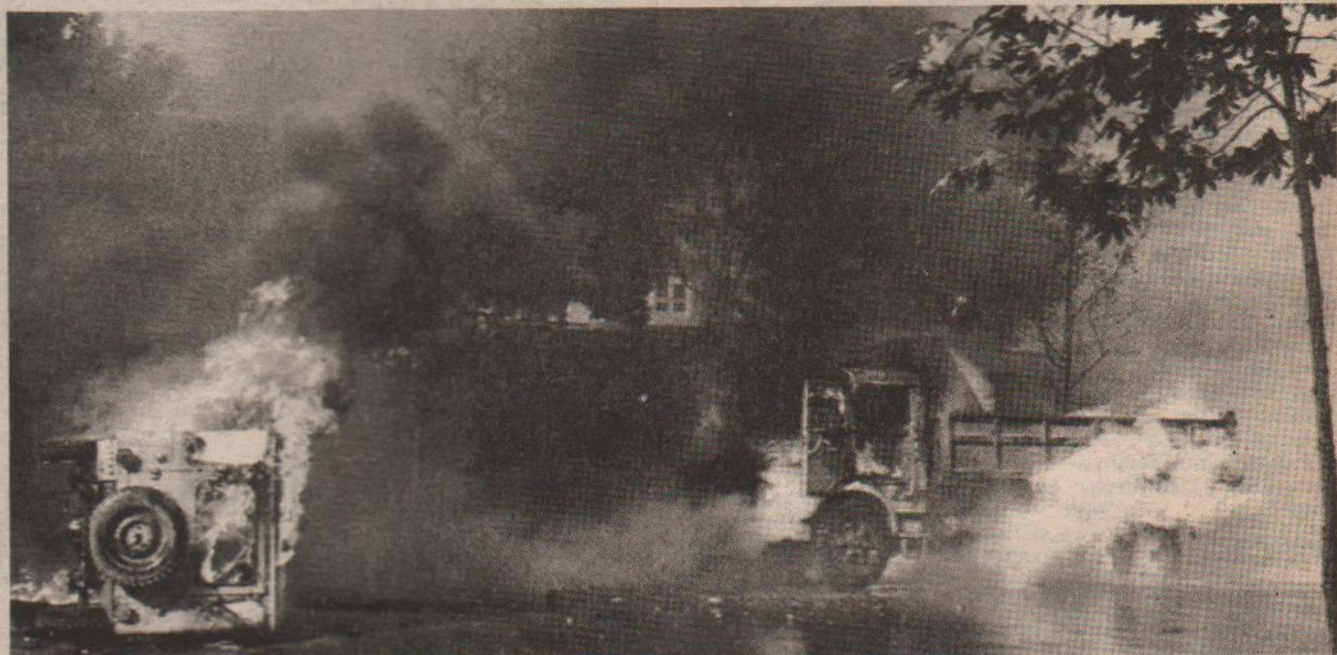
'A bit later a press officer from the Security Office would phone one of my colleagues and say, no, take that out. That story came from the Ministry of Information. It wasn't that they cared about the stories — they just wanted to show their power.'

Why did journalists — the 20 per cent who didn't take bribes — stay on?

### STRIKE

'We obviously had a struggle. But we thought that if we moved out that would give them total control. So we stayed, and when the first journalists strike came they saw that we were right.'

As a reporter Gilani is well placed to assess the present



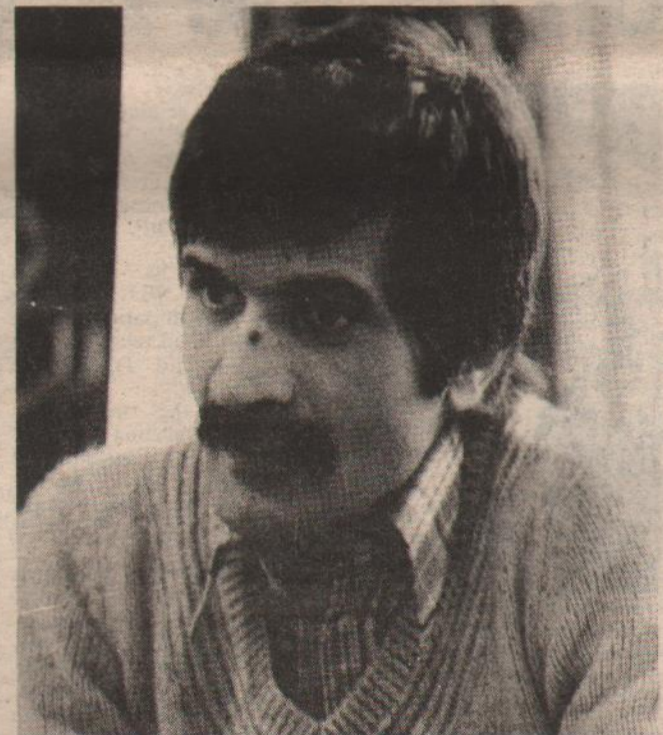
Scenes of upsurge in Tehran

upheavals and the mood of the masses. He is highly critical of the role of the religious leaders and points out how they have been dragged along behind the struggle.

The day before a major demonstration three days before 'Black Friday' in September, he got a phone call from the residence of Ayatollah Shariat Madari, the senior

religious leader inside Iran, saying that *Kayhan* should report the Ayatollah as calling on people not to demonstrate that day.

The next morning, as hundreds of thousands poured out onto the streets, there was another worried phone call, asking the paper to say that the Ayatollah had been in favour of the demonstration all along.



FEREDDOON GILANI

Gilani tells of instances where mullahs — priests — have been forced to join protests by literally tens of thousands of people arriving outside their door.

As in the case of the intelligentsia, it was the stupid insensitivity of the regime which drove the mullahs towards the opposition. After press attacks on the mosque, they began to preach against the regime. Workers thus began to realise the value of the mosque as a sanctuary against police attacks on meetings.

'They didn't gather in the mosques to hear the mullahs but to meet each other.'

Ayatollah Khomeini has a position of leadership only because of the political vacuum among the masses. Ultimately though this would be disastrous.

### DUAL ROLE

'The mullahs have played the dual role of being opponents of the regime and at the same time in many instances being a barrier to the struggle. It is quite obvious that they are connected to the ruling class and in the last analysis cannot lead the struggle.'

Gilani points out that working class action against the regime started long before it was reported in the Western and Iranian press. The only source of information linking together the various strikes that were taking place was *Navid*, the underground Tudeh (Communist) Party paper, with a 70,000 circulation.

If imperialism tries a direct military intervention, Gilani says, they will have another Vietnam on their hands.

But it is unlikely that they will, he claims, because American and Israeli troops are already operating with the Iranian army.

'We have pictures of soldiers on Black Friday with long hair. None of our soldiers have long hair — they were Americans or Israelis.'

'I read in your paper that the Shah's speech was drafted by the US ambassador. I believe this and the people understand this too.'

The problem the workers face is the absence of political or even trade union organisation. More militant workers, such as the better-educated oil workers, have long fought to boycott the SAVAK-run official unions.

They have organised discus-

sion groups at the workplace which are gradually forming a network. The desire for independent class organisation is there.

Gilani reckons that the fall of the Shah will be followed by a relatively short period of continued bourgeois rule: 'The problem at the moment in Iran is that we do not have a strong party and you know that the two conditions of a revolution are the objective conditions and a strong communist party.'

'The Tudeh Party deceived us. At the moment 25 years ago when they could have taken the country they didn't. This is not the party that can lead the workers.'

Gilani stresses the importance of international solidarity, particularly to counter the regime's propaganda — 'If people know what is going on they cannot remain indifferent' — and to present a different image of the opposition: 'The voice of the Iranian people internationally comes through Khomeini and he does not represent the real forces that could liberate Iran.'

### CONSCIOUS

Trade union action is vital: 'In the journalists' strike they were going to arrest 40 people — including me — and the fact that the NUJ in this country sent protests actually prevented some of these people being arrested.'

'Other unions should do this sort of thing. For example it should be possible to organise dockers' blacking the export of arms.'

Gilani's own plans are to return immediately to Iran, despite the obvious risk of arrest.

'I can't do anything here. When you go to Speakers Corner there are many people there more conscious than I am when they talk. But it is not a time to talk. It is a time to act.'

FEREDDOON GILANI will be speaking at a rally in London on Monday 4 December, organised by the Committee Against Repression in Iran.

Other speakers will include Russell Kerr MP, recently returned from Iran, Fred Halliday, author of a forthcoming book on the Iranian crisis, and a representative of the Campaign for the Liberation of Women in Iran.

The meeting is at the St Pancras Assembly Hall, Euston Road, London NW1.

## 17 December

# SOLIDARITY!

SHAH Out! Owen Out! Labour end support for the Shah! These will be the main demands of a national demonstration called for Sunday 17 December by the Committee against Repression in Iran.

STEVE POTTER reports. The demonstration has already received the backing of a number of Labour MPs and trade union leaders. CARI organisers are hoping for a big turnout from the student movement fresh from the debate on Iran at NUS conference the week before.

The campaign in solidarity with the Iranian masses has reached a high point over the last few weeks. Meetings have been organised in every major town with speakers from the trade union movement and the left.

Links are being established between campaign workers, Iranians and dockworkers to try and achieve the same degree of blacking of goods to Iran that was achieved in solidarity with the Chilean people.

Inside the Labour Party left MPs are organising to put the heat on Owen and Callaghan's

craven support for the Shah.

The need is now for a broad based non-exclusive solidarity movement which can link up all those people already active. Demonstrations have been organised nearly every weekend in London over the past few weeks.

A big activity is needed to launch that movement on a firm basis.

To do this, the rather too common practice of excluding people from demonstrations must be ended.

This is the main reason why the Communist Party and

International Marxist Group have put their efforts behind the 17 December demonstration rather than those to be organised by the Iranian student societies over the coming weekends.

CARI has organised a committee to plan for the march, to which all organisations of the workers movement are invited.

Posters, leaflets, films and speakers can all be obtained from CARI, Box 4, Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, London N1. (01-800 8958).

# INTERNATIONAL

## Successful Bahro conference

# 'Detente' versus solidarity

THE plane connection between London and Berlin did not work, writes OLIVER MACDONALD, and I had to spend the night in a Dusseldorf hotel with two other stranded travellers: the defence correspondent of the 'Observer' and a British executive who does big business with East Berlin.

The executive seriously explained to the journalist how typically German East Germany was — authoritarian, efficient and so on. He explained with amusement how the regime deals with 'its own kind' — the Marxists.

An economic expert he had known had been jailed for eight years for writing a Marxist criticism of the regime. His name, I asked.

'Bahro, Rudolf Bahro — in the rubber industry', he grinned.

### CONCERT

The next morning I arrived in West Berlin for the biggest demonstration of socialist solidarity with opposition in Eastern Europe ever held in Western Europe: the International Congress for Rudolf Bahro, organised by the Bahro Defence Committee in Berlin.

The conference had been funded through a concert with Wolf Biermann three weeks earlier attended by 7,000

people. When the concert was broadcast on the radio the streets across the wall in the East were deserted — the population had tuned in.

### PLENARY

Some three thousand people crowded into the plenary discussions of the conference and the nine working groups discussing various aspects of Rudolf Bahro's book, *The Alternative, a Critique of Real, Existing Socialism* (just out in paperback here from NLB).

Ernest Mandel from the Fourth International debated an official representative of the Italian Communist Party on the significance of the October Revolution for the struggle for socialism today.

Jiri Pelikan, editor of the Czech Socialist Opposition journal *Listy*, along with Mihaily Vajda, a Hungarian Marxist, discussed the significance of 1968 in Czechoslovakia with representatives of the Western left, including Rossana Rossanda of *Il Manifesto* and Rudi Dutschke.

The last night of the congress was devoted to the character of socialism and speakers included representatives of the Jusos — the West German Young Socialists — other socialist organisations in Western Europe and socialist oppo-



THE Berlin Bahro Congress: Mihaily Vajda is on the left, Jiri Pelikan fifth from left and Rossana Rossanda on the right.

sitionists from Eastern Europe.

The congress ended with a rally of about 1500 people in the centre of West Berlin after it had unanimously adopted a

resolution in solidarity with Bahro.

The West German media gave extensive coverage to the

proceedings at the congress and the event was a powerful demonstration against the desperate measures taken by the East German Politburo to

silence Rudolf Bahro. But its significance was much greater.

It drew together militants of the Fourth International, representatives of other Marxist organisations, left social democrats and one official representative from the Eurocommunist Parties — the PCI spokesperson.

A front of this scope, committed to mass action in defence of the anti-bureaucratic oppositions in Eastern Europe, could begin to change the political map in Europe, disorganising the military and repressive lobbies East and West.

### REVERBERATING

It could begin to replace a 'detente' of the regimes against the working masses of Europe with a growing practical, political solidarity of the socialist forces in Europe.

This is not a prospect that appeals to the apparatuses of either the Eurocommunist parties or the social democrats. But it is winning increasing numbers of supporters not only on the revolutionary Marxist left but at the base of the mass parties themselves.

Rudolf Bahro's lonely stand for socialist democracy in the GDR is reverberating across the continent.

Photo: Labour Focus on Eastern Europe

# 'The recreation of the Aryan race'

REMEMBER our exclusive page 3 feature last week. We ran two pictures showing the woman on the right — and possibly also a male companion — on one occasion at a National Front paper sale in Islington, on the other in an advertisement for a European neo-Nazi organisation.

The slogan on the poster reads: For National Socialism.

RICHARD CARVER follows up last week's revelations with a closer look at the FANE, the French-based fascist party for which the NF members posed.

Federation of European National Action (FANE — Federation d'Action Nationale Européenne). At a casual glance the name does not seem particularly offensive.

Less offensive, anyway, than the World Union of National Socialists (WUNS), of which it was an indirect offshoot.

However, the slogan on its poster and its sordid publications show that it has forgotten nothing from the days when Europe's fascists paraded under their proper name.

An organiser of WUNS's French section was Yves Jeanne, a former member of the 33rd 'Charlemagne' SS Division. One of his collaborators was Françoise Dior, the fashion heiress for whose hand National Front leader John Tyndall once (unsuccessfully) competed.

After changes in the name of the organisation (Aryan National Front) and its eventual collapse in the early 1960s, Yves Jeanne turned up as a leader of the FANE, which grouped a number of neo-Nazi sects,



SEEN here selling NF papers, this woman posed for a poster advertising the FANE.

particularly in France and Belgium.

FANE's main founder was Marc Fredriksen, whose own sect numbered about half a dozen, Didier Renaud and

Hubert Kohler.

While maintaining his FANE affiliation, Kohler was later to become a member of the Front National, the French fascist organisation loosely linked with the British NF.

For all its European aspirations FANE is essentially a French organisation. But it does have good relations with the Movimento Tradizionale Romano in Italy.

In 1973 the two groups organised a meeting modestly entitled 'The first assembly of all the fascists in the world'. This is how the gathering was advertised in the FANE paper *Notre Europe*:

'The need of the moment is to unite everyone in a single European and world organisation. Clearly we are not new fascists but traditional fascists. Fascism is one, one our creed, and one the word coming from us...

'This hierarchy of values, the true theocracy of the future, will assume the direction of a

society misled by anti-fascist subversion and will lead it back to the road of a healthy ethic of life, social justice in the harmonic order of Nature and a clear spiritual evolution of the human being, to the superman, the recreation of the true Aryan race, following to the greatest degree spiritually, and therefore biologically, the maxim of Roman wisdom "Mens Sana in Corpore Sano"...

'We must don the black shirt!...

(Emphasis in original. For this text, as for other information in this article I am indebted to Patrice Chairoff's *Dossier Neo-Nazisme*.)

Heady stuff this. It would be interesting to know what our Islington Wunderkinder thought of it.

Interesting too to hear their opinion of the FANE's major publication, mentioned last week, *Le Mensonge d'Auschwitz* (The Lie of Auschwitz).

This was originally written in

German by Thies Christophersen, another SS alumnus. According to Christophersen, Auschwitz was more like Butlins than anything else. He even describes in loving detail the romantic liaisons between inmates and SS officers.

And if that doesn't make you vomit, he claims that a total of only 200,000 Jews died at the hands of the Nazis, not six million, and suspects that the gas ovens 'were built after the war'.

Encouraged by the reluctance of the French state to implement a ministerial order banning this publication, the FANE embarked on a new series of 11 Nazi classics — works with names like *Christ was not a Jew*, *The Talmud Unmasked*, and *Jewish Ritual Crimes*.

The series was printed in Belgium — not surprising in view of FANE's past connections — and Britain.

Now who could the printers have been?

## WHAT'S LEFT

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

'BLACK WOMEN Speak Out' — ICAR invites you to hear Nan Bailey (USA), Nyaradzio Makamure (Zimbabwe-ZANU), Gail Lewis (Britain). Fri 1 Dec, 7.30pm, Seymour Hall, Sholdham St., London W1.

THIRD international meeting of International Campaign for Abortion Rights — Paris, 9 Dec. Contact ICAR, c/o 374 Grays Inn Rd., WC1.

ICAR MEETINGS are every two weeks: 27 Nov, 11 Dec, 8 Jan, at 374 Grays Inn Rd., WC1, 7.30pm.

DESIGNER required to work for Socialist Challenge/FI Litho. Must be politically committed. Knowledge of printing and production techniques, especially platemaking, an advantage. Apply in writing to FI Litho, 328/9 Upper St, London N1 or ring 01-359 8288.

NEWHAM WOMEN'S VOICE presents: *She Asked For It* — a play about rape by Counteract, Fri 1 Dec 7.30pm at the Central Hotel, 150 Barking Rd, London E6. Adm 50p.

COMRADE from an African country (political refugee) desperately needs

own room to rent in London. Contact: Richard Carver at SC. 01-359 8180 (office hours and Sundays) or Jon 01-9864045 (evenings).

REVOLUTIONARY translators needed: the Latin American Fraction of the IMG has material from Latin American revolutionary organisations, to be translated from Spanish/Portuguese into English. This material is coming in all the time and we urgently need help. Contact: LAF, PO 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 £6. All donations to Garners Strike Fund, c/o TGWU, 84, 12-13 Henrietta St., London WC2. 01-240 1056.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE now has a stock of attractive hessian bags with two designs; in black, fight racism; in red, women's liberation symbol. Cost: £1 from our offices or £1.25 by mail (including p&p).

'FIGHT RACISM' T-shirts. Good

quality white cotton with red design. Cap sleeve or regular short sleeve. Medium or large (sizes are on the small side, if in doubt order a large). £1.50 from our offices, or £1.75 inc. p&p.

THE NATIONAL ABORTION CAMPAIGN needs a new office worker: to coordinate the campaign's work, run the office, organise activities, demos, etc. Office experience useful, commitment to women's liberation essential. Hours 10-5 with some evening and weekend meetings. Salary approx £160 per month after tax. Please apply in writing giving previous work and other experience to: NAC, 30 Camden Rd, London NW1.

DAY CARE abortion legislation. Meeting to discuss legislation for mandatory abortion facilities. 3pm, 3 Dec, NAC office, 374 Gray's Inn Rd, London WC1. Tel: 01-278 0153.

WEST LONDON United Troops Out Movement public meeting at Queen's Hall, Ealing Town Hall (New Broadway) at 7.30pm on Tues 5 Dec. Film: *Home Soldier Home*. Speakers: Michael Holden of An Cumann Cabhrach, Yana Mintoff and Lloyd Hayes, a black ex-soldier who served in Ireland.

COMMITTEE for Human Rights in Uruguay: a meeting/social, 8pm, Sat 2 Dec at the Latin American Centre, 17 Hoxton Sq, London N1 with film, slide show and Uruguayan musical group. Adm: 50p.

AN WERYN — radical/Socialist Journal for Cornwall. Iss. ue 5 out now. 20p inc postage. £1 for 6 issues. From: 23 Basset St, Redruth, Cornwall.

politics. Speakers: David Fernbach, Monty Johnstone, Gunther Minnerup, Edward Thompson, Raymond Williams. On Sat 2 Dec, 2pm to 5pm, New Ambassadors Hotel, Upper Woburn Place, London WC1. Adm: £1.

BRITAIN OUT of Ireland! PAC and RCG are starting a new series of forums on the war in Ireland. These forums are open to all those who are prepared to work for a principled campaign on Ireland. First meeting: 5 Dec, Conway Hall, 7.30pm. Speaker: Terry Marlowe, on 1968-78, Part 1 — The Background. Further information from: PAC, 2a St. Pauls' Rd, London N1 or RCG, 49 Railton Rd, London SE24.

CARF 7 out now! 15p. Articles on racism and the judiciary, the East End, Harambee, Blacks Britannica, immigration and prisons. Available from progressive bookshops or CARF, Box 35, 182 Upper St, London N1. Bulk orders can be arranged — discount for orders with cash.

WOMEN, IMPERIALISM, racism and immigration. Open meeting for women to follow up the two days of educational. Women working in these areas will be represented. Sun 3 Dec at 11am, Camden Women's Centre,

ROSSLYN Lodge, Lyndhurst Rd, London NW3. Please bring food. Creche.

REVOLUTIONARY Communist Tendency, third public forum: 'Eurocommunism and the State'. Speaker: Keith Tompson. Fri 1 Dec 7.30pm. The Roebuck, 108a Tottenham Court Road.

RACISM and Education. Public meeting on recent NUT pamphlet on Race, IQ and education, plus general questions of racism in education and how to combat it. Speakers: Dave Albery (BSSRS) and Anna De Casparis (ALTARF). Organised by Camden Against Racism, West Hampstead and Hampstead Group. Sun 3 Dec 8.00pm., Quex Road Methodist Church Hall, Quex Road, NW6. (Nearest tubes: West Hampstead, Kilburn Park).

DEMONSTRATION against the Nazi British Movement on Sat 12 at 11am in Mold, North Wales, by Daniel Owen statue. Organised by Merseyside ANL.

## Why Ford exploded

I HAVE been asked quite often during the Ford struggle: 'Why the explosion this year by the Ford workers, when like all our people they have accepted government guidelines, restrictions, promises, and TUC policies which have supported them?'

The obvious answer has been that we can no longer wait for 'food' tomorrow; the price to pay for holding inflation has been far too high, and we the workers have been the only ones to pay. It has also been said that this year the TUC seemed to show determination in supporting the rank-and-file. Lastly, particularly for Ford workers, it has been the enormous profits the company has made.

I have another opinion (not denying any of the last three reasons) and it certainly applies to Halewood. We have suffered more than ever since November '76 from the very, very strict, unjust and unfair discipline coming from a complete change of management. The lads accepted it for long enough.

I believe that when all shifts, all lads and lasses, found a common base to belt the company back we did — we turned, and it has clearly been shown by the people of Halewood, who were out completely within 24 hours and have rejected all the company's phoney deals since then almost unanimously.

Ford pay the price for the careerists and opportunists at present in Halewood, the lackeys who grasp their life by imposing misery on thousands of hardworking people on Merseyside.

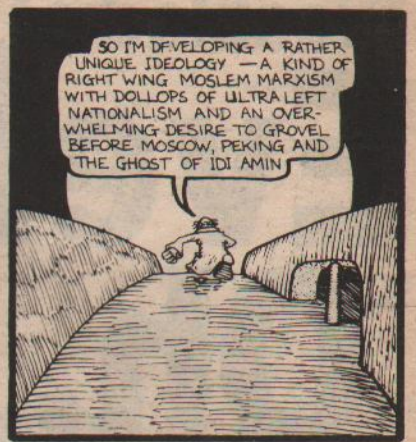
JOHN BOHANNA (Halewood)

## Rock and roll lives!

KEVIN Wood's review of *The Boy Looked at Johnny* (9 November) probably revealed more about him than it did about the book. He unfortunately took most of Julie Burchill's and Tony Parsons' posturing in good faith, seemingly imagining them to be lone crusaders in the rock music press against privilege and discrimination.

This, however, is the same Tony Parsons who recently jetted to America to interview Bruce Springsteen in a style describable only as fawning. This is the same couple who introduce one character in the book as 'Mark Perry of Sniffin' Glue (what a girl)', and who use the doubting of someone's masculinity as a snide insult. Hardly anti-sexist, is it?

The most important point about the book, which Kevin Wood totally missed, is that although it purports to be 'the obituary of rock and roll', it contains no analysis whatsoever —



simply a long and neurotic stream of invective against those who have, in the eyes of Burchill/Parsons, sold out to the biz.

For all their pseudo-cynicism, Burchill/Parsons are incredibly naive to think that new wave would not, to a large extent, grow old and become absorbed by the rock industry. In their eyes rock and roll is dead. But how then do they explain the continued existence of those bands who, although they might not express it in these terms, are challenging the conventional idea and ideology of a rock and roll band?

The approach of Burchill/Parsons is totally subjective and cannot even attempt to analyse rock and roll because it gets no further than personalities. They fail to give reasons for the rise of new wave or for its apparent decline. They make no attempt to explain the growth of new wave as a youth culture or why new wave was, and still remains, much more political than any other movement in the history of rock and roll.

Rock and roll is possibly the culture of late capitalism and deserves to be analysed as seriously as any other art-form by Marxists, objectively and informedly — a task which unfortunately is long overdue.

TONY COLLINS (Hull)

## PAC on Glasgow

IN YOUR attack on Glasgow Sinn Fein (16 November) over the principled stand they took on the 18 November Glasgow Irish Defence League march, you say that their decision 'may have followed pressure from the London-based Prisoners Aid Committee'.

I am writing to state that the first contact we had with the comrades from Glasgow Sinn Fein was after their decision had been taken. It is a decision we fully support and we know the 'pressure' they were under from Glasgow IDL (IMG) not to take up this principled stand in support of the prisoners.

Your reference to us as 'London-based' must have some meaning which, however, escapes me. I suppose IMG is also 'London-

based', as are most political groups in England. Why then single us out for comment in this respect?

It is noteworthy that the amount of space given to the attack on Glasgow Sinn Fein far exceeds the space, if indeed there has been any, you have given to the Republican movement in your paper. The reason for this is self-evident. With support like yours we don't need the Brits.

JACKIE KAYE (Prisoners Aid Committee)

## History Workshop

HISTORY Workshop is a Marxist, socialist and feminist collective dedicated to the democratisation of historical learning and the overthrow of the capitalist system. The political positions of the editors, though various, are probably not very different from those of contributors to *Socialist Challenge* — indeed, at least two have written for your paper in recent months.

Among the major articles which have appeared in the journal are a two-part study of women in Nazi Germany, examining the complex interplay of economic and ideological repression which went into the making of Nazi Labour Front policy; a long article by Charles Van Onselen on the drink trade in 1890s South Africa, disclosing the contradictory claims of competing capitalist fractions in the exploitation of African mineworkers; and (in the forthcoming issues) a two-part study by Arthur Exell, an Oxford engineer now in his 49th year of work as a car worker, on Morris Motors in the 1930s: the first part is on tyranny and paternalism in the labour process, the second about the difficulties of clandestine trade union organisation.

On 11-12 November some 350 people came to Ruskin History Workshop 12 to discuss 'Britain 1945-78', a self-critical and self-reflective weekend on industrial and political struggles over the past quarter of a century and some of the material and cultural determinants shaping them. In none of this can I recognise John Ross's characterisation (9 November) of *History Workshop* as an "epic poem" of

popular and radical achievement.' Has he ever read our journal? And if so, could he tell us what is in his mind? RAPHAEEL SAMUEL (Ruskin College, Oxford)

## Better radioactive than dead!

I AM looking forward to using my *Big Red Diary* for 1979, but I had to laugh when I saw the caption on the front of it: 'Better active today than radioactive tomorrow'.

While I have always opposed the use of nuclear power in its worst form, i.e. in the arms race and physically during wartime attacks, I feel it is easy to forget that radiation is not always used for evil purposes. I know, because I owe my life to its worthwhile form — that of radiotherapy treatment for cancer and the use of nuclear medicine for the diagnosis and treatment of illness.

So while I agree that the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons is one of the greatest scourges of the 20th century, I feel we should be aware of the positive things which accompanied their invention, i.e. nuclear medicine (at least until socialist doctors can invent some safer and less haphazard methods of diagnosing and treating cancer).

Until that day my motto has to be: 'Better radioactive yesterday than dead today!'

ESTHER GARTNER (Coventry)

## Effects of 'Bolshevis-ation'

WAS I wrong in detecting a 'shock-horror, how self-evidently ridiculous' feeling behind John Ross's comment in his review of Edward Thompson's new book (9 November): 'Kendall actually argues ... that the formation of the CP was an

unmitigated disaster, as it blocked the development of a healthy British tradition?'

There seems to me nothing intrinsically improbable about this proposition. In 1909, before the peak of syndicalism which Ross (I think wrongly) interprets Kendall as idealising, the Social Democratic Party, the largest socialist grouping outside the Labour Party, was again under attack as a sectarian, dogmatic, and numerically insignificant force by Philip Snowden, one of the ILP's own 'gang of four'.

At that time there were 60 SDP branches in London, 108 in the 'provinces', 41 in Scotland, nine in Wales, one each in Gibraltar and Ireland, and two in South Africa (*Justice*, 15 May 1909). *Justice* advertised a total of 124 SDP lectures and public meetings that week, plus 26 Socialist Sunday Schools. The circulation of the largest-selling socialist paper, the *Clarion*, was around 80,000.

Given the growth in population and in trade union membership and militancy, we have a right to ask what the 'revolutionary left' can show to match this today, after more than half a century of work by the Communist Party of Great Britain and its derivatives.

How the 'left' might have regrouped and developed without 'Bolshevisation' after the shattering and at the same time radicalising effects of the First World War is a matter for speculation, but a case can be made that the formation of the CPGB retarded and perverted the movement in Britain. There is no reason to believe that this is a case of 'retardation in one country'. We may well come to see that it applies to many others.

IAN BULLOCK (Brighton)

THE LENGTH of letters printed will usually be kept down to 400 words in order to encourage as wide a range of contributions as possible. All letters may be cut at the Editor's discretion. Unsigned letters will not normally be published, although we will withhold real names from publication on request.

# SOCIALIST CHALLENGE EVENTS

THE DEADLINE for this column is midday on the Saturday before publication.

### 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, day) or Steve (226 4287, evening), or write to Manchester SC Centre, 14 Piccadilly.

SALFORD Socialist Challenge supporters can be contacted at the Manchester Socialist Challenge offices, Tel 061-236 2352 or, by writing to Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre, c/o 14 Piccadilly, Manchester with a view to forming a Salford Socialist Challenge group.

LIVERPOOL Socialist Challenge supporters meetings on 'Revolutionaries and Trade Unions': Wed 6 Dec, 'Women Workers and Trade Unions' (Sara Burn): Wed 13 Dec, 'Industrial Democracy or Workers Control' (Tommy Healey). All start at 7.30pm in the Committee Rooms, AUEW Building, Mount Pleasant.

LIVERPOOL Socialist Challenge Xmas Party, Friday 15 December, Caribbean Centre, Upper Parliament St, starts 8pm.

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

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

NEWCASTLE Socialist Challenge benefit, 30 November, University Canteen, 7.30pm, with live bands The Proles and The 45s, disco, bar, stalls, Adm. 70p (50p unemployed, school students). Tickets from SC sellers and Days of Hope, 115 Westgate Rd.

DURHAM Socialist Challenge Supporters Group. For details contact: Dave Brown, 2 Pioneer Cottages, Low Pittington, Durham.

MIDDLESBROUGH Socialist Challenge sales, Saturday lunch time near the lottery stand at Cleveland Centre. Paper also available at Harrisons (newsagent) opp. McKenna & Brown in Linthorpe Road.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES readers can buy Socialist Challenge from Green Books, upstairs in the Spencer Hall shopping centre.

### LONDON

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TOWER HAMLETS/HACKNEY joint public meeting: 'The Fight for Black Liberation in the US' (speaker Nan Bailey), Thur 30 Nov, 7.30pm, the Britannia Pub, Mare St.

SW LONDON sales every Saturday, 11am-1pm, at Clapham Junction (Northcote Rd), Brixton tube, Clapham Common tube, Balham tube. Also on bookstalls outside Oval tube, Herne Hill BR, and at Shepherd's newsagents, Braganza St.

HACKNEY Socialist Challenge supporters group now meets fortnightly on Thursdays at 7.30pm in the Britannia Pub, Mare St, E8. 7 Dec: 'Hackney Girls Project' — discussion led by some of the women who helped to organise it.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### YORKSHIRE

Huddersfield SC group meets fortnightly on Thursdays at the Friendly & Trades Club, Northumberland St. 7 Dec: 'Women's Liberation and the struggle for socialism' (speaker Penny Duggan).

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

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

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

### MIDLANDS

For details of activities of local supporters throughout the Midlands contact the Socialist Challenge Centre, 76b Digbeth High Street, Birmingham: (021) 643 9209.

SOUTH EAST BRIGHTON SC forums fortnightly on Tuesdays. Contact Micky on 605052 for details.

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

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

### SCOTLAND

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

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

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

# SURPLUS VALUE

## Disabled at work

# Even socialists say 'Oh, poor boy'

ONE NIGHT I'd missed the last bus home so I thumbed a lift. A car stopped just up the road and I asked the driver if there was any chance of a ride. He nodded, I got in, and he drove off — straight into the grounds of a nearby psychiatric hospital. I thought: What the hell's going on?

The driver got out of the car, lifted the bonnet, and said the clutch had gone. This was bullshit. I'm an engineer; I know when a clutch has packed in.

It turned out he was a mental nurse, and before I knew it I was marching up a path into the hospital itself. The nurse was lying to me about having to see a friend of his. A matron opened the door and I was led through to an office.

'Good evening, doctor,' my nurse escort said to one of the occupants, 'is this one of yours?' It was disgusting. It's one of the things you have to put up with as a spastic. Even socialists say: 'Oh, poor boy.' It's really important that people understand.

### LAUGHED

I went to the local infant school for a year. I remember the other kids laughing at me — they used to call me 'Wrigley's Spearmint Gum' because I couldn't keep still. They didn't understand about my disability, and neither did I. One of the most important things you have to learn is the nature of your disability, and how to cope with it.

I also remember the teacher shouting at me. It was a year before they or I realised I was partially deaf as well as spastic. After that I went to a special school for the physically handicapped where I got on a lot better.

It was great to realise that I wasn't the only disabled person in the world!

Luckily, our doctor told my parents not to molly-coddle me but to let me lead as normal a life as possible. So from an early age I played in the street like the other kids, and got into more than my fair share of fights with the mickey-takers!

My dad even taught me to ride a bike. Many people feel disabled children should be protected from the rest of the world, but if this happens they are likely to be less self-confident or even anti-social.

From school I went on to a sort of further education course for physically handicapped people, away from home. They taught us a lot about office work, which was pretty useless to me, but also how to cook, sew, and so on, to generally be more self-sufficient. This was useful.

However, at that time I was really wanting to go to work and I went to a work centre near home. I was then about 17. I was making wire coat-hangers for which I was paid £1.50 a week. The same work in a factory would have paid about £17. Today I believe the work centres pay about £4 a week.

This is not because handicapped people can't produce the same quantity as ordinary workers. It's just outright exploitation! After all, anyone can push a button. The trouble is that coming from physically handicapped school you don't have much option. Instead of feeling you have the right to work, you are supposed to be lucky to have a job at all.

In fact, I was perfectly happy at the disabled workshop because, in a sense, they didn't know any better. This is not to say that anyone from a disabled workshop can get a job outside. That's the problem —



knowing how to react and being sociable in some respects.

My dad was working at British Leyland and he got me an interview there. I was really excited when he wrote and told me. I've kept his letter to this day. I got the job, and I've been there ever since — that's 11 years. I received the normal rate right from the start, because the union insisted that disabled workers be given the same rate as everyone else. That goes for the blind, the deaf and dumb, and the chronically ill.

### FRIENDLY

The plant makes lorries and I'm on the production side, making parts for engines and chassis. My main work is connecting piston rods to the engine block.

Some jobs I find difficult but others I can do. It's mainly automatic work. You put in a component, press a button and then another button, and that's it. With some jobs you've got to know the machine. And with one particular machine, the only person who knows it is me.

In terms of my handicap, the other workers are very friendly to me. When they didn't know me they were inclined to be patronising, but now they let me get on with it — and give me a bollocking if I do anything wrong. They treat me like anyone else.

They're inclined to take the piss,

but about humanity rather than my disability. They take the piss about anything I do wrong, rather than at me.

I'm into electronics. I read a lot of hi-fi and audio magazines, so people come to me and ask about different equipment. They don't fully take my views on the political level, though!

The attitude on my politics is: 'Oh, that spastic. Who's going to take any notice of him.' In other words, most of the workers respond to me in a reactionary way on a political level.

You don't hear much about disabled people's rights in the unions or anywhere else, because both ordinary workers and the disabled themselves regard work for the handicapped as a privilege. If you are lucky enough to have a job, the last thing you should ever do is complain about it.

You are not encouraged to be trade union minded. If you want different or better conditions, you start to worry that there is something wrong with you; that you are ungrateful. It can be soul-destroying.

### CHALLENGE

I was in the National Society of Metal Mechanics at first, but that was a waste of time. The branch had a reactionary chairperson who didn't bother to hold branch meetings for the most part, and then didn't tell me where they were being held or when

they were cancelled.

Nine months ago I joined the Engineering Union, and since I've been in it I've been fighting on a disablement issue, which I've now won for myself but not for others.

I discovered that another brother, also a spastic, held a red card — the ordinary membership card — while I held a yellow card, which classified me as 'chronically sick or disabled'. I was paying 25p a week dues instead of 30p, and it meant that if I fell sick, I wouldn't be entitled to sick pay from the union.

### FIGHTING

Like many disabled people, I've had hardly a day's sickness in my life. And in the case of the chronically sick, it means that those who are most likely to need sick pay are the ones who don't get it. Some of us wanted to challenge the rule book over this, and moved that our branch should send a letter to the AUEW journal to this effect.

I got myself a red card, but my branch did not carry our motion. Perhaps other AUEW members who read this will take up the issue.

I'm the teller for the branch, counting votes at meetings. We have raised the issue of the National Front. Racists were putting nasty letters about immigration into the union journal, and we proposed in the branch that this be stopped. We got a

good reception on this in the branch.

I'm involved with Socialist Unity in Southall, for the simple reason that it joins so many organisations together. I think that the Socialist Workers Party should join Socialist Unity. I'm not in a group myself.

I prefer to call myself physically handicapped, because I feel the word 'disabled' implies you are not able, if you see what I mean. I'm handicapped, but there's nothing wrong with my brain! Handicapped people aren't encouraged to be self-confident, because, if they were, they might take the same attitude as other oppressed groups, and start demanding their rights.

While blacks are treated as a threat by our society, and women and gays as a joke, handicapped people are those you must feel sorry for. In other words, we are given the most patronising treatment going, more or less on a level with domestic pets.

Apart from anything else, I think people should educate their children more about what it is to be physically handicapped. I don't envy anyone who is a handicapped child. I wouldn't like to go through that again.

As with women, the law serves to reinforce the myths. For example, we have to have our parent's and doctor's permission to apply for a driving licence. Whenever we apply for a job, we must have a medical check-up. Then there are the spastic and sick jokes made to make us look incapable. And just as gays and blacks are missing from TV shows, so are the disabled.

### IMAGE

The left's record on this question is very poor, but understandably so, since apart from Jack Ashley's group the physically handicapped haven't done much to organise themselves yet.

What upsets me most is when people active over their own oppression, such as gays or women, laugh at me. I have experienced this quite often. I feel they should know better. After all, they have analysed sex stereotyping, so it should be pretty obvious to them that most disabled people don't exactly fit the image of sexual desirability projected by this society.

It is also annoying to be ignored. I have speech difficulties, and people often don't really bother to listen, socialists included. I hope I don't sound self-pitying — part of the problem is that people aren't aware of these things.

It's great for me to have the chance to communicate like this, and I want to paint things as they are. I would like to say that I do also meet plenty of people who understand my situation.

I think the physically handicapped need to get together to articulate our oppression; in order to come to terms with our handicaps, and to develop self-confidence. We could discuss ways of fighting for our rights, such as changing that AUEW rule. Also it would help us in our fight against patronising attitudes, our equivalent to sexism or racism.

The trouble is that disabled socialists are few and far between, so I would very much like to hear from other disabled readers of **Socialist Challenge**, especially if they live in London, in order to get such a group off the ground.

This article is based on taped discussions between TONY and two friends. Write to Tony c/o Socialist Challenge if you are interested in forming a Physically Handicapped Group.

**Belsen in Britain**

# The life and times of psychiatric patients

'ON ONE occasion Dr Lawlor tried to subject three adult, but mentally immature and child-like patients, to a rigid and unpleasant diet consisting of a tepid, porridge-like substance and nothing else for a month.'

'When he came to the conclusion that they might be receiving secret gifts of sweets from others, he ordered them to be locked up together in a room to prevent further breaches of the regime he had ordered.'

GEOFFREY SHERIDAN, who worked on the Confederation of Health Service Employees' journal when the Normansfield Hospital inquiry began, reports on the most extensive investigation ever carried out into the running of a psychiatric hospital.

The quotation above comes not from a report on Belsen but from the committee of inquiry set up to investigate conditions at the Normansfield hospital for the mentally handicapped, in Teddington, Middlesex.

One of the recommendations of its 700-page report, published last week, is that Dr Terence Lawlor — a consultant psychiatrist — should never again be employed in the NHS. The committee of inquiry,

which spent a year taking evidence and cost £350,000, catalogues concentration camp-like conditions at the hospital, which it compares with a workhouse.

'The standards of hygiene were often appalling...Faeces and urine were frequently left unattended for days on end...The upper floor of the building often had to be evacuated because rain water poured in...'

**COSMETICS**

Health minister David Ennals has responded with the predictable cosmetics. He has ordered area health authorities to investigate conditions in all hospitals for the mentally handicapped, which in total have 49,000 patients.

We can expect virtually no change. While few psychiatric hospitals are as bad as Normansfield, there have been over the past few years at least half a dozen inquiries into individual 'mental institutions' which have revealed conditions just as horrific.

**REMEDIAL**

Neither these inquiries, nor the minor remedial action that has resulted from them, have achieved anything to alter the fact that those who are born with a serious mental handicap



Lonely Metropolitan by Herbert Bayer

or are severely mentally incapacitated in later life will find themselves shut away from society in the 'loonie bins' bestowled by the Victorians. Lawlor is not the only person associated with Normansfield to be criticised by the latest inquiry.

While the committee found no evidence of cruelty or ill-treatment by the nursing staff at the hospital, it attacks the regional and area health authorities for failing to take any notice of the staff's complaints about Lawlor, and it criticises two officials of the

Confederation of Health Service Employees for 'exploiting' their grievances and breaking the union's rules.

The latter comments are quite remarkable. As the report itself makes clear, the conditions at Normansfield would never have been exposed but for the strike by the COHSE members at the hospital, who successfully called for Lawlor's suspension.

**SCAPEGOAT**

The inquiry has sought to scapegoat the union regional and branch secretaries involved.

They are blamed for stirring up the walk-out and allowing a petition to be circulated among union members at the hospital. The report quotes a COHSE rule which effectively forbids members from initiating petitions.

The leadership of the union stands by this absurdly undemocratic rule, and it has responded to the report by agreeing to hold its own internal inquiry.

There is a certain logic to this move. Apart from the concern of the COHSE bureaucracy to avoid strikes, it has a touching reverence for governmental inquiries and for the professionalism on which the health service is structured.

Its wariness about 'outside interference' does nothing to break down the isolation of psychiatric hospitals and patients, whose oppression — as with the physically handicapped described on the facing page — is reinforced by being screened off.

COHSE's own reports point to the chronic underfunding and understaffing of psychiatric hospitals yet the union gives precious little support to the numerous local actions by



THE STRIKE that began the inquiry, May 1976

## Don't let the Mental Health Act drive Michael Young crazy

IF YOU live in the USSR and are a dissident then the way the authorities deal with you is call you 'mad' and throw you in a mental hospital.

If you live in Britain, are working class and steal to survive then the way 'our' authorities may deal with you is also to call you 'mad' and throw you in mental hospital.

This is exactly what happened to Michael Young, write GREG DRAPKIN and STEVE COHEN.

Michael Young has never been violent towards anyone, though he has stolen property from a lot of people. This system can't cope with people like Michael.

They tried approved school, borstal and prison. However these places never made him any richer. So last time — when Michael stole a TV set — the court got a couple of doctors to say he was 'psychotic'.

By 'psychotic' they meant (to use the words of one doctor) that he had an 'irresponsible attitude towards property'. This allowed them to shut him up in Moss Side Hospital under Section 65 of the Mental Health Act.

**INDEFINITE**

Under Section 65 Michael Young was sent away for an indefinite sentence, which could mean for life. The only person who can release him is the Home Secretary — even the so-called Mental Health Review Tribunal can only make

recommendations to the Home Secretary.

Michael's now been inside for nearly six years. The people who put him inside — the judges and the doctors — ain't gonna want him outside. The only way we are going to get him out is by a campaign to force his release.

Lance, an organisation dealing with housing and employment of ex-prisoners, has offered Michael a hostel place and a woodworking scheme if he is released.

Michael Young is one of an unknown number of persons unknown who are in a similar situation. By taking up Michael's case we would be helping him, but also everyone else imprisoned under this Act.

The campaign address is the Mental Patients Union, c/o Grass Roots Books, 109 Oxford Road, Manchester. If you would like any more information or would like to help in any way or know of similar cases, then please contact us.

## The Ballad of Michael Young

Words by Red Flu • Music by Bob Dylan ('Jack of Hearts')

Michael Young was 21, a hardened criminal was he  
He stole a television set, and also some other property  
So when the screws had heard the news they said it's plain to see  
We've got to lock this man away to save society  
And in Moss Side on a 65 they shut the door and threw away the key.

Four years later the appeal tribunal finally heard the case  
They reconsidered all the things they never dared to tell him to his face  
He stabbed his sisters and his mum, three shrinks have sworn it's so  
His mum and sis say it's a lie but how are they to know?  
We'll keep the lid tight on the bin he's got another couple years to go.

Another year had come and gone then Michael's mum got busy on the phone  
She rang the local Law Centre and told them that she wanted Michael home  
The lawyer started working, his brain was moving fast  
Looking for some answers, ways out of this morass  
He found some facts and witnesses that's how the next tribunal came to pass.

O'Shea the red psychiatrist from Birmingham drove up to testify  
And Lance and Michael's family from Manchester dressed in their suits and ties  
Then through the door peered Michael's shrink, Noble was his name  
He knew that all the people there had seen right through his game  
So the tribunal got rained off, giving Noble time to leave the town.

At the replay his replacement started speaking spreading out the facts.  
He said that someone else had said that Michael might have killed cats with an axe.  
And when the poor steal from the rich, then Michael says it's fine  
He knows the rich steal from the poor, they do it all the time  
Oh a psychopathic attitude to property, it's a classic sign.

Eight months later, this man is still inside the bin.  
The Home Office ain't bothered cause they know that no one's ever heard of him  
But Michael Young is not alone, I don't mean people care  
No, thousand more like him and just like us are still in there  
In Broadmoor, Rampton and Moss Side that's where they throw the ones they want to hide.

So all of you good people, and all of those who want to be free  
Keep your thoughts close to yourself and don't go nicking a colour TV  
And when they ask you how you know that you are really sane  
Don't try to say your mental health is somewhere in your brain  
The way to spot the crazy ones is simple, they've got them tied in chains.



Dr. TERENCE LAWLOR, the consultant psychiatrist at Normansfield — 'intolerant, abusive, and tyrannical'

its members to confront this situation.

We can be certain that much psychiatric illness will be eliminated in a socialist society. But it will never disappear for good. Breaking down the walls of mental institutions — in a social if not a literal sense — will help the workers movement to come to grips with the problems.

# Socialist Challenge

## OUR FUND DRIVE

THIS WEEK Begin's head joins Videla's in the basket, thanks to the collective efforts of our readers.

The small efforts of many supporters working together can prepare the way for the fall

of the Shah of Iran, as this week's list shows. Contributions from Socialist Challenge groups accounted for a good proportion of the almost £200 which came in.

Southampton IMG members

collected £30 from a social organised for the paper, while South-East London supporters made £5 from 'popcorn and toffee sales at a stall at Greenwich anti-racist festival'.

The fund drive total now stands at £1,121.03. But this is still less than half what we need this quarter with only a month to go. So further efforts are needed.

Camden supporters are organising a jumble sale, while Hackney Socialist Challenge Group plans to hold a benefit gig for the paper with local group Oxy and the Morons.

To date we've only had a handful of sponsors for the sponsored diet of well-known teacher Bernard Regan.

It's easy to sponsor this comrade. Just decide how much you are prepared to give the fund drive for every pound Bernard loses.

We plan special 'weigh-ins' to make sure that the pounds are coming off!

Write in today with a pledge and we'll get you to pay up when the dieting days come to an end at Xmas.

Remember, you can also help the fund drive by taking a chance on our Xmas lottery. There are only three weeks before the draw, so rush in your money or offers to sell the tickets in the final weeks!

Our thanks this week to:

Brent SC Group	£20
No smoking sponsor	£5
S. Bodini	.50
Dominic Johnson	£2
MB	£15
TD	£5
Watford supporters	£5
Leicester comrade	£20
SE London SCG	£5
R & V Moddy	£5
J. Tomlins	£5
Herman de Ley	£20
Southampton IMG	£30
Camden SCG	£20
Anon	£15
Mike Lomax	£2
J C Smith	£10
Anon	£1.20
A S Quint	£2
Anon	£12

TOTAL £199.70

## JOIN IN THE THIRD NATIONAL SALES DAY

### Saturday 9 December 1978

Each month this quarter we have set aside a day when we ask all supporters of the paper to join in selling on the high streets, at the bus stops or tube stations, and on the estates.

If you live in a town where there are no regular sales of the paper, just fill in the form below and we will send you a bundle of 10 on a sale-or-return basis to see if you can establish regular sales.

Post to PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

Please send me 10 papers on a sale-or-return basis for the 9 December Sales Day.

VIDELA

BEGIN

SHAH OF IRAN

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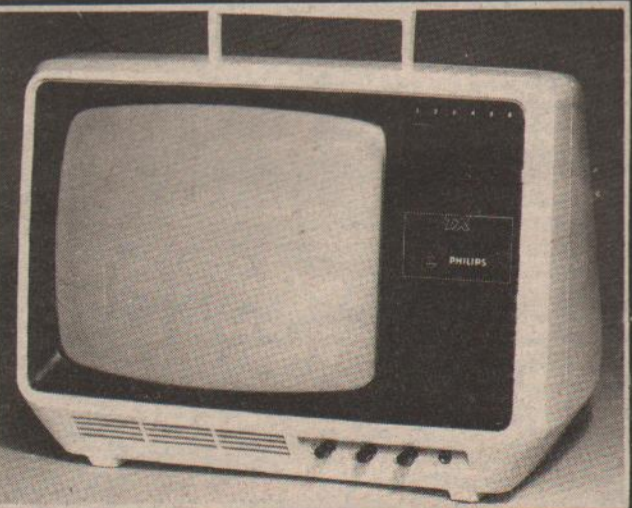


500  
1000  
1500  
2000  
2500

WHY NOT try your luck in our Xmas lottery?

For 10p per ticket or £1 a book of tickets, plus sacc, you can have a chance to win one of the following: a portable 12-inch black and white TV; a case of French wine; an autographed copy of Ernest Mandel's new book, *The Second Slump*; a record token; or a year's subscription to *Socialist Challenge*, *International and Socialist Woman*.

The draw will take place on 18 December in our offices, and the winning number will be printed in the issue of 4 January 1979. Organised by D. Weppler of 328 Upper St., London N1.



## SUBSCRIBE NOW!

Domestic: 6 months, £5; 12 months, £10  
Abroad: Airmail, £16.50. Surface, £10 per annum.

Name .....

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I enclose a donation for the Fighting Fund of .....

Cheques, POs and Money Orders should be made payable to 'Socialist Challenge'.

Complete and return to:

Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.

## Demands for socialist democracy China in turmoil

'MODERN dictators have developed a new religion to suppress the people and keep them in the dark. A spiritual Great Wall had been built round the country to protect the dictatorship.'

'Arise, comrades! — Give a final judgment to all dictators and finally eliminate them!'

—Statement on wall poster in Peking, November 1978.

While Chairman Hua was away, dancing the 'hora' in Bucharest earlier this year, Teng Hsiao-ping and his supporters were busy at home laying the basis for a campaign that would unseat him.

For Hua and party vice-chairman Wang Tung-hsing are regarded both within sections of the apparatus and by the masses as policemen.

It is not a foolish assessment as both men rose to power because of their control over the repressive organs of the state. Hua was Minister for Public Security, Wang commanded the detachment detailed to guard Mao.

It was Wang who arrested the 'Gang of Four' and put Hua in power. It was also Wang who suppressed the demonstrators at Tien An Mien Square after the death of Chou En-lai.

Teng Hsiao-ping is a veteran bureaucrat of the old school. He was sacked during the Cultural Revolution as 'The Number Two Capitalist Roader' and was publicly reviled and harassed.

### FAILURE

The failure of the Maoists then to institute a society qualitatively different from what existed before led to demoralisation amongst the masses. Mao was forced to revert to the party and state apparatus for support.

The rehabilitation of Teng and numerous other top and middle-level bureaucrats meant their re-entry into the party and state apparatus. It was only a matter of time before they made a bid to purge the entire section of the leadership identified with the Cultural Revolution.

However, in order to do this they have, ironically enough, to apply the methods of the Cultural Revolution. The wall-poster campaign against Mao and Hua is clearly inspired by sections of the apparatus.

But already it has taken on its own dynamic. In a country where the bureaucracy maintains a total monopoly of all means of information, even the smallest concessions can spark off a mass upheaval.

Teng wields enormous power in Peking today. However he



Teng Hsiao-ping in 1966



Premier Hua Kuo-feng

needs some popular support in order to deliver the final blow against those who were party to his humiliation. The recent events will undoubtedly aid him.

The demonstrations in Peking continue to gather momentum. Nigel Wade, the Peking correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, reported:

'"Hyde Park" is the pseudonym used by one of the poster writers. But they do not attack Communism itself and they say quite definitely that they want "socialist democracy", not "bourgeois democracy" as in the West.'

Meanwhile the latest issues of *Chinese Youth* were, till recently, suppressed on the orders of the party leadership. After a fierce debate in the party's upper reaches they have just been released.

They reveal a vigorous debate on the theme of 'socialist democracy'. A Chinese-speaking comrade who has read them told *Socialist Challenge* that there were 'echoes of the discussion in the Fourth International on this question'.

The model that Teng Hsiao-ping has in mind might well be Yugoslavia. Economic 'liberalism', close links with the West, anti-Sovietism and peaceful co-existence.

### ERUPT

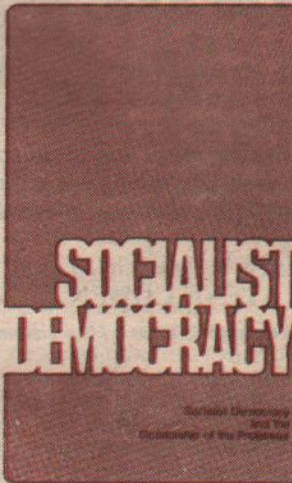
But China is not Yugoslavia. It has a population of 800 million people. Unless and until the masses find channels through which they can exercise control over Chinese society, the contradictions of the bureaucracy will continue to erupt at regular intervals.

In recent years a number of left-wing observers have stated that Trotsky's demands for a political revolution in the USSR did not apply to China because of the diverse origins of its revolution. Events have somewhat contradicted that particular thesis.

The basic contradictions which characterise Soviet society can all be found in China. The latter's specific peculiarities might give the political revolution a different form, but its aims will be the same.

Long live socialist democracy! Down with the bureaucracy!

NEXT WEEK: The debate in China



WHAT the Fourth International says on socialist democracy: 30p plus 10p p&p from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XQ.

