

Socialist Challenge

BUILD A SOCIALIST OPPOSITION FOR A UNIFIED REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION

12p

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HUGH SCANLON (R.I.P.)



HUGH SCANLON died last week in Blackpool after a protracted illness. He had been suffering from what is known in the trades-unions as 'Carron's disease', a particularly virulent form of cancer very common amongst trade-union officials who reach the top. Last-minute attempts to save Scanlon by members of his executive failed miserably. He was determined to die. In the end one of his oldest political friends, the *Morning Star* had no option but to announce that he had ceased to breathe.

Scanlon was born in Australia in 1913, the son of immigrant workers. His father died soon afterwards and Hugh and his mother returned to England. He was greatly influenced by Jack London and Upton Sinclair and many years later he admitted that it was this type of utopian socialist writing 'that impressed me rather than any high-sounding theoretical works', a factor no doubt in his inability to resist the onslaught of 'Carron's disease'.

He left school at 14 to start an apprenticeship, as an instrument maker at Metro-Vickers and was impressed by shop-stewards there who won him to the union.

At the age of 23 in 1938 he was elected a shop-steward; in 1947 he was elected divisional AUEW organiser for the North-West, a position he held for sixteen years. His position in the Union was further strengthened in the coming years, but it was not until 1963 that he was elected to the Executive Council.

In the 1960's the President of the Engineering Union was the notorious Bill Carron. Right-wing to the core, a cold-war anti-communist and lot more besides, Carron used to take a delight in riding roughshod over democratic decisions arrived at by national Committees and conferences. 'Carron's law' as it came to be known was that the President had the right to cast the Union's vote whichever way he thought fit. This was strongly attacked by the left in the union. Scanlon fought the election for the left on two basic planks: opposition to Labour's incomes policies and as he himself put it: 'The second point was that of internal democracy within the union. This is founded on three broad principles: the right of every member to elect all officials from shop-stewards to the president. Secondly, the right of the National Committee to be the policy-making body. Thirdly the inviolate right of the final appeal court — again a body of rank-and-file members — to adjudicate on any dispute between the membership and the Executive Council — and for these decisions to be binding on the executive.' Yes, this is the basis on which Scanlon defeated Carron and raised the hopes of thousands of militants in the engineering union.

In the first flush of his election victory in 1967, Scanlon stated his clear opposition to Labour's policies on more than one occasion. When asked why the Labour government of 1966 had opted for right-wing policies, Scanlon commented: 'The problem is not that the government fell for these policies but that the trade-union movement fell over itself to endorse them. But hasn't that always been the case, isn't it far more difficult for us to oppose the Labour government which is putting forward reactionary policies than it is to oppose the Tory government which is putting forward the same policies?' Yes, it is far more difficult. But what is the difference between a reactionary Labour government in 1966 and a reactionary Labour government in 1977? None! The only difficulty is the failing political health of union bureaucrats.

By the time the miners' strike of 1974 had returned Labour to power, Hugh Scanlon was well on his way to being described as a 'statesman'. Wilson, who loathed him personally, was to describe him on the television as an extremely intelligent and 'responsible' trade-union leader. Carron must have been chuckling in his grave. Scanlon, together with Jones, backed Labour's reactionary policies to the hilt. They defended the Social Contract in no uncertain way. It seemed as if though the circle had turned full wheel. Scanlon's friends in the Communist Party headquarters still did not give up hope. After all we live in the age of transplants.

Blackpool 1977 was to shatter all these illusions. Scanlon did the unmentionable. He rejected an overwhelming vote by his engineering section delegates to the TUC to prevent him from casting his votes at the TUC for the 12-Month Rule. Scanlon walked out of the meeting having refused any discussion on the subject. The *Morning Star* headlined: 'Uproar over Scanlon's edict on 12-Month Rule'. But they could not explain the whys and hows. Why was Scanlon reduced to 'edicts'? Why had he evolved in this way? Why no criticism of him before on a consistent basis? To these questions there were no replies from King Street. Scanlon had done a Carron.

In this fashion he killed off his own left origins. Like many other 'utopian socialists' he ended his political life as a reactionary. Whether he will end up in Hell or the House of Lords is besides the point. The struggle against Labour's policies and against the likes of Scanlon must be continued if the Labour movement is to be in a state to resist those for whom Labour is opening the door: the Tories.

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

Socialist Strategy for Western Europe

Mandel v. Johnstone

The debate not to miss. Ernest Mandel of the Fourth International and Monty Johnstone of the

Communist Party argue their strategies for socialism in Western Europe.

Fri 9 Sept. 7.30 pm

St. Pancras Assembly Rooms, Bidborough Rd., London WC1. (Opp. St Pancras station) Tickets 75p at the door.

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CLIVE GOODWIN on TV censors — p.15

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Editorial

Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.
 Editorial 01-359 8189
 News 01-359 8180

Hands off Zimbabwe!

THE OWEN/YOUNG proposals offer nothing that is new either to the racist settler regime or to the black nationalists in Zimbabwe. Were it not for the media coverage carefully orchestrated by the Foreign Office, they would hardly have raised a single eyebrow. The aim of the proposals is to wean support away from the armed struggle and if Smith had decided to play along this could have represented a serious danger. But the settlers' leader is aware that even a few concessions would weaken his position and he is therefore going to utilise his recent electoral 'victory' to remain intransigent.

The aims of Anglo-American imperialism are fairly straightforward. They would like to lower the 'colour line' from the Zambezi to the Limpopo — that is from Rhodesia to South Africa. This entails a neo-colonial Zimbabwe. Owen, Young and the military consul-designate Field Marshal Lord Carver have all sung the praises of Kenyatta's Kenya as a model regime! Such a solution is favoured by all the regimes in the region. The 'front line' states, despite nuanced differences, favour a quick settlement because of the economic and political dislocation which the present crisis causes. South Africa wants the Kenyan solution because of the obvious impact of a protracted liberation war within its own borders. There is little doubt that the militants of Soweto were greatly encouraged by the victories of the MPLA in Angola.

Smith rejects the plan because he believes he can reach a separate and more beneficial 'internal' settlement with a nationalist grouping not involved in the guerilla struggle. The Patriotic Front's main political base is the guerilla army. So it does not favour any solution which seeks to marginalise that army, though it is critically weakened by its consistent calls for Britain to carry out its 'colonial responsibilities'. The British and Americans will now attempt to influence Vorster on one hand, and the frontline states on the other to pressure their respective allies.

The proposals are a none too subtle attempt to deny the people of Zimbabwe their right to total self-determination. The presence of a UN Force (remember the Congo!) and international imperialist 'aid' to help a black petty bourgeoisie to take power are obvious indications of this fact. The 'legal' basis of the plan is that Britain still has its responsibilities and the UDI of Smith was illegal. Thus a new Kenya can be created.

We should not forget that Kenya in its pre-independence period was the scene of numerous brutal massacres by the colonialist forces. One was forcefully reminded of those brutalities when reading about the tortures inflicted on Zimbabwean blacks by Smith's soldiers. Furthermore, the Kenyan state today is dominated by multinational companies and characterised by widespread brutality against workers, students and all political opponents of the Kenyatta regime. Kenyatta is, however, well-disposed towards white plantation owners who stayed behind as they ensure that bribes and 'gifts' are regularly sent to the President's house in Nairobi.

The Owen/Young plan includes the creation of an army which includes Smith's torturers and the nationalists. Furthermore the entire judiciary and police force will remain during the period of transition. Carver, the Resident Commissioner, will have untrammelled control over this apparatus of repression, with accountability to no-one but his paymasters.

We condemn these proposals as a whole. The only solution in Zimbabwe we favour at the present moment is one that allows for the Zimbabwean people to determine their own future. That means the immediate election of a Constituent Assembly on the basis of one person one vote and the dismantling of the entire machinery of the white settler state. Imperialism cannot guarantee this in any form. So we must say unequivocally: Imperialism: Hands off Rhodesia; No British Rule in Zimbabwe. British Labour should help the liberation struggle by all means necessary.

Labour paves the way for Tory dinosaurs

By TARIQALI

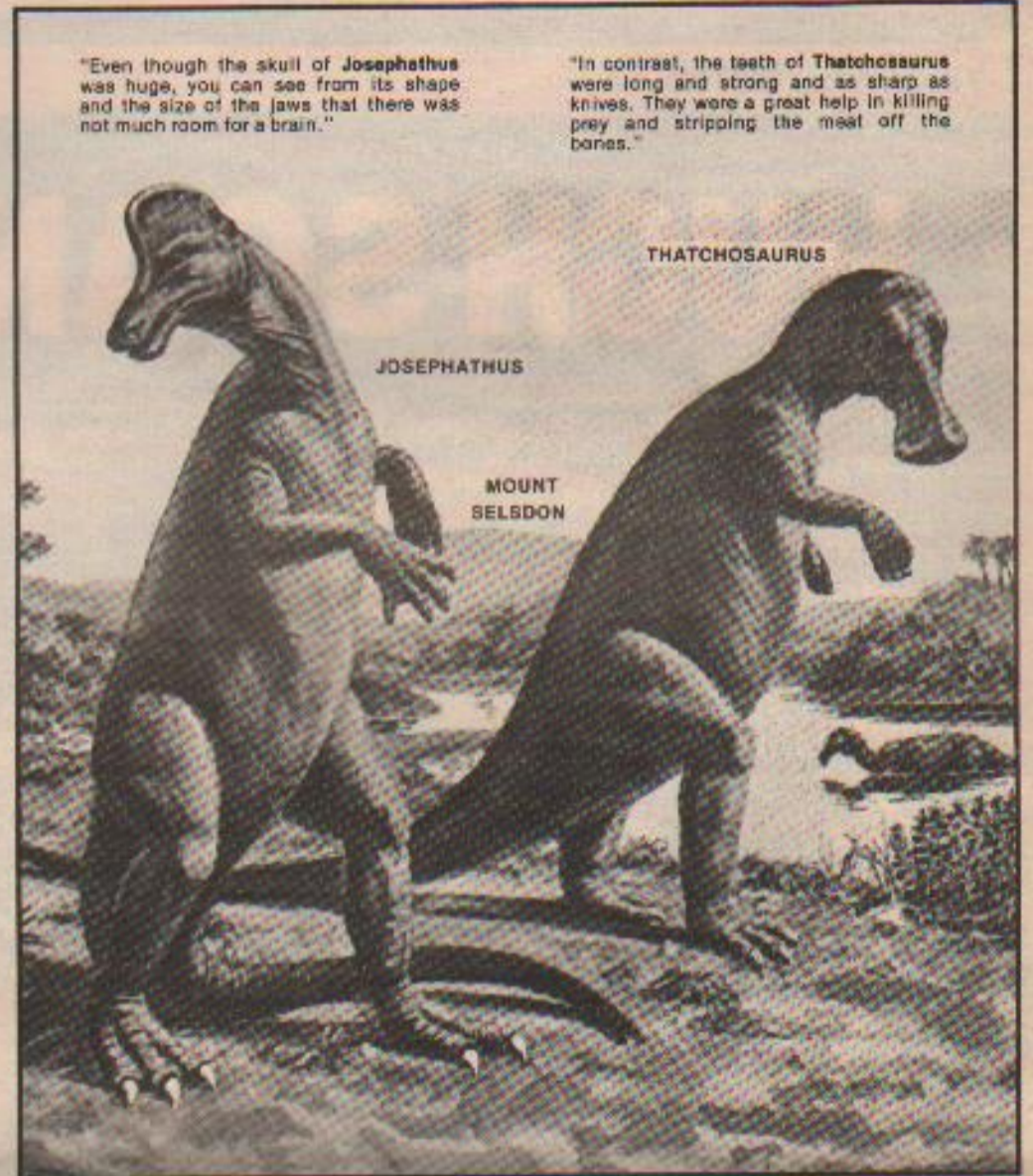
IS THE British ruling class really losing its marbles? Has the sustained effects of the economic crisis and the grim realisation that Britain is no more than a decaying, third-rate imperialist power finally driven them to despair? It is too soon to answer these questions in the affirmative, but there are certainly signs that the old ruling class confidence appears to be evaporating. This is expressed not just within the judiciary, the army, the police and the intelligence services, but also in the favoured ruling party of British capital — the Conservative and Unionist Party, to give it its proper title.

Keith Joseph's outburst against the Scarman report on Grunwick is merely the latest indication of the declining political quality of this old bourgeois party. For by no stretch of the imagination could it be argued that Joseph's remarks were in the immediate interests of the British ruling class. If anything it was old judge Scarman who defended these and showed himself to be a shrewder politician than Joseph. Even *The Economist*, which cannot be accused of a pro-union bias, commented: 'But above all the report provides an objective account of why the dispute flared up: insensitive, authoritarian management payed scant heed to the grievances of immigrant Asian women then earning £28 a week.' It went further and advised Ward to accept the report before the mass picketing re-commenced.

PROVOCATIVE

Why then did Keith Joseph come out with his provocative attack on Scarman and re-echo the remarks of Ward and his advisers, John Gouriet and Robert Moss of the 'National Association for Freedom' (NAFF)? And are the Selsdon group serious when they ask Thatcher to appoint Ward as her advisor on industrial relations? The answer lies in the relationship of forces within the Tory party itself. Since the overthrow of Heath, the party has drifted rapidly rightwards. A number of Heathites have left parliament and are seeking their fortunes elsewhere. This highlights another interesting feature of contemporary Tory politics. Some of the more talented and younger ruling class careerists are not being attracted to Tory politics or to Parliament, but to the City of London and to the multinationals. There has been a noticeable decline in the quality of Tory leadership over the last few years: only a thoroughly philistine and frustrated party could have elected Thatcher as its leader in preference to Heath.

And yet despite all this, there is a certain logic to Thatcher's victory in the leadership stakes. It helped to move the Tory party inexorably well to the right and thus renew its appeal to those layers of tradition-



"Even though the skull of Josephathus was huge, you can see from its shape and the size of the jaws that there was not much room for a brain."

"In contrast, the teeth of Thatchosaurus were long and strong and as sharp as knives. They were a great help in killing prey and stripping the meat off the bones."

al Tory supporters who were disaffected with consensus politics and wanted a hard line with the unions.

It is no secret that Thatcher is greatly influenced by the pronouncements of NAFF. In fact, a NAFF ideologue, Robert Moss, is one of her speech-writers and she has graced a number of NAFF's 'social' occasions. In that sense Joseph's remarks are designed to stress Thatcherite thinking and pander to the more reactionary sectors of the population, those who regularly read and are influenced by English's *Daily Mail* — an agitational paper for middle-class/petty-bourgeois layers, embodying a right-wing populism which is thoroughly nasty.

The big question is whether this is all hot air designed to win votes or whether it is an indication of what Tory policies will be after the next elections, even though Geoffrey Howe is beginning to lose hope of winning them. All the indications are that the only Union the Tories will defend with any vigour is the Union of England, Scotland and Wales. The economic and political crisis could lead them to unleash a political

offensive against the trades unions, especially if Labour's parliamentary strength is decimated in Scotland. Thus a lot will depend on the political map of the country after the next general elections. Joseph is certainly out of touch with immediate ruling class interests at the present time. But he could well be floating a balloon for the future. In which case the sooner it is punctured by mass action to nationalise Grunwick the better.

SHORT-SIGHTED

The British trade-union leaders who gathered at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool are, as always, proving themselves to be extremely short-sighted. Scamman's decision to back the 12-month rule could well prove to be the last straw which will ensure more working class abstentions in the next elections. For if the Tories and their press are on the offensive, we have to recognise that the grounds for this confidence have been prepared by the retrograde policies of the Labour government. The utterly reactionary character of these policies and

the decision of Foot and Benn to endorse them by staying in the Cabinet has demoralised traditional Labour supporters in their thousands. It is hardly surprising that Labour Party membership figures are the lowest in five years. In fact an additional reason for the antics of the Tory dinosaurs is that Labour's policies give them little room to manoeuvre. The only way they can outflank Labour is by a sharp move to the right.

For it is the Labour government which is today acting in the interests of the British ruling class. Jack Jones and Scamman used to say in the early days of this government that unless workers accepted wage-restraint Labour could not stay in power. This was always an incorrect argument. Today its reverse is true. It is only by fighting Labour's policies that the trade-unions could possibly keep Labour in power. The TUC in Blackpool failed dismally to do this. The problem is that its failure to do so will make it more difficult to combat the Tory dinosaurs when they return to power. Jones, Scamman, Foot and Benn will have a lot to answer for over the next two years.

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 united 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 millions of workers throughout the world. We are opposed to them and will offer full support to all those fighting for socialist democracy.

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

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

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

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

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

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

NAME

ADDRESS

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

TUC and the 12 Month Rule No recognition for Scanlon's law

by GEOFF BELL

The 12 month rule was passed by the TUC on Wednesday by one of the most amazing breaches of workers democracy the trade union movement has seen for a long time. Hugh Scanlon committed his 1.2 million votes in favour of the 12 month rule, and thereby secured its acceptance.

This decision flew in the face of his own union's policy. The policy, carried by a 50-2 vote on the AUEW's national committee in May reads:

'This national committee instructs the executive to call for an immediate return to free collective bargaining at the end of the second stage of the Social Contract and that every effort be made to have this adopted by the TUC in 1977.'

The motion was passed in opposition to one of Scanlon's which talked of 'an orderly return to free collective bargaining'.

There is no doubt what these votes meant. They meant an immediate return to free collective bargaining — not the 'order-

ly' return Scanlon wanted and which the 12 month rule represents.

Indeed the engineering workers' delegation at the TUC voted by 21 to nil (with three abstentions and two absent) challenging Scanlon's right to dictate the union's policy.

But Scanlon refused to allow a discussion and refused to recognise the vote.

Subsequently the 12 month rule was passed and now it is meant to be binding on us all. No doubt trade unionists will be told such is 'trade union democracy'.

But when a vote is rigged, when the votes of the second

largest union in the country are cast in direct contradiction to the wishes of the members, then such democracy is that of absolute monarchs and of tyrants. It deserves no respect, no recognition, and no obedience.

The real feeling at the TUC — rather than that manufactured by Scanlon and the other lackies of the most right wing Labour Government since the war — gives the green light for trade unionists up and down the country to immediately begin the fight to regain the wages they have lost over the last two years.

Already the dockers' shop stewards committee has announced that they plan strike action in pursuit of their demand for a 20 per cent increase — a demand which promises to drive a tanker through the Government's pay policies. It is true this committee is 'unofficial' — but again it is an issue of union democracy for the committee is elected by rank and file dockers throughout the country.

Whether in the docks, in the engineering industry or on other factory floors a way forward is

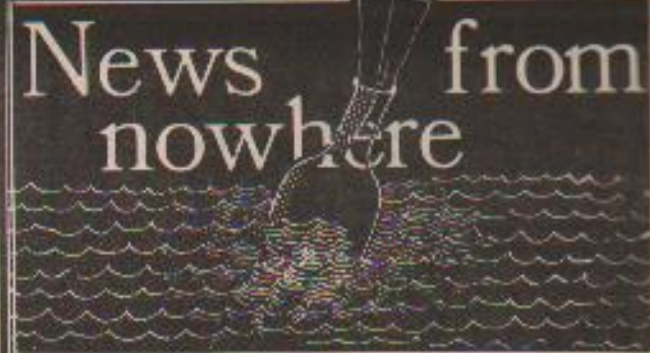
needed around which a successful fight can be waged to reverse the decline of living standards over the last two years. The opportunity is there for a fighting unity of all those willing to struggle against the right-wing policies of the Labour Government and the scabbing trade union bureaucrats.

A policy which demands an immediate £15 increase to make up for the two year drop in wages can start the process.

One which gives automatic rises as inflation rises would protect both the lower and higher paid worker in the future.

A national minimum wage and immediate equal pay for women, would further protect those who have been hit hardest by the Social Contract.

These are the policies which can spearhead the fightback. If Scanlon and others in the right wing of the labour movement do not like it, the rising workers offensive can sweep them aside.



Duffy's daily mail

REMEMBER the long article in the Daily Mail attacking the Socialist Workers Party after Lewisham? An article full of slurs and innuendoes and downright racism. Well at least one section of the labour movement appreciates that sort of stuff. The right-wing of the Engineering Union in Birmingham lapped it up and had photostats made. These were left lying around in AUEW offices where more active members could see them. Some were probably sent in the post as well though we cannot confirm this at the moment.

In normal circumstances we would have assumed that this was a run-of-the-mill incident. The cold war, after all, is still being fought in the AUEW. Catholic Action is still alive and well. An advert in a new publication of Merthyr Labour Party, The Pioneer, placed by right-wingers, urges readers not to vote for communists. The Birmingham episode could well be part of a similar campaign to discredit the SWP candidate for the AUEW Presidency, Ian Morris.

to her, and was unimpressed by this reporter's explanation that she had rung a number she believed to be Lavender's and the voice at the other end agreed with the quotes.

Connoisseurs of Press Council proceedings will note that while the Evening News management wisely treated these complaints and the Council's problings with virtual contempt, its Associated Newspapers stablemate, the Daily Mail, has a slightly different attitude.

A complaint brought against the Mail, again for spurious quotations, had apparently led to an internal inquiry by managing editor C.J. Rees, who told the Council he'd made a 'thorough investigation' and had 'several talks' with the reporter concerned. This show of integrity has no connection with the Mail's unfortunate slip over the Leyland bribes scandal.

Out of the Ghetto and up the ladder

IN THE centre-spread this week we give readers a flavour of some of the underground discussions which are shaking the Communist Party. During the recent Communist University, Bert Ramelson saw a well-known party intellectual, Alan Hunt, with a copy of Out of the Ghetto. After questioning Hunt as to why he was reading such nonsense, the CP's Industrial Organiser exploded: 'It's when you see rubbish like this that you begin to feel that maybe French has a point!'

What is even more ironical is that one of the authors who now caricatures the positions of the far-left has a distinguished pedigree. Dave Purdy was a member of the International Socialists in 1968, later joined Workers Fight, and ended up in 1972 in the Communist Party. If his new pamphlet is any indication all the odds are that his evolution is still incomplete.

Shell shock

THE PICTURE of a peaceful South Africa tastefully painted by that nation's especially free press is supported by the following notice pinned up by management in the Johannesburg office of the Rand Daily Mail:

'We have recently had a shooting incident in the building. I have also been informed of other incidents which have taken place in the past.'

'While the company cannot legislate against the right of staff members to carry weapons, I would like to make it absolutely clear that any person displaying, pointing or shooting a gun on the premises will be subject to instant dismissal.' We imagine that the white unions will be vigorously opposing this.

All the news that stinks

REPORTS OF complaints against newspapers dealt with by the toothless Press Council often reveal just how unworthy some readers are of the impeccable standards practised by the public prints. The latest adjudications show that the London Evening News is exemplary in this respect.

Two reckless complaints (both unaccountably upheld) had been made against this impeccable record of the capital's concerns. Mr. P. Cazaly of Bromley, Kent, objected to the fact that remarks attributed to him on the subject of whether women work harder than men bore no relation to what he had said on this subject.

Cazaly was surprised that ace reporter Martin Turner should only have noted down his name, address, age and occupation in the course of the interview. And was puzzled to find — when he wrote to the other men questioned for the vox pop feature — that they all substantially agreed with his complaint. Naturally the Evening News did not trouble its readers with any correction or apology.

Another surfeit of press freedom in the News upset Maria Lavender, former treasurer of the Sporting Staffordshire Bull Terrier Association, who found herself attributed with remarks on these animals that she had never made and to which she strongly objected.

Lavender was unhappy that would-be Journalist of the Year Catherine Olsen had not spoken



'YOU'RE WANTED AT THE TOP TABLE, HUGH.'

TUC and Grunwick Put your pickets where your mouth is

MUCH apparent anger, much rhetoric, many fine words were present at Blackpool on Tuesday when the TUC debated Grunwick. To nobody's surprise Congress adopted the APEX motion calling upon 'all affiliated unions to continue and to intensify their financial and practical aid to those in dispute'.

But for the Grunwick strikers themselves, the motion was flabby and vague. Strike Committee member Kamlesh Gandhi told Socialist Challenge at the

TUC Grunwick lobby on Monday, 'We think the motion is not strong enough...we think it should include the cutting off of all services'.

The same sentiments were put to the APEX leader Roy Grantham when he was drawing up the motion for Congress. According to strike committee member Jack Dromey the strikers 'had urged APEX to include a request for unions to cut off all supplies and services'.

This Grantham refused to do, and as a result concrete and practical ways of winning the Grunwick dispute were hardly mentioned at Blackpool.

The TUC motion is a starting point. But more than that is

needed if the strike is to win: This means mass action to re-establish the mass picket at Grunwick with the aim of stopping the scab bus.

It means mass action to cut off all supplies to George Ward — to put the utmost pressure on the trade union leaders to sanction such action — and if they don't, for their rank and file to do the job for them.

And it means mass action to answer George Ward's threats to close the factory with an occupation and a demand that the Labour Government nationalise Grunwick under workers control, without compensation.

Kamlesh Gandhi said on Monday that the Grunwick strikers

have 'received a lot of sympathy' from the TUC delegates. That is all very well, but as strike treasurer Jayaben Desai said on 23 August, the strikers had 'drowned in sympathy but thirsted for action'.

Desai was right and she and the other strikers have been right before — on the issue of mass picketing, on the issue of the postal boycott, and now on the issue of the cutting off of all supplies.

It only remains to offer a reply to the latest threat of Ward, Keith Joseph and company. Let the TUC leaders put their pickets where their mouths are, and let the flag 'under worker control' fly over Grunwick.

THE LABOUR Government fights for women's rights, of course. It is especially concerned to protect those of married women, whom some misguided employers and even trade unionists believe should be driven back into the home in these times of crisis.

The confidential letter reproduced above sent to Socialist Challenge by a supporter who works in a so-called Job Centre run by the Department of Employment — will convince all waverers that our Government is the staunchest defender of women's rights. In this spirit we reveal its contents.

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Gays fight repression

The annual conference of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality drew 550 delegates to Nottingham over the bank holiday weekend. CHE has experienced heavy setbacks since its last conference. Its parliamentary law reform campaign has seen the defeat of a Bill to lower the age of consent for homosexual men, and the Bill to extend to Scotland the terms of the 1967 Sexual Offences Act has fared little better.

The left of the gay movement has not yet been able to offer a strong alternative in action. Below JAMIE GOUGH looks at some fundamental issues involved in the fight against gay oppression. Socialist Challenge will be publishing a series of articles on this issue and contributions are welcomed.

THE PREJUDICE and discrimination faced daily by gay people of both sexes appears to many of its opponents as being merely a matter of primitive ideas. In their minds, prejudice stems from antiquated religious dogma, and from fear and hatred resulting from ignorance. Surely, they would argue, this can be erased by more tolerant and enlightened education. But there is much more to it than that.

Prejudice against gays is constantly being produced by one of the most basic institutions of society — the family. The majority of people live in — and are forced to do so — the family based on a heterosexual couple.

Women — who are especially

oppressed in the family — are driven into it by economic necessity, backed up with life-long indoctrination. The family serves capital well. It gets the housework done at no cost to the ruling class. It instills authoritarian attitudes and isolates working people from each other.

FAMILY

The family is reinforced in so many ways — including the media, education, and the state — that it appears as a 'natural' arrangement. Heterosexuality seems to be the only 'natural' form of sexual expression. Other forms of sexuality and sexual behaviour — especially gay sexuality — seem to be a personal threat. Gay people's sexuality threatens others of their own sex. It presents

an image that they may well have repressed within themselves. By relating to the 'wrong' sex, gay people do not conform to traditional 'masculine' and 'feminine' ways of behaving.

Lesbianism rejects 'normal' sexuality which is centred on the penis thanks to male domination and the reduction of sexuality to reproduction in the family. Men, especially those whose most consuming preoccupation is their 'potency', are especially threatened by lesbianism. This helps to explain the extreme verbal and physical violence which lesbians continually encounter.

CHALLENGE

Homosexuality is not just the concern of gay men and women. The struggle against gay oppression challenges the repressive sexuality and gender roles of 'straight' people as well.

Gay people first experience their oppression in a very personal way — from members of their family, their friends and their acquaintances. Gays hide their sexuality so that they don't become completely ostracised.

For the great majority of gay people, this is the most important immediate problem — a daily suppression of their true feelings, and a continuous struggle against loneliness. This is all the more intense for those gays — probably the majority — who get married. Lesbians whose sexuality is suppressed as women are particularly

victimised at the hands of the family.

The isolation and fear experienced by gay people is one of the greatest obstacles to the fight back against this oppression. For instance, the vast majority of gays who are victimised by bosses or the law do not want to launch a fight in support of their cases for fear of publicity. This gives an enormous importance to organising directly to make it easier for gays to express their sexuality openly, to 'come out' — through counselling services, gay centres, gay caucuses in the unions, and above all through mounting strong broadly-based campaigns to fight each and every case of discrimination.

The oppression of gays is in the first place a 'personal' matter. But that doesn't mean that the capitalist class is not directly concerned with it. Capitalists exploit anti-gay feeling for divisive purposes — for example, to sack individual workers, or through more massive campaigns to provide a scapegoat for the decay of bourgeois society in crisis.

RULING CLASS

Equally as important, the ruling class intervenes — through the pages of their press, through their churches, their laws, their morality brigades, the education system and the health service and even their housing policies — to reinforce attitudes against gay sexuality. This also defends the

institution of the family.

The most systematic and murderous form of anti-gay prejudice was seen in the fascist states. In Nazi Germany, gay people were rounded up and murdered by the thousands.

The fact that gay oppression is transmitted through such an enormous variety of agencies shows just how central the heterosexual family is in capitalist society. It requires a fightback on all these fronts.



Picket against the victimisation of a gay worker, sacked by the British Home Stores last year after kissing another man in a TV documentary.

Photo: MIKE TOMLINSON (FL)

Labour Party Conference to debate abortion this year!

IF A majority of delegates to the annual conference of the Labour Party in Brighton next month do not raise their hands in support of the abortion resolution, this will be a serious blow to women's right to choose.

It is the first time that the abortion issue has been placed on the conference agenda outside of health service policy.

The sentiment within the party is strong. The abortion debate ranks third in terms of the number of resolutions received; and there are none from the anti-abortion Labour for Life group.

The Labour Abortion Rights Campaign calls on all supporters of abortion rights to help convince delegates to vote for our resolution, and to join with us in resisting any attempts to drop this issue from the agenda under the pretext of 'time considerations', as has been rumoured.

All pro-abortion organisations are convinced that there will be another private members' bill in the next Parliamentary session. And the restrictive Government Bill which David Ennals is said to be preparing must be blocked.

A massive pro-abortion vote by rank and file Labour Party mem-

Speak out by
ANTONIA GORTON,
Convenor, Labour Abortion
Rights Campaign

bers and by trade unions will be a powerful factor in building the movement to win this vital right for women. LARC has been busy in the past month. It has contacted delegates to co-ordinate pro-choice forces so that the resolution will get through the conference intact.

The resolution supported by LARC calls upon the National Executive Committee and the Parliamentary Labour Party to:

1. Defend the 1967 Abortion Act from restrictive amendment;
2. Draw up proposals for future Government legislation which would ensure women's right of choice on abortion in law;
3. Include in the next manifesto a commitment to introduce legislation to ensure women's right of choice about abortion;
4. Recognise the importance of abortion rights to women and accordingly abolish the free vote for Labour MPs on the abortion issue;

5. Campaign vigorously for freely available abortion facilities throughout the NHS.

LARC has issued an urgent appeal for all women, trade unionists, students and political organisations to join in a mass lobby of delegates on Tuesday, 5 October. The National Abortion Campaign has put its support behind this appeal. TASS, the white collar section of the Engineering Unions has taken up the appeal. We hope the support continues to grow in the next few vital weeks before the conference.

We want delegates to see the scope of public feeling on abortion. We want them to be convinced of the need to take on MPs, the Labour Party and the Government. The lobby will be successful if it reaches out to win delegates to support the right of women to choose.

We ask *Socialist Challenge* readers to:

- * Send us the name and address of trade union and Labour Party delegates to the conference;
- * Mandate your delegates to vote for the resolution — a key union could make a big difference. Schedule a report back meeting;
- * Organise contingents on the

lobby. Get broad sponsorship and financial support for it;

* Get publicity in the press.

Mobilising material, LARC bulletins, leaflets and badges are available from: Antonia Gorton, 73 Albion Road, London N16. Membership [LP members only] 50p.

PIE and the press

'Fire him immediately' screamed the Sunday Mirror. Tom O'Carroll, chairperson of the Paedophile Information Exchange, is the person under attack. His 'crime' is nothing more than speaking out on paedophilia — sexual relations between an adult and child. JAMIE GOUGH reports

The Mirror's demand came after a series of hysterical attacks in the press provoked by the affrontery of PIE in daring to organise a public meeting. Fleet Street's sudden interest in 'protecting children' contrasts strongly with the press's indifference to any meaningful rights for children.

Thanks to the press campaign, the Shaftesbury Hotel in London — where the meeting was to be held — cancelled the booking. Threats were received that the meeting would be broken up by a 'right wing group'. The PIE meeting has now been re-scheduled for 19 September at the Conway Hall, premises of the South Place Ethical Society which became concerned with the attacks on free speech.

Paedophiles came under similar attack at the annual conference of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality. Under threats from the management of the conference hall, Dr. Brongersma — a Dutch social democrat senator and campaigner for paedophile rights —

had to cut out all reference to paedophiles from his speech.

Trust House Forte, owners of another hotel where the paedophile workshop was to be held, issued a last minute ban, so that the workshop had to be held elsewhere. The CHE conference later condemned this flagrant censorship and the vicious press campaign against PIE.

This kind of harassment is nothing new for PIE. Judge King-Hamilton, the ultra-reactionary who presided over the Gay News prosecution, took the opportunity to investigate the paedophile organisation. The police obliged, but no charges were brought.

Socialists must defend the right of any group to discuss questions of sexuality. The democratic rights of individual paedophiles — including freedom from job harassment — must also be upheld. Without taking up this struggle, there will be no resistance to the repression and hysteria.

However, it has to be recognised that because of the nature of capitalist society — with its repressive institution of the nuclear family, which denies any creative and independent development of children — it is hard to talk about consenting sexual relations — as PIE argues for — on an equal footing between children and adults.

In this situation most children cannot exercise a conscious choice

in entering into such relationships. But this kind of vigorous debate to instill a real recognition of children's rights, is a far cry from the hysteria churned out by Fleet Street.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE BENEFIT

Saturday 10 September
6.30pm

The Other Cinema

Illustrious Corpses
(Rossi, 1975)

Highly impressive —
True Out

'A Remarkable Film' —
Socialist Challenge

Plus: New short film about
Socialist Challenge
and introduction by
Tania Ali

£4.50. Tickets from
Socialist Challenge, The
Other Cinema, or at the
door — 25 Tottenham
Street, London W1 (off
Tottenham Court Rd)

CHE Conference dodges real issues

THE ANNUAL conference of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality took decisions on a wide range of issues — from *Gay News* defence work to support for women's abortion rights — which, if contrary to past practice, are carried out, could provide a basis for a more action oriented campaigning group.

The conference voted overwhelmingly to work with and to affiliate to the National Abortion Campaign. Nikki Henrique argued that if CHE began to 'fight for the right of women as well as gay men to do with their bodies as they please', then lesbians might begin to take CHE more seriously. The involvement of women in

CHE has continued to decline. Only 20 women attended the conference out of the 550 people in total. There are no women on the new executive. One of the largest autonomous women's groups set up unconstitutionally by CHE members in Manchester has left CHE since the last conference.

As a response to the loss of its women members, conference voted to allow women to decide — through a postal vote — whether or not to form autonomous women's groups.

The need to defend the democratic rights of gays was an area of particular concern. CHE will set up a legal advice service, something desperately needed by the

thousands of gays victimised by bosses and the law every year. A *Gay News* defence committee is also to be established to mobilise against Mary Whitehouse's attack. The national demonstration scheduled for the time of the appeal against the conviction will be an important focus of its activity.

Local CHE groups were called on to involve themselves actively in anti-fascist work, and follow the example of those CHE groups represented in the 150-strong gay contingent at Lewisham. Nevertheless, a resolution to exclude fascists from meetings and membership — an elementary precaution — was thrown out.

Lucas toolmakers A suitable case for press frenzy

If all else fails, the ruling class press can be relied on to attack strikers with the type of front page headline the *Evening Standard* employed last Friday. It read: 'Lucas Women Lead Revolt To End Strike'.

The press report failed to mention that the 'women workers' were no more than a handful employed at Lucas. Nor did it report that next day after seeing union officials the women concerned said they agreed the union had done everything in its power to end the dispute and that, 'We agree with what the men are fighting for'. JOHN GRAHAM reports from Birmingham on what the Lucas toolmakers are fighting for:

Lucas toolmakers first negotiated a bonus scheme 12 years ago. Today it stands at £7.58. On 1 July this year the toolmakers decided the most fruitful way they could defend their living standards was to put in a claim for a substantial increase in their bonus. Their thinking was that this tactic would not bring them into conflict with the Social Contract.

Nevertheless Lucas resisted. Over their shoulder they were anxiously looking at the claim of 10,000 production workers who they knew would be influenced by the success of the toolmakers' claim. When the toolmakers started a work-to-rule management immediately suspended the whole of the bonus.

INSULTING

The following Monday, ten weeks ago, the 1,200 AUEW toolmakers struck in defence of their bonus and their living standards. Contrary to press reports the strike has nothing to do with differentials.

The first offer Lucas came up with, an insulting 49p increase, was flatly rejected by the toolmakers. Subsequently the

management set about trying to break the strike. In cooperation with British Leyland, whom Lucas supply, and it is suspected with the aid of the Engineering Employers Federation spare parts were shipped in from abroad — including South Africa.

LAIPOFF

These attempts to smash the strike were not as successful as the employers had hoped and workers at British Leyland began to be laid off.

Then came a new offer from Lucas. The press claimed it represented an increase of £3 a week plus £100 bonus. In reality things were very different. The £3 was dependent on a productivity deal. It was not to be added to the bonus, and the toolmakers had to agree never to submit any more bonus claims. It was also up for review in six months, and had to be 'self-financing' — that is, the workers had to produce more. As for the £100, after tax deductions, the loss of the bonus owing to them for the week prior to the strike, the two weeks holiday pay it was deducted from, and National Insurance contributions, the toolmakers would

gain precisely nothing.

So not surprisingly the offer was rejected at a mass meeting — much to the annoyance of AUEW official and candidate for the presidency Terry Duffy, who attempted to persuade the stewards to recommend a return to work.

SCABBING

Instead Lucas shop stewards are now calling for a fight against the massive scabbing operation the employers have launched. They are touring factories, union branches and district committees in search of financial support for their official strike. British Leyland toolmakers have already donated £250 to the Lucas strikers' fighting fund. Shop stewards are also approaching dockers and airport workers, asking them to 'black' the scab components being shipped into the country. If this strategy is successful, then the opposition of Lucas management, British Leyland and the Engineering Employers Federation can be swept aside and the toolmakers can achieve their aim of the full £5 on their bonus.

WOMEN

* While the press invented the 'women strike revolt' story, they have not reported the 400 women workers who are sitting in at the Lucas car component factory as Mere Lane in Sutton Coalfield near Birmingham. The women have been laid off on the excuse of the toolmakers' strike. They are reporting to work every day and demanding a guarantee of work from management.



John Deason, centre, at a meeting of the right to work marchers on their way to Blackpool. Upon arrival last Monday, marchers heckled and jostled union leaders to protest against rising unemployment. John Deason was arrested outside the TUC.

Ringmaster Sanderson's anti union circus

by NOEL HIBBERT

GEORGE WARD's obstinacy has produced an array of tin-pot imitators around the country. Take the example of Roy Sanderson of Skegness. When the majority of workers in his forklift firm decided to join the transport workers' union last October, convenor Phil Gillat came in for immediate harassment. On 16 May he was removed from the factory with 10 minutes notice. For the past 16 weeks, 43 workers have been on official strike and the conciliation body, ACAS, has found in favour of the union.

The cards are stacked heavily against the strikers. Skegness — renowned as a convalescent home for miners — is being hit by the first strike in its history, but the workers are isolated from the big battalions of the working class.

Sanderson's tactics are straight from the 1877 conscientious employers' handbook. He has used unemployed youth as scab labour. Phil Gillat says: 'Two workers went for a job. One was a seal tamer from the local circus and the other an experienced trade unionist. They were both asked whether they belonged to a union. The seal tamer was taken on immediately. The trade unionist was told to get lost.'

'Ringmaster' Sanderson has put his scabs through the hoops. Workers are now interrogated, photographed, and all relevant facts about union activities are filed on the employers' blacklist. Two men off sick were sacked for 'fraternising' with pickets.

A number of the main component suppliers for Sanderson are being boycotted. But production continues. Sanderson gets parts from agents who drop materials within a 20-mile radius of Skegness, while the strikers lack the resources to trace the suppliers.

Organised gangs of scabs have intimidated pickets on night duty.

Two weeks ago a photographer for the *Militant* newspaper was bounced off Sanderson's car as it rumbled the picket line. The local press is in Sanderson's pocket. The strike has never received front page treatment, and all letters published are from so-called 'independents' who push Sanderson's case.

Dave Cairns, TGWU regional secretary, has promised to strangle Sanderson into submission through an extensive boycott. Some of the strikers wonder whether he intends using an elastic band, rather than a rope. Cairns seems to be tripping over himself not to outpace Roy Grantham of APEX. He is hedging his bets on the outcome of the Battle of Granwick. After all, if Sanderson was buried alive through mass action, there would be a practical example of how to smash George Ward!

The Hull Socialist Alliance is fighting to extend the boycott at Sanderson's, through a Granwick/Sanderson Support Committee. It demands that official leaders put their words into action to build the mass picket.

Financial donations and support to: Phil Gillat, 27 Lady Maudslayi Drive, Winsthorpe, Skegness, Lincs. Tel: 0754-3512.

IN BRIEF

COATBRIDGE: James Callaghan was greeted by 150 angry local government workers when he arrived in the Monklands district of Coatbridge in Scotland last Thursday. The workers were from the housing department of the Labour-controlled council, who have been on strike since the council announced a re-organisation plan two months ago.

Claiming that council workers were responsible for poor local housing conditions, the council wanted 50 redundancies in the department. The district branch of the local government workers' union voted unanimously in favour of strike action of members in the housing department, and this was followed by a strike in the finance department, halting rent collections.

With NALGO's regional branch also being brought out, the council has begun to back down. It now demands three redundancies. The attacks on the efficiency of workers have stopped.

NALGO is fighting the victimisation of the three workers, demanding no redundancies. Callaghan had nothing to say to the strikers.

Messages of support and donations to: Barney Whelan, President, Monklands NALGO branch, 14 Department Office, Airdrie, Scotland.

OXFORDSHIRE: Teachers here have been given an undertaking by Oxfordshire County Council that there will be no redundancies after the county-wide strike against education cuts earlier this summer.

The executive of the National Union of Teachers jumped at the opportunity to drop plans for further strike action. It has also ended its members' boycott of school meals supervision.

The teachers' leaders have dragged their heels throughout the struggle. They have failed to provide any lead in linking the resistance to the cuts put up by teachers to other public sector action. Oxfordshire teachers will celebrate their partial victory by continuing to refuse to take oversize classes.

Newcastle theatre occupied

by JIM BRADY

PLANS ARE underway to re-open the Unity Theatre in Newcastle — under workers control. The theatre has been occupied by members of the performers' union Equity following the liquidation of the theatre's trust, which resulted in closure and the loss of 70 jobs.

A well-attended public meeting called by Equity on 30 July resolved to occupy the theatre against the liquidator. The defence of jobs in an industry with 70 per cent unemployment is of obvious importance, as is the need to protect, by occupation, the theatre as a workplace.

Equity Council — the union's executive body — has declared the occupation official and is actively seeking wider trade union and labour movement support. The occupation of a theatre is unprecedented in Britain. It marks a significant step forward for workers in the entertainment industry.

It is hoped by Equity that the theatre will be opened to the

public under the union's control in the very near future. As we go to press negotiations between union officials and the university authorities are in progress. However the reopening of the theatre on a permanent basis will be dependent on sufficient funds being released by the trust's funding bodies — Tyne and Weir council, Northern Arts, and the Arts Council.

Resolutions of support and financial donations are urgently required and will be gratefully acknowledged. Please send to: British Actors Equity (Newcastle Theatre Fund), 8 Hurley Street, London W1.

Pressure on Tyne and Weir council to release funds is essential to the successful outcome of this fight. Resolutions to that effect from labour movement bodies, etc., should be sent to: Chief Executive, Tyne and Weir Council, Sandford House, Archbold Terrace, Newcastle 2.

For further information or speakers, contact Archie Macmillan, Equity Official Occupation, University Theatre, Newcastle. Tel: 21875.



Five hundred anti-cuts campaigners marched in support of the work-in at Hounslow Hospital, West London, on 31 August. Women's groups, local trades unionists, and scores of hospital workers demonstrated their opposition to the area health authority's plans to close the 65-bed hospital. If the authority's plans were on target, Hounslow Hospital would now have only 20 patients — it has twice that number, thanks to the work-in. At the South Middlesex Hospital, a work-in has just begun to prevent a cut of nearly 100 beds by Christmas.

OPENFORUM: AUEW ELECTION

Why we must support Bob Wright for President

by MICK RICE, Chairperson, Joint Shop Stewards Committee, Lucas BW3; member of AUEW Birmingham District Committee

JOHN GRAHAM's article in *Socialist Challenge* on 11 August, 'Vote for Ian Morris', shows that the International Marxist Group still finds it difficult to control their fascination for ultra left adventures.

Of course, if the argument is reduced solely to the basis of the respective election addresses then Ian Morris would get the vote of all revolutionaries, except those of the Workers Revolutionary Party who are running their own candidate. But then getting the vote of the revolutionary members of the engineering section of the AUEW isn't what the election is about. Political strategy and tactics are more complex than producing a blueprint and distributing it as widely as possible.

The central question which all revolutionaries face in relation to the trade union movement is the building of a genuine rank and file movement. All activities within the trade union movement should be subordinated to this task. However, it cannot be built out of thin air. It is necessary at the outset to define the broad policies on which the movement is to be built. Equally one cannot build a genuine rank and file movement if one has a complete set of pre-determined policies,

for no outside forces will join in. The first mistake can result in either an accommodation to the bureaucracy or a passive worshiping of spontaneity as the only 'pure' and 'true' form of action. The second mistake leads to substitutionism, which is the characteristic of all political sects.

CANDIDATES

Within the AUEW engineering section there is a long tradition of struggle between a right wing faction, now headed by John Boyd and Terry Duffy, and a left wing faction, now headed by Bob Wright. This division extends to most elections throughout the union.

It has always been part of the philosophy of the Broad Left that candidates for positions should be elected by its members before contesting. Broad Left members who are interested in standing speak on why they consider themselves to be the best candidate, and after questions and discussion the members elect the person they think most suitable.

In the case of Bob Wright's candidacy this was done and at least three members of the IMG, including John Graham, had the chance to speak. Ian Morris also

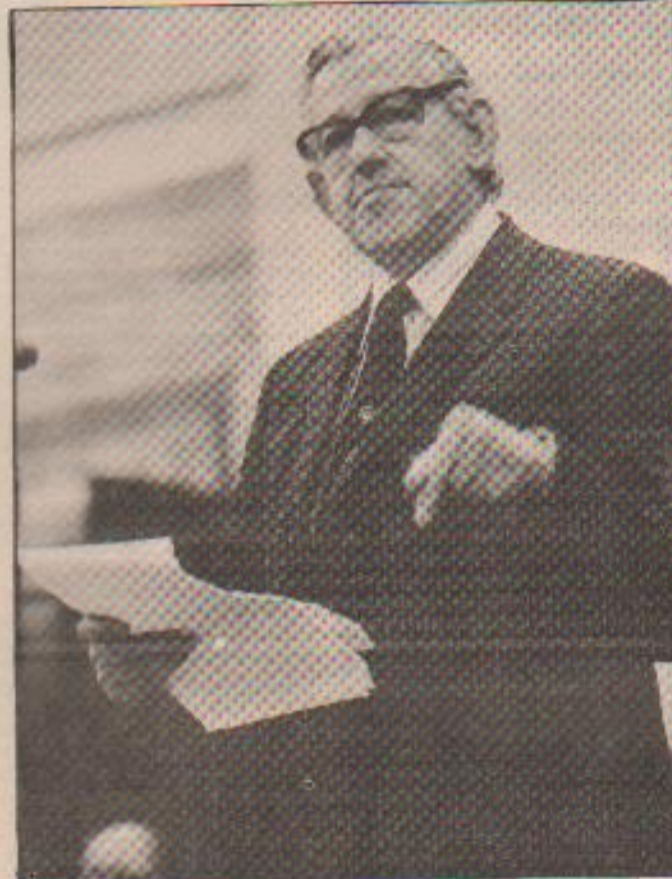
attended this meeting. Your members never hinted that 'the issues at stake are too great to be bound by "majority votes" of the Broad Left.' If this was really the case they should at least have had the decency to propose an alternative candidate! A failing which I cannot understand.

John Graham also stated that 'The election was an occasion when we have to act independently of the Broad Left.' In fact in our area precisely the reverse happened. The IMG were excluded from the Broad Left and IMG members were forced to leave the room. So much for acting independently.

If we look now at Ian Morris's candidacy no similar meeting to that of Broad Left was held to determine the candidate. In fact for some months the Socialist Workers Party were informing us that an SWP full-timer was going to stand, a more blatant case of substitutionism would be difficult to invent. Finally some central committee member probably came to his senses long enough to get an actual worker to stand. But whilst the worker is genuine the same cannot be said for the *Engineers Charter* which has no real base anywhere.

NOTSERIOUS

Out of the 182 full time officials in the AUEW engineering section there is not one who is a member of a far left group. Out of the estimated 3,000 District Committee delegates within the union there are about 15 members of far left groups. Can the SWP and the IMG be serious in their advocacy of Ian Morris for the President's position? Whilst history teaches us that it is possible to skip stages



BOB WRIGHT: elected Broad Left candidate.

this stretches credulity too far. In any case the SWP are not serious about their candidacy, for as Chairperson Duncan Hallas stated at a recent meeting in Birmingham: 'If we had any chance of winning we wouldn't be running'. Which serious militant could agree with this logic?

The danger of Morris's candidacy is that it deflects attention from the real problems. Younger members of revolutionary groups will see their political commitment not in terms of establishing themselves in their workplaces and within their union organisation. They will not see the need to

take on the mundane and often routine jobs in the unions as they develop support for themselves and their policies. No, for the sect, it is all easy. One simply needs to issue a set of policies, to be able to write an election address or a leaflet. One simply needs to proclaim the Party: we are here and this is what we stand for.

Union elections are different from parliamentary elections. In the unions there is a structure with at least a formal right for all members to participate. They are also organised hierarchically. That being so one would expect that revolutionaries would extend their base from the bottom gradually winning more positions as a reflection and consequence of developing the rank and file base.

BEST PERSON

Union elections are not won solely on the basis of programme. One often hears members saying that they do not agree with the politics of their shop steward but that he or she is the best person for the job. Revolutionaries will begin to win on this basis and over time the ideas of their members will need to be hardened politically.

Implicit within John Graham's article is another idea which needs to be tackled. That is in the first round revolutionaries have the luxury to vote for the revolutionary candidate and in the second round they can again throw their weight behind the Broad Left nominee. This yo-yo behaviour cuts no ice with militants and only discredits revolutionaries who then become type cast as people who play fast and loose with the trade union movement. Furthermore Graham and your readers should be aware that the Broad Left has in local elections supported revolutionary socialists for full time positions.

Airport workers can ground Phase 3

The Civil Aviation Authority is reputed to be losing £2 million pounds a day from the strike of air traffic controllers. It would cost the employers £1.5 million a year if they agreed to the strikers' terms.

The most obvious conclusion to be drawn from this is that the Authority's intransigence to even consider the strikers' demands is not caused by its desire to save money. Like other strikes taking place and promised, it is concerned with politics.

All the 850 assistant controllers, who are members of the Civil and Public Services Association, are asking is that the CAA implement a settlement agreed way back in July 1975, but outlawed by the Social Contract. According to strike leader Ken Thomas, implementation of the agreement would mean a rise of between 14 and 20 per cent.

So the CAA, heavily prompted by the Labour Government, says it cannot give in to the strikers because their claim would break the 12-month rule and 10 per cent ceiling on wages — an argument which is disputed by the CPSA and even the TUC.

The Government clearly sees the strike as a 'test case' for its attempt to further drive down the living standards of working people. The Cabinet and the CAA are prepared to lose millions of pounds, ruin holidays, damage the much talked about 'export drive', and break an agreement now over two years old in order to teach these public sector workers a lesson. They are also willing to endanger tens of thousands of lives.

Socialist Challenge has been told by two of the strikers that since the assistant controllers go-slow began, there have been 12 'near misses' — or near collisions — in the skies above the airports. These are solely the result of the air traffic controllers, either doing the jobs of the assistants or of simply ignoring the usual safety measures the assistant controllers operate.

The dispute has attracted wide support — from assistant controllers in Spain, France and in other countries, from a number of unions in Britain — the railway workers union ASLEF has pledged support — and from other airport workers who have given heavily to the strike fund. Over 50 per cent of flights have been cancelled — more than twice as many as the strikers expected.

The Government is determined to smash the strike. It knows that if it does, other public sector workers may think twice before attempting to smash the pay guidelines.

Which is why the CPSA should cheerfully admit their claim is in breach of what remains of the Social Contract — and by that attract wider solidarity from millions of workers who are straining to smash the 12-month rule and the 10 per cent limit. Once these are smashed, then this time next year maybe millions of low paid workers will be able to afford to go on holiday.

by John Graham

JOHN BOYD, general secretary of the Engineering Union and a leading 'moderate', has just sent a letter to every AUEW shop steward informing them that the executive council will not even consider making a strike official if a full-time officer has not been involved prior to the strike.

This will apply even where 'the employer is provocative (as) there is no reason why our full-time officials cannot conduct an external conference with a federated engineering establishment before the stoppage takes place'.

This means that even in cases where a shop steward or union militant is victimised, the union will not back a strike until an official is involved. Boyd points out that an external conference can be held within seven days, but it is well known in the AUEW that it can take weeks and even months to get a conference.

Boyd's circular is part of a campaign to stall any shop floor action against Phase 3. The logical outcome would be that militants who refuse to submit to right-wing officials would be disciplined through some machinery of the union.

And that is precisely the logic of Boyd's hysterical defence of the 'best Labour Government this country has ever had' in the August issue of the AUEW's journal, where he denounced 'extravagant claims'. Perhaps it is Boyd's generous moderation which helped to persuade the executive committee to back the 12-Month Rule.

Boyd plays Sunny Jim's tune



JOHN BOYD: the AUEW general secretary tries to make contact with the Full-time Official in the Sky.

SOCIALIST UNITY TAMESIDE CALL

THE NEXT major anti-fascist mobilisation will be on 8 October in Tameside. The fascists are pulling out all the stops to get their supporters there. Anti-fascists in the labour movement have also made it clear that if the NP march goes ahead they will attempt to stop it.

Last weekend the Steering Committee of Socialist Unity put out a call for a massive contingent behind its banners. The meeting was attended by activists from Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Bolton, Hull, Leeds, London and Southampton.

It was agreed that Raghb Ahsan, the SU candidate in the Ladywood by-election, would go on a speaking tour in late September to mobilise and build support for the demonstration. 'If the fascists go ahead, we could make Lewisham look like a picnic', Ahsan told *Socialist Challenge*.

The next Socialist Unity meeting will be in Manchester on 9 October, a day after the demo. SU supporters should make sure they are present.

DONACHIE DIES

WE REGRET to announce the death of comrade Johnny Donachie.

Johnny was in his twenties and had been active in revolutionary politics for the past four years. He was a well-known militant in the NUS as a student at Sheffield Polytechnic.

At the time of his death he was working as a porter. Johnny had been seriously ill for some time. He will be missed by all those socialists who worked with him.

7 DAYS in the 32 COUNTIES



by TOM MARLOWE, Dublin

After many false starts Jimmy Carter finally spoke on Ireland's British question last week when he issued a short statement saying he was 'deeply concerned' about continuing conflict and violence in Northern Ireland.

The boring banality of Carter's remarks was illustrated by the 57 varieties of praise it attracted. Unionists, Irish nationalists, the British Government, the Irish Government, even Sinn Fein, all expressed some degree of satisfaction with Carter's statement.

But the only half significant feature of it was that the American President acknowledged the 32-county nature of the Irish situation when he said that any 'just solution' must have the support of the Irish Government.

If nothing else, Carter was swimming with the tide. In the last couple of weeks, the 'Irish dimension' has been increasingly referred to throughout the 32 partitioned counties of Ireland.

The mainly Catholic opposition party in the North, the Social Democratic and Labour Party, has issued a statement putting 'increased emphasis' on the Irish dimension.

* A new 'green Tory' party has been formed in the North with its first aim being 'the removal of the British from Northern Ireland'.

* The recently elected Fianna Fail Government in the 26 Counties has unofficially supported the new SDLP policy and is making various noises indicating less harsh treatment for its republican prisoners.

* Even the new Catholic Primate of All Ireland, Archbishop Thomas O'Fiaich said on his appointment: 'I look forward to the day when Ireland will be a united country.'

NO REFORMS

When the Catholic Church, the SDLP, and the Southern Irish Government start raising the green flag a few inches off the ground, you can be sure something is up. The 'something' in question is the attitude of the British Government. It appears

Ireland: a nation once again ?

that Callaghan and Co. have finally got it through the thick skulls of the 'moderate' nationalist-minded leadership in Ireland that the Labour Government has not the slightest intention of 'reforming' the North of Ireland — even if this were possible.

Referring to the recent pact between the Labour Government and the Ulster Unionists, prominent SDLP member Hugh Logue complained: 'All the lives in Northern Ireland are negotiable for another day in impotent office.'

The SDLP is also aware of the irrefutable evidence of the stepping up of the torture of republican suspects in the North. According to Paddy Duffy, a senior member of the SDLP and a practising solicitor: 'There are now about ten doctors in Northern Ireland who have been dealing consistently with injuries inflicted during interrogation.'

With anger in the republican ghettos against this brutality rising daily; with the increasing call from these areas for the removal of British troops, and with the bankruptcy of 'power sharing', the nationalist 'moderates' have little option but to move in the direction of an all-Ireland dimension.

Those who resist are principally the dwindling band of supporters for the line of the Northern Irish trade union bureaucracy, who continue to crawl to the British Government pleading for 'A Better Life For All'. Paddy Devlin — another leading member of the SDLP who has criticised his party's new policy — is one of those near-extinct animals.

DEVLIN

He also attacks the SDLP for not being socialist enough. But 'socialism' for Devlin, as for the Irish trade union bureaucracy he serves, is to avoid any stand on the national question which might annoy Loyalist workers — a complete capitulation to Orange ideology.

Militants in the republican areas of the North are unlikely to be impressed by the latest changes in direction of the nationalist moderates. They recognised long ago that Britain was their enemy. Yet such changes remain significant. They are a long-overdue recognition by even the most insipid nationalist-minded leaders that Britain has nothing left to offer.



Jimmy Carter with an 'England Get Out of Ireland badge' — for winning elections only

This report shows the increasing opportunities for building a movement to support the removal of British troops from Ireland. The United Troops Out Movement is holding a conference in November aimed at doing just that.

There will be a national planning

meeting for this conference on Saturday 17 September at 1pm in the committee rooms of Cavendish House at the Polytechnic Students Union, All Saints, Manchester. Attendance is open to all those who support 'troops out now'.

Anti-racist Struggle

'Jewish bastard'

BRADFORD: Fascists have been extremely active in attacking bookshops in Bradford. Book-burning is, of course, fascist activity with an old pedigree. Reuben Goldberg, who works at the alternative bookshop Fourth Idea, was visited at the shop by a British National Party thug called Frederick Harris. Goldberg, a former president of Bradford University Students Union, recognised Harris as a former student.

The fascist was formerly in the National Front but left to join the Leeds-based BNP with 12 other NFers. The evening after Harris' visit, Fourth Idea's windows were broken, following a phone-call to Goldberg from a man who said: 'We'll burn you to the ground, you Jewish bastard. Heil Hitler'.

NF attackers were satisfied with that — they also broke the window of Bradford's community relations office. Police moved in and have arrested George Wright, chairperson of the Bradford NF. Wright recently told the *Telegraph* and *Argus*: 'It is they (the socialists) who start the violence — not us.'

'You're next'

NORTH LONDON: The front of The Other Bookshop at 528 Upper Street, Islington, was daubed by fascists a few days ago. The inscription read: 'You're Next — NF'. Coming as it does after the gutting of SWP headquarters, these threats cannot be taken lightly. The home of Socialist Challenge Foreign Editor Richard Carver has also been daubed, and fascist hoodlums have chanted Nazi slogans outside it.

Rock Against Racism

YORK: Rock Against Racism was started in response to racist remarks made by several prominent musicians. It organises around the slogan 'Love Music — Hate Racism'. Among well-known bands which have played for it are *Aswad*, *Sex-Pistols* and *Carol Grimes*.

RAR recently hired a dance hall at the De Grey Rooms in York and an extension for the bar licence was applied for in the usual way. Applications are considered by the police and are usually a formality. The police refused.

The case came up before magistrates on 1 September and the police objection was upheld. The police had claimed that RAR had inadequate stewarding arrangements. In reality the inherent racism in the police force was coming out again.

Delegates to the York Trades Council and the GMC of the local Labour Party have expressed astonishment at the police ban and have promised to raise the issue in their respective organisations. A RAR spokesperson said: 'Our campaign against racism will continue and the concert for 15 September will go ahead.'

Front Rally

READING: After a threat by the National Front to hold a rally in the town, a meeting called last week by Reading Trades Council and open to all organisations opposed to the policies of the NF adopted overwhelmingly a resolution demanding that local authorities enforce a ban on any NF march, rally or meeting and pledging a mass picket to stop the fascist provocations if a ban is not imposed.

An amendment proposed by delegates from Reading Labour Party calling on anti-fascists to 'march peacefully in opposition to the NF' was defeated and plans are under way to organise the mass picket by mobilising the largest numbers possible. The Front have yet to announce the date of their planned rally.

Ireland's British Question

QUESTION: Who was recently arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act at Stranraer after visiting the North of Ireland; arrested in the North of Ireland under the Emergency Powers Act; told by a soldier in Belfast, 'I don't care if I did shoot innocent people'; and arrested by a soldier with 'National Front' inked on his flak jacket — all in a couple of days?

ANSWER: A delegation from the London-based Campaign Against British Brutality in Ireland, which visited the Six Counties to investigate British Army repression following the Queen's visit.

The delegation, which included Pat Arrowsmith and Brian Hodges, president of Lambeth Trades Council, is planning to publish a pamphlet and present evidence to the tribunal on British crimes in Ireland.

CP opposition debates:

'The British Road to Disaster'

by DODIE WEPPLER

The long awaited meeting 'Against the draft, against the split' organised by the political opposition remaining within the Communist Party of Great Britain opened with a punch-up and ended with one. Despite this, the 450 people who attended the Hammersmith Town Hall meeting last Friday heard hard-hitting contributions and, however bankrupt their policies, the speakers displayed a political agility not evident to date from the ranks of the New Communist Party.

There were two competitors for the chair, when the meeting opened, thanks to a local inner-party tiff. Fergus Nicolson had the upper hand as the microphones were hastily arranged in the hall itself, to drown out John Gould's efforts to convene the meeting from the platform. Gould is the chairperson of the Hammersmith borough district

committee of the party.

In the midst of the chaos, Gould was roughly dragged behind the curtains by the stewarding force while Jack Dash took the microphone to warn against political complacency in the midst of the crisis of the CPGB, appealing for a return to the tradition of the Party's 'past great leaders like Harry Pollitt and R. Palme Dutt.'

MINERS/MUSICIANS

The policies expounded by the speakers mirrored those of the New Communist Party. Messages sent to the meeting from Dave Bolt (vice-president of the Scottish area of the miners union), Jack Collins (executive member of the Kent miners) and Alan Bush, the composer, all called for utmost unity in the face of the economic crisis to prevent the party from continuing further down the 'British Road to Disaster', as Bill Lathwaite of the Surrey District Committee coined it in his contribution from the floor. Harsh words against the splitters of the New Communist Party who had

'left a drowning ship' flowed as freely as those against the draft.

The carefully prepared platform speeches presented a rounded view of the bureaucratic policies of the opposition. Mary Davis — of the London District Committee — dwelt on the draft's conception of the broad democratic alliance. Although an improvement over the anti-monopoly alliance of past programmes, Davis argued this draft separated the social forces involved in the alliance — including the black, women's, and nationalist movements — and the working class itself. She rejected charges of economism so 'increasingly fashionable in the party' but held up with contempt a members' remark that equated the importance of the 'gay-straight issue with the class struggle on the factory floor'. The draft fuelled this view.

Winston Pinder, a black speaker from the London District Committee centred his remarks on the 'inability of the draft to provide a decisive policy to harness the potential of the black working class'. Black and white unity was essential, but Pinder

asked how this was to be achieved. He felt the actual practice of party members on this front was above question, but this was not reflected in the theoretically weak draft. Pinder was best received when he made a derisory appeal to the many NCP members present to stop sending him letters and to end attempts to sow disunity in the ranks of black organisations.

LUNATIC FRINGE

Many of the strongest words in the meeting came from Terry Marsland of the Tobacco Workers Union. The split was nothing less than an act of treachery. And although she thoroughly condemned the failure of the CPGB to draw the lessons of Chile — where 'policies of compromise and appeasement' have had dire consequences for the South American people — she had little time for those who have been the most insistent on the need to learn these lessons: the far left. 'The SWP, the WRP and the rest' were dismissed as 'the lunatic fringe'.

John Foster, the social histor-

ian, apologised for being an intellectual — a group which other speakers claimed dominated King Street — in the final platform contribution. Nevertheless he called for 'creative Marxism', something which couldn't be left to the party's so-called intellectuals.

In a highly sophisticated analysis of the state, Foster called for an urgent distinction to be made between bourgeois democratic rights and bourgeois institutions. Drawing on historical examples, he denounced the illusions sown by the draft in the British constitution.

At the end of the meeting, a brief glimpse was caught of what oppositionists in the thirties must have experienced. Stewards roughly removed Brian Grogan, national secretary of the International Marxist Group, to prevent him distributing the group's statement outside the meeting hall. In marked contrast to other recent meetings of the CPGB — like the Communist University — Socialist Challenge sellers were told by stewards that 'we Stalinists are going to get rid of Trots like you'.

Two members of the Communist Party have taken 'Road' to its ultimate logic. They argue for a 'socialist broader reformist strategy.

In this extract David Purdy and Mike Prior argue that:

The Left should support an

BRITAIN HAS a richer experience in the application of incomes policies than almost any other capitalist country. There have been only a few years in the past fifteen when the government of the day has not sought to exert some form of direct control over the movement of prices and money incomes. In part this has merely been a consequence of the critical condition of British capitalism over this period. But it also testifies to the advanced state which the socialising tendencies characteristic of post-war capitalism have attained in Britain. Neither of these aspects of incomes policy has been properly recognised by the left and used to achieve political advance.

The issues can best be set out by examining the Social Contract. This has been widely rejected by the left as a corporatist confidence trick. In agreeing to two successive rounds of voluntary pay restraint, it is argued, the trade union movement has provided an indispensable prop to the strategy of capitalist re-stabilisation, has compromised its autonomy and defused the combative potential of the working class. Only through resistance to a further round of pay restraint and a resumption of normal collective bargaining can these self-imposed afflictions be cast aside.

There are two decisive weaknesses in this position. One is a straight-forward consequence of the depressed conditions of the British economy and its slow underlying rate of growth. The other stems from an assessment of the positive features of economy-wide pay agreements between the government and the trade union movement in the process of winning socialist hegemony.

In the current economic situation the defeat of the Social Contract would be a Pyrrhic victory. At the economic level the force of this assessment depends on what assumption is made about the movement of money wages in the absence of any agreed pay ceiling. One assumption is that the abandonment of a formal incomes policy will make little overall difference. Alternatively it may be assumed that the restoration of normal collective bargaining will unleash a major wages offensive.

Consider the first prospect. It is arguable that the current high level of unemployment and the maintenance of a tight monetary and fiscal policy will keep money wage settlements down to modest overall proportions. In this case the only major consequence of a return to normal collective bargaining would be to introduce greater flexibility for individual bargaining units and allow some widening of previously compressed pay differentials according to relative bargaining strengths and market conditions in different

sectors of the labour market. There is certainly some limited scope for such readjustments. In the private sector companies with large export markets have improved their profitability as a result of the depreciation of sterling in 1976. There is also a much smaller margin of slack to accommodate pay rises in the public sector to the extent that the state now holds that public expenditure cuts have been overdone and is prepared to envisage some marginal reflation.

Such fine distributive calculations are the very stuff of normal collective bargaining. But a perspective of wringing the maximum practicable sectoral wage concessions out of employers within the narrow limits set by the prevailing harsh economic environment, scarcely amounts to a socialist crusade. It may be objected that if workers are not even engaged in sectoral wage struggles they will not be prepared to struggle for wider objectives either. This traditional view, with a pedigree dating back to Marx and Engels, has some truth for the formative stages of capitalist development or for groups of workers with no background of union organisation and struggle. What it ignores are the ambiguous social functions of wages and conditions bargaining once it has become normalised. It is an arena within which class struggle is continually mobilised and at the same time contained. For example, collective action to influence the terms on which labour power is exchanged helps to overcome the most elementary obstacles to class unity — that of pure individualism — but because bargaining is structured on sectional lines it acts as a barrier to the achievement of higher levels of collectivity. Similarly the wage struggle offers a channel for the expression of felt material deprivation, but in the process confirms and re-inforces the economic and social structures of contemporary mass consumption. A reversion to normal collective bargaining represents a

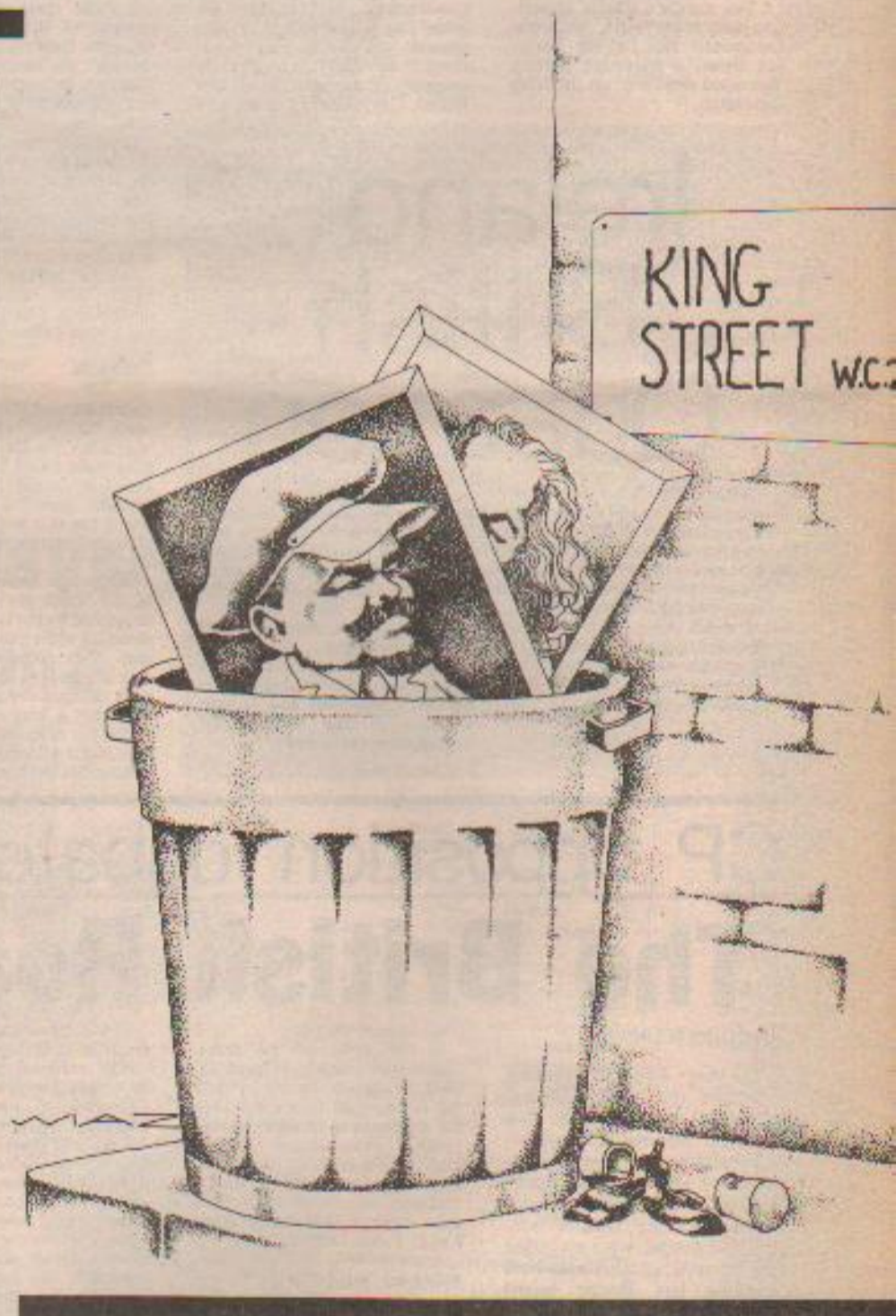
retreat from the difficult task of finding ways of resolving these ambiguities. The relevance of a socialist social contract to this task is discussed below.

Consider now the consequence of a wages offensive. This is usually advanced as part of a comprehensive alternative economic programme. Its advocates appreciate that in an economy whose real output is undergoing negligible growth a major upsurge in wages would inevitably cause disruption if it were not complemented by more far-reaching measures. In order to fix ideas it is worth spelling out in some detail the chain reactions which a wages push would set in motion.

There is first the "confidence" effect on the behaviour of foreign and domestic capitalists. Apart from the familiar outburst of political hysteria the most immediate economic manifestation would be a rapid fall in the exchange rate with subsequent repercussions on import prices which would feed into industrial and living costs. Foreign control banks would agree to support the exchange rate only if the government took steps to restore domestic order. Whether this kind of pressure is described as blackmail or as the rational pursuit of class interest is immaterial. It remains a major point of vulnerability. If, as both historical experience and reflection on contemporary reality suggest, such pressure is unlikely to be effectively countered by voluntaristic appeals to stand firm or by the imposition of a state of siege, it would be better to avoid entering this particular battle in the first place.....

INFLATION

If the state were prepared to ratify a wage-led increase in the rate of inflation by adopting a generally permissive stance on policy, the result would indeed be a faster inflation. To defend their real incomes workers and other social groups would be forced to step up their monetary claims. The spiral would continue indefinitely and almost



certainly accelerate in pace as attempts to anticipate future inflation began to exert an influence on wage settlements, pricing policies and consumer behaviour. Since rampant inflation is profoundly socially destabilising sooner or later one of the links in the inflationary chain would be broken, whether by the re-introduction of an incomes policy or the reversal of the state's permissive demand policy.

In contemporary Britain it is almost certain that a government which permitted an acceleration of inflation for any length of time would fall. Inflation is widely feared and resented particularly after the unprecedented wage-price spiral of 1975, which led directly to the first phase of pay restraint under the Social Contract. Moreover the ground for a tough stand on public expenditure and monetary res-

traint has by now been established, and a wide measure of popular support. It is therefore in that having rejected the discipline of pay restraint unions would find themselves subjected to the traditional direct discipline of rising unemployment as the combination of a wages offensive and a counter-offensive increase in the rate of bankruptcies,

he new draft of the 'British social contract' as part of a

Incomes Policy

and redundancies.

A sophisticated government could even turn the situation to ideological advantage by deploying the seductive logic of free choice: unions and workers should not be coerced into pay settlements, but should choose their preferred combination of inflation and unemployment. Whether and at what eventual level of unemployment the rate of wage and price increases could be beaten down by this painful route would depend on how stern a disciplinarian the state was prepared to be and on the responses of capitalists, workers and unions. What is certain is that neither the interim acceleration in inflation nor the accompanying rise in unemployment would be in the interests of the working class.

The left's counter to this grim scenario is to invoke alternative policies which would interrupt the chain of events. Thus it is suggested that a left government could stem the tide of price rises at source by introducing a six month price freeze followed by stringent price controls. In the context of a wages offensive such a policy would force capitalists into bankruptcy or evasion of the controls. Either way in the ensuing crisis the government would acquire an excuse for further intervention in the private sector leading to outright public ownership. Similarly it is recommended that the spillover from higher real wages and levels of private consumer spending into higher imports should be averted by the speedy implementation of sweeping controls over international trade and finance. In short, current left policy envisages the economic equivalent of storming the barricades.....

AGREEMENT

In principle a social contract is nothing more than an economy-wide agreement between the government and the trade union movement under which rules are drawn up to regulate pay settlements within lower level bargaining units in return for an explicit commitment by the government to a particular set of economic and social policies. Considered as an ongoing institution this is a form of collective bargaining conducted at the level of the economy as a whole. Negotiation at this level falls by definition within the domain of politics since the terms under negotiation are the policy of the state itself.

Nevertheless a social contract recognisably belongs to the same species as more familiar modes of collective bargaining. In principle it involves no greater or

smaller compromise of trade union autonomy of organisation and action than any other collective agreement. A particular agreement may be more or less unfavourable to the unions. As long as the contract remains on a voluntary basis, the unions remain free to press for a revision of the terms, or, for that matter, to refuse to enter any agreement at all and revert to exclusive reliance on normal collective bargaining.

It is this feature of a social contract which provides the link with the experience and traditions of the trade union movement. It is accepted that union objectives and tactics in normal wage bargaining take into account such plant, enterprise or industry level factors as productivity, profitability and employment levels as well as more general factors such as the past, and perhaps anticipated future, movement of the cost of living.

BREAK WITH PAST

At the same time a social contract introduces a definite break with the past. This is not because an agreed set of pay norms is by definition an attempt to impose conscious social regulation on the characteristic anarchy of pay determination under capitalism and the associated distribution of income both between and within classes. This is a feature of any incomes policy. The novel element of a social contract is the *quid pro quo* principle, that is, the principle that the trade unions should not accept or be expected to accept responsibility for the performance of the economy without a corresponding extension of power to influence national policy. The withholding of corporate economic strength on the wages front becomes conditional on, and therefore a vital means of achieving, social and political advance.

The *quid pro quo* principle presents a major opportunity for subverting capitalism by linking the issues of pay and inflation with those structural issues — the volume, pace and composition of investment, the pattern of production and consumption, the scale, direction and composition of foreign trade, the character and consequences of technical innovation — which under capitalism are determined anarchically as the outcome of private action and decision beyond the scope of social control. Correctly used a social contract becomes an instrument for the assertion of a coherent working class strategy for the national economy. It offers a level for shifting the terms of public debate and

welding together a progressive social and political alliance.

The risks in the exchange of *quid pro quo* are precisely the familiar risks of collective bargaining in general. The trade union leadership may be outmanoeuvred or subdued by *force majeure*. The process of matching concessions on pay for concessions on policy may easily degenerate into a hard headed corporatist exercise in the mutual adjustment of demands which accept and confirm the social and economic *status quo*. It is also evident that the progressive potential of a social contract will be fully realised only under a left government. But there is no reason in principle why the attempt to realise this potential should not be made whenever government is in office. The political value of a social contract lies as much in the going as in the arriving. The risks involved are real and must be faced. But to reject the principle because of these risks is to condemn the working class to a permanent role of defiant subordination to bourgeois hegemony.....

GUIDELINES

Some clues and guidelines as to what such a redirection would involve can be found in the themes taken up in the Labour Party's 1973 Programme and its 1974 Election Manifesto. These centred on the role of the National Enterprise Board, the development of a system of planning agreements with leading private corporations and the democratisation of industrial policy formation and management.

The policy to be stressed in the present context is that these ideas contain the germ of a fully fledged programme around which, after Labour took office in 1974 the issue of the Social Contract could have been debated and negotiated and a progressive alliance mobilised. They offered a method of projecting into the centre of national political life as the conditions of any economy-wide pay agreement, the need for state intervention and an extension of working class power in order to resolve the persistent failures of British capitalism in the spheres of investment, innovation, foreign trade and regional development, and in order to integrate industrial policy with social needs. The defeats and demoralisation which the left has suffered over the past two years serve only to emphasise the continuing necessity to develop these themes into a hegemonic economic strategy.

Out of the ghetto, into the quagmire

MANY OF OUR readers will be outraged and angered by the article we print on these pages by David Purdy and Mike Prior. Both authors are members of the British Communist Party. The excerpts we print are from a section headed 'Incomes Policy', itself part of a 116-page duplicated book-pamphlet entitled *Out of the Ghetto: The Road to Socialist Renewal*. The pamphlet is not being sold publicly but enjoys a subterranean circulation (see News from Nowhere) in CP and left social-democratic circles. We felt that some of the 'riches' contained in the pamphlet should be made available to a wider public, including many members of the Communist Party itself whose reaction we feel will not be so different to ours.

More importantly we are of the opinion that Purdy and Prior, albeit in an extreme fashion, take the new draft of the British Road to its ultimate logic. In the process they prostitute Gramsci and distort Lenin as part of a serious attempt to outflank Kautsky from the right. For the merit of *Out of the Ghetto* lies in precisely this fact: it explores the terrain of 'Eurocommunism' in Spain and Italy, unearths numerous nuggets of wisdom and brings them back to the insulated working class movement of Britain. The fact that the practical conclusion of Purdy and Prior's premises are accepted by most social-democrats in this country and especially right-wing social-democrats and Fabian 'intellectuals' would not worry them in the slightest. It would only be proof of the fact that the foundations necessary for building socialism 'brick by brick' (Ramsay MacDonald) under capitalism itself are already quite strong.

Their views on wage-restraint and the necessity for trades union to accept well-worked out 'social contracts' shows an utter contempt for the working class of this country. Moreover it rejects unequivocally the independent political capacity of the working class itself. Purdy and Prior are both, to their credit, exponents of inner-party democracy within the CPGB. And yet they fail to see the contradiction between that and denying workers democracy to the proletariat, both its traditional and white-collar sectors. Workers control is excluded, no doubt, as romantic utopianism. Everything can be left to union bureaucrats and enlightened economists. That is the reformist dream-world which the authors of *Out of the Ghetto* inhabit.

Their position on 'incomes policies' flows quite logically out of their global analysis of British capitalism. They believe that socialism can develop out of capitalism 'without a violent rupture from the political system', but capitalism can with equal facility re-establish itself. They talk of developing a strategy for socialism 'based on probabilistic judgement informed by sober analysis of historical experience'. What on earth is that supposed to mean?

OUT OF THE GHETTO

THE ROAD TO SOCIALIST RENEWAL

DAVID PURDY
MIKE PRIOR

The aim of Purdy and Prior appears to be to develop a 'creative' reformist project on the model of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) for Britain. Why then do they leave out our 'historic compromise'? If Italy were the model, Labour activists should be arguing for a National Government to 'resolve the crisis'. And yet Purdy and Prior refrain from advocating the need for a Labour-Tory coalition in order to give the unions a breathing space to better prepare for establishing working-class 'hegemony'. Why do they shy away from such an analysis? Could it be that they are embarrassed because even right-wing social-democrats sensitive to the historical memory of the labour movement do not talk about these things except in private sessions with the likes of Paul Johnson and the Editor of *The Times*. But surely our two authors would not be put off by such irrelevancies. They therefore need to explain this curious omission from an otherwise internally consistent document.

Since the strategy which the two CP members propose cannot in any event be put into practice by the CPGB (except insofar that it could help to police a new version of wage-restraint on a national scale and not just in isolated cases such as the tool-room dispute in Birmingham earlier this year), why stay in the party at all? Surely they should argue for the dissolution of the CPGB into the Labour Party and use their influence to wean Benn away from leftist excesses. Their argument for staying in the CPGB is their second major inconsistency and is in any case totally unconvincing.

Finally we must raise once again the vital question of why Purdy and Prior cannot circulate this important document inside the CPGB as part of the pre-conference debate. Without doubt it would create an important divide and force many supporters of the 'New Draft' to define their positions more clearly. The fact that documents such as this cannot be discussed tends to make a mockery of all the party's claims to a free and open discussion. A reply from the CPGB leaders to such a document is essential.

by JAMES FRANCIS

Eyewitness in Sri Lanka Grave threat to Tamils

THE SITUATION in Sri Lanka is much graver than press reports would suggest. Our reporters spoke to A. Sivanandan, the Director of the Institute of Race Relations, and himself of Tamil origin, who has just returned from Sri Lanka.

The conditions throughout the country are terrible. The communal riots have exacted a heavy toll, though Tamil leaders in London have grossly exaggerated the casualty figures. There are refugee camps in a number of major centres which house Tamils who have lost their homes in the rioting.

I have visited some of these camps in Colombo. In one of them, St. Peter's College, the situation is very bad.

In particular Tamil women are having to live in horrible conditions. Some women who were in the maternity ward in hospital were sent to the camp because it was feared that the hospital would be attacked by communalist hooligans.

One Tamil doctor had his car

burned and many others were too scared to go into the hospital. On one occasion a bomb was thrown into the camp itself.

We asked Sivanandan for his estimate of the total number of refugees:

'There are 20,000 in the Tamil city of Jaffna alone. Many are being housed in four schools. You can imagine what conditions are like. There are 10,000 in transit refugee camps in Colombo waiting to be sent to the North and 3,000 in Kandy as well as in other centres. I would put the total figure near 35,000. The army is guarding several of these camps.'

UNP VICTORY

As to how the riots originated Sivanandan confirmed our previous reports:

'The feeling of instability created by the fall of the Bandaranaike regime was heightened by the UNP victory and the realisation that the main opposition was the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF).

'The cost of living had soared under the previous government. Coconuts and onions were selling at unbelievable rates. So people started looting and then things developed further.'

People took part in the riots for varying reasons:

(i) The looters out to satisfy their needs. You must remember that 58 per cent of Colombo's population lives in shanty towns. (ii) Rioters who were instigated by the defeated SLFP to embarrass the new UNP government. This was clearest in Kandy where there were riots as well.

'However three Tamil shops were not attacked. All these were owned by SFLP supporters. A coincidence? I think not.'

Sivanandan said that as a Marxist he did not see any solution in a separate state. In his opinion such a state was not economically viable in any case:

'Unless of course you extend it to Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Puttalam and beyond the peninsula itself. The TULF said the elections were a plebiscite. If that is so then the majority of Tamils in Trincomalee and Batticaloa are opposed to a Tamil state.'

CLASS OR NATION?

'Politically these separatist calls obscure the class and caste differences within the Tamil community itself, but every Marxist has to start off from the understanding that Tamil nationalism is a reality. The question is how we can ensure the hegemony of class



'The Tamil language was barred and Tamils were discriminated against in education. A Tamil with 4 A-levels couldn't enter a university, but a Sinhalese with 1 A-level could. This was called "positive" discrimination. The left parties, the LSSP and the CP, totally failed to campaign against this discrimination. If they had they could have won Tamil workers to class positions on the question.'

'It is in this context that we should see the recent Tamil responses to the rioting. Though it is interesting that in Jaffna the Tamil demonstrators have not attacked Sinhalese people, but the state. Only one policeman has been killed. The police have burnt 30 Tamil shops in Jaffna itself. The reason there is no curfew in Jaffna is because the police cannot be trusted by the government!'

As to the government itself:

'I think J.R. Jayawardene is an intelligent bourgeois leader. He sees clearly that communalism and racial violence is not in the interests of the propertied classes and he is opposed to it. He has also pledged to consider removing the racist clauses in the constitution in relation to Tamil rights.'

Nevertheless it would appear that minor concessions will not satisfy the Tamil community, in particular the youths, any longer. They are enraged and angry. They want their Eelam (Tamil separate state). Could Sri Lanka become another Cyprus? Only if the Indian regime does a Turkey and that is totally excluded for the moment.



Military fears mass support Bhutto Arrested

by TARIQ ALI

THE MARTIAL LAW regime of General Zia-ul-Haq has arrested the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The arrest came after allegations of corruption and brutality under Bhutto's regime.

The discovery of illegal prison camps in Pakistani-controlled Kashmir led to the arrest of the boss of Bhutto's paramilitary organisation, Masud Mahmood, who has made a full confession. It is also alleged that Bhutto got a massive rake-off from a Mirage jets deal with the French Government.

The allegations of brutality are true. Whether Bhutto himself was corrupt has still to be proved, but there can be little doubt that his ministers and the apparatus of the People's Party were.

However these facts were known for weeks. The reason for the arrest is that Bhutto was once again beginning to draw large crowds in a number of Pakistani cities. This is a reflection both of the absence of any real left alternative and the unpopularity of the army.

Immediately after the coup landlords began ejecting tenants and factory managers unilaterally abrogated wage-agreements. Over a quarter of a million people defied the army to greet Bhutto in Lahore a few weeks ago. They were tear-gassed and baton-charged and Bhutto was not allowed to address them.

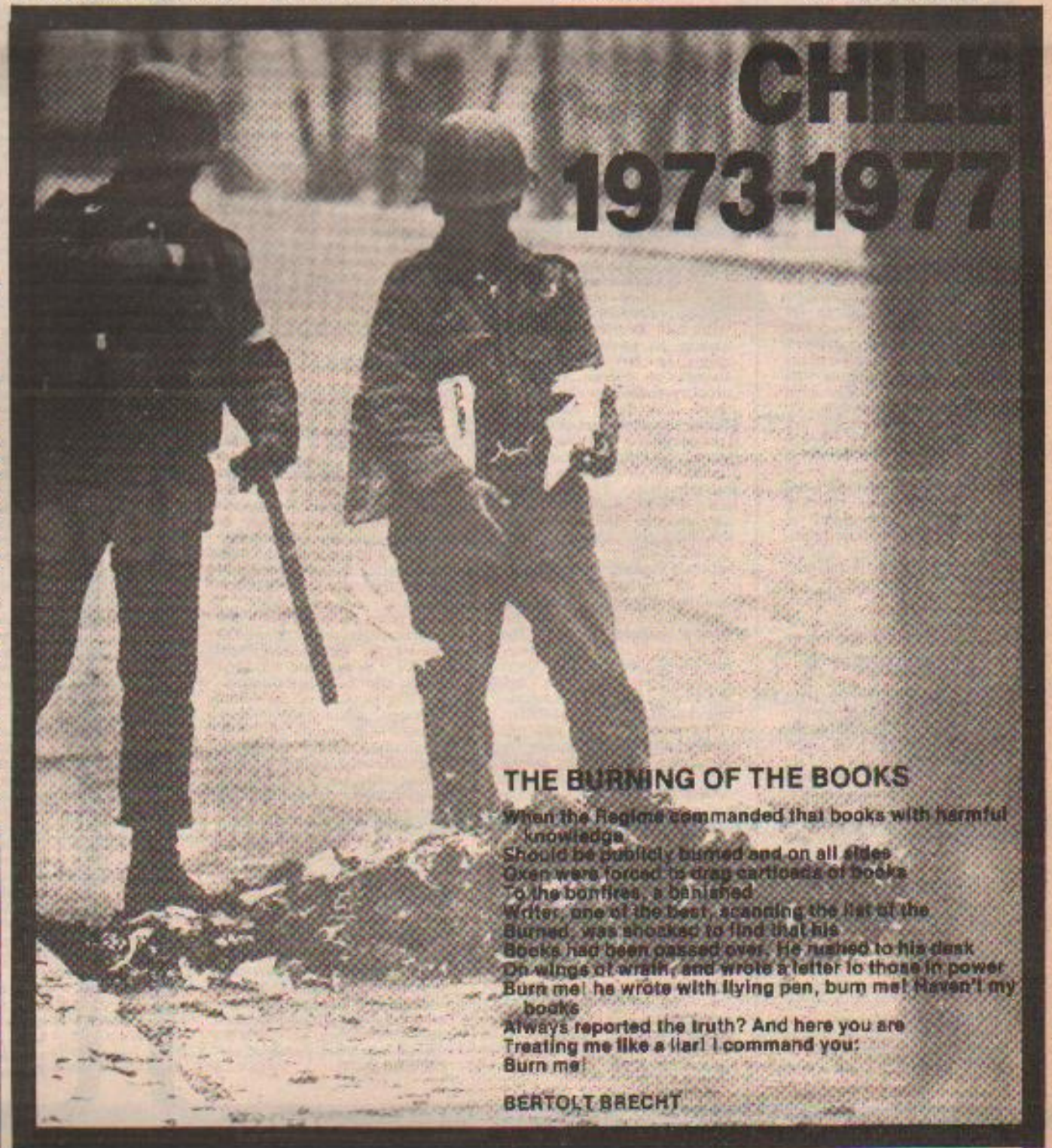
The thought that Bhutto might

come close to winning the elections scheduled for October was too much for the Army. Here both Zia and his junior officers were united. Zia because he knows that Bhutto has a long memory and would be unlikely to forget the humiliation inflicted on him by the Army and a large section of the junior officers because they want to get rid of Bhutto once and for all.

However Bhutto's arrest is likely to jeopardise the elections. The Army is hoping that press revelations about Bhutto might finish him in any case. This may or may not be true.

Bhutto, unlike Gandhi and Bandaranaike, was removed by a coup, and not by elections. The distinction is important in understanding why Bhutto — a Pakistani Peron — still is not totally discredited within the masses.

The Other Cinema will be devoting next Sunday's performance in their Music for Socialism series to Chile, with showings of *The Tiger Pounced* and *When the People Awake*, and live performances by Chilean musicians. At 6.30pm, £1.50 — all proceeds to the Cultural Committee of the Chile Solidarity Campaign. Also showing from 9-22 September at 8.45pm, *Cantata de Chile* by Cuban director Humberto Solas, described by the director as 'an act of solidarity with the Chilean people'. The Other Cinema is at 25 Tottenham Street, London W1. Tel: 01-637 8308.



CHILL 1973-1977

THE BURNING OF THE BOOKS

When the Regime commanded that books with harmful knowledge should be publicly burned and on all sides Oken were forced to drag cartloads of books to the bonfires, a banished writer, one of the best, scanning the list of the burned, was shocked to find that his books had been passed over. He rushed to his desk on wings of wrath, and wrote a letter to those in power. Burn me! he wrote with flying pen, burn me! Haven't my books Always reported the truth? And here you are Treating me like a liar! I command you: Burn me!

BERTOLT BRECHT

Zimbabwe 'Resident' appointed The mechanics of transition

by ROY ALEXANDER

THE APPOINTMENT of Field Marshal Lord Carver as 'British Resident' under the Owen/Young settlement scheme for Zimbabwe is an attempt to reassure the white population by sending in a top military man to oversee the operation.

Very revealingly, it connects the present scheme with that most successful of British neo-colonial operations — the ruthless crushing of the Kenyan nationalist 'Mau Mau' rebellion in the early 1950s, in order to prepare for a peaceful transition to pro-imperialist black rule. Kenya can now celebrate its 14th year of independent rule — but it is still as much a victim of imperialist exploitation as ever.

Carver followed the usual course for an upper class candidate for military office: from Winchester public school to the elite Sandhurst academy, and thence into the tank corps (which he saw as an easy life with a quick financial reward).

After the war he took a job looking after the Ministry of Supply's lorries. He then went on to do much the same thing on a bigger scale, as Assistant Quarter-master General to the Allied Land Forces.

Then, in 1954, Carver turns up as Deputy Chief of Staff in Kenya, once more with his precious lorries, whose efficient repair and servicing seems to have been his principal concern.

JOE URDANG 1907-1977

IT IS with great regret that we announce the death of comrade Joe Urdang. Joe was an active member of the South African Trotskyist movement in the 1930s and since his arrival in this country some years ago has been of great assistance in the South African work of the IMG. His daughter Stephanie is a leading member of the anti-apartheid movement in the United States and author of a forthcoming book on women and the Guinea-Bissau revolution. We send our warmest sympathies to his wife Rose and his family.

If, however, Carver was pursuing his love affair with the internal combustion engine, the British



CARVER: love affair with the internal combustion engine.

forces as a whole had much dirtier business underfoot. Having blocked the offensive of the nationalist Land and Freedom Army (mainly based among the Kikuyu people of Kenya) they set about the difficult task of uprooting the nationalists from their base in the cities.

This they did through the rather unsubtly named Operation Anvil. Their method was simple, if crude:

they arrested every male Kikuyu in Nairobi. One sixth of the city's total population — 30,000 in all — was arrested and interrogated. Half were interned as a threat to security.

The armed forces then turned to routing out the surviving Land and Freedom units from their forest strongholds, by a combination of bombings, ambushes,

and the organisation of small mobile patrols of the 'search and destroy' type later to become so infamous in Vietnam.

By the end of 1954 Carver was the mechanical hand-maiden of a military machine that had murdered ten thousand black nationalists and set up concentration camps whose inmates numbered 70,000 out of a population of 8 million.

Thenceforth Carver's rise was swift, as he occupied sensitive political posts in the Far East and Cyprus. In the mid-Sixties, as the Labour Government's favourite General, he established a reputation as one of the most sophisticated of a new generation of political generals, propelling him into the highest office on the General Staff and Defence Staff in the early 1970s.

This, no doubt, was uppermost in the minds of Dr. Owen and the Labour Government, when they considered their plans for Zimbabwe — not to mention his public endorsement of Brigadier Frank Kitson's notorious theories of 'counter-insurgency and peace-keeping'.

We suggest that the liberation movements tell Carver to stay where he is — perhaps they could send him an old lorry to keep him usefully occupied.

In Brief

PORTUGAL: At least 70 people were injured in Evora, in the Alentejo, when members of peasant cooperatives tried to stop the Republican Guards from returning expropriated land to its former owners under the recent agrarian 'reform' law. One demonstrator was arrested. When peasants protested outside the guard post and court the Republican Guards again went into action.

SOUTH AFRICA: The Government has set up a special task force to combat 'urban guerrillas'. It will be hand-picked from soldiers with experience of repression in Namibia.

NAMIBIA: South Africa has annexed the Namibian port of Walvis Bay. This is believed to be part of a project to give Namibia Bantustan status.



USA: The Imperial Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan intends to infiltrate and disrupt a meeting of a body set up by Congress for International Women's Year. He said that the movement was a haven 'for all the misfits of society including self-admitted lesbians' and that the Ladies Auxiliary of the Klans had been 'working against the movement for the past three to four years opposing the women's libbers.'

TURKEY: Four people were killed and more than 40 wounded when armed police tried to demolish buildings in a shanty town on the outskirts of Istanbul. All the dead were residents trying to prevent the destruction of their homes. This brings the number killed in political violence this year to 164.

AUSTRALIA: Unions have demanded a referendum on uranium mining, failing which they threaten a national strike. Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser has ordered police and security forces to compile dossiers on all those who have protested against Australia's uranium exports.

NETHERLANDS: The Socialist and Christian Democratic Parties have broken the long political deadlock and agreed to form a coalition government. The main sticking point — a Socialist proposal to legalise abortion — has been deferred for consideration by the Cabinet. The Christian Democrats oppose any abortion reform.

EAST GERMANY: Five dissidents have been allowed to emigrate to the West but the regime has taken the opportunity created by this public relations move to place further restrictions on Professor Robert Havemann, who was put under house arrest last November for protesting against the expulsion of the dissident singer and poet, Wolf Biermann.

POLAND: A wave of panic buying after a disastrous harvest has led the Polish party press to condemn British 'stroi-cism' in the face of hardship: 'On various occasions we admire the Britons' skill at adapting to difficult situations and coming to terms with necessity. In those moments we wish with envy: "Would that we could be like this!" Communist Party of Great Britain please note.

CORRECTION

Last week's article by Chris O'Brien on the movement to free 'Apela', the Basque nationalist held in France, stated that the Spanish Socialist and Communist Parties had refused their support. This is untrue. Both parties have called for Apela's release.

Europe's Forgotten People

OLIVER MACDONALD looks at a little known part of the USSR where, as we reported last week, the British student Andy Klymchuk has been arrested.

Which country has the highest steel production per head in the world? Answer: the country where Trotsky grew up. No, not Russia: the Ukraine. Quibbling over names? Absolutely not, because behind that name lies a country whose workers are likely to play the role of pivot in the struggle for socialist democracy throughout both Eastern Europe and the USSR.

In 1968, a Western observer of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia noted: 'One of the first acts of the invading Russians was to close down the radio station in Presov.' He was referring to the station broadcasting for the Ukrainian population in eastern Slovakia, also audible across the border in the Soviet Ukraine.

The Soviet troops knew what they were doing. Shortly before the invasion another bourgeois expert wrote: 'A study of the Soviet Ukrainian press for the past two months shows that the public — above all the intelligentsia — is in sympathy with the bloodless revolution in Czechoslovakia and is closely following the various events which have occurred as a result.'

BRIDGES

Little wonder that the Soviet Premier, Kosygin, called the man overall responsible for the Presov Ukrainian radio, Frantisek Kriegel, 'that Galician Jew'. Kosygin understood what a powerful lever in the Czechoslovak struggle for socialist democracy the Ukrainian masses could be.

For 43 million Ukrainians

inhabit a republic with huge industrial and agricultural resources that borders Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania and stretches along the southern rim of Russia proper as far as the river Don. And the explosive political situation in the Ukraine makes it a potential bridge between isolated national upsurges in Eastern Europe and a generalised victory for workers' democracy throughout the entire region.

CRUSHED

The Ukrainian people have had more than their share of 20th century evils. Brutally crushed by Czarism, the Ukraine erupted in a tumultuous national and social revolutionary upsurge in 1917. During the next three years it was occupied not only by the Whites but by the German Army, the Polish Army and the French.

After a brief period of peace and cultural flourishing in the twenties, Stalinist forced collectivisation brought death and starvation to millions of peasants in one of Europe's richest agricultural regions. At the very time Stalin was proclaiming the final victory of socialism, the Yugoslav Communist Clliga was reporting cannibalism in Ukrainian villages.

The consequent Stalinist terror was most savage in the Ukraine. In the 6 months after August 1937 the Ukrainian CP was decimated: out of 102 Central Committee members 3 survived; all 17 members of the government, the whole secretariat and orgburo, every single regional Party secretary and the bulk of city and district secretaries were liquidated. And between 1933 and 1937 the Ukrainian cultural intelligentsia was almost completely annihilated.

Then came the brown plague of Nazism. The land was deva-



stated, millions died, 2.5 million Ukrainians were seized for Nazi slave labour. Meanwhile Stalin pondered a plan to finally solve the Ukrainian national question: by shipping the entire population off to Siberia. He eventually dropped the scheme, but did not finally crush Ukrainian guerrilla resistance to Stalinist rule until the end of the 1940s.

And as the Medvedev brothers point out in their latest book on Khrushchev, although 'in 1956-57 about 7 to 8 million people were released and allowed to return to their homes' from the labour camps, this privilege did not extend to those jailed for participating in 'Ukrainian Nationalist' movements.

In 1960 a group called the Ukrainian Workers' and Peasants' Union was arrested for advocating socialist democracy and something guaranteed in the Constitution — the Ukraine's right to secede from the USSR. Its leader, Lukyanenko, was sentenced to death by firing squad, later reduced to 15 years jail.

Any honest and serious student of the Ukraine will find a brutal Russian chauvinist policy of national oppression there. In 1963, John Kolasky, a veteran member of the Canadian Communist party for 30 years gained the rare privilege of studying at the Ukrainian Party Central Committee's Higher Party School in Kiev for 2 years. In

1965 he was arrested by the KGB and thrown out of the USSR and the Communist movement for 'bourgeois nationalism'.

Though amongst the more obscurantist of CPs, the Canadian Party felt the need to send an investigating delegation to the Ukraine in the late 1960s. When it returned the Party published its damning report officially. Moscow let fly and within a few days a terrified Canadian Party leadership tried to retrieve all copies of the report.

In the 1959 census, just under 90 per cent of Ukrainians in the Republic gave Ukrainian as their first language. Yet in 1960 the total number of copies of books produced in Ukrainian was 20 per cent less than the number published in 1930. The number of titles published was half the 1930 figure.

EDUCATION

Over 3 million Ukrainians live in Russia. No Ukrainian schools exist there. When a Ukrainian educational conference demanded schools for them in 1963 the authorities responded by banning publication of the conference report in the Ukraine.

Yet in the Ukrainian capital, Kiev, with 23 per cent of the population Russian, 93 out of 147 10 year schools were Russian in 1960. Only 54 were Ukrainian. The situation has undoubtedly

worsened since.

PILLAGE

According to a unique Ukrainian Academy of Sciences study, no less than 11,700,000,000 roubles net were withdrawn from Ukraine to Moscow during the 3 years between 1959 and 1961. (A rouble is valued at more than a dollar).

Roy Medvedev's 'Political Diary' points out that this policy of economic pillage was bitterly resented by top Ukrainian officials:

'They declared outright that they were being robbed. One highly placed Ukrainian official announced that had it not been for the Ukraine's excessive All-Union contribution, the Republic's housing problems would have been solved a long time ago.'

Given the huge housing problem throughout the USSR, this is a staggering claim. Such facts have produced growing unrest in the Ukraine during the Brezhnev era and an increasingly ferocious response from the summits of the bureaucracy in Moscow.

* Next week Oliver Macdonald looks at the roots of national oppression in the Ukraine and the likely consequences.

What's Left

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

MIDLANDS Socialist Feminist Conference: 'Feminism, Sexuality and Abortion' Saturday, 15 October, 10am-8pm, Lancaster Polytechnic, Coventry. Registration £1; students and claimants 75p. Cheques payable to: Socialist Feminist Group, c/o Carolyn Pickering, 37 Gavelston Road, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

CHILE Solidarity Campaign public meeting, 4th anniversary of bloody military coup, Saturday, 10 Sept., Shopping precinct, Coventry, 10am-12 noon.

FOUND: Swiss made 'Marline' watch with a black leather strap, at Clifton Rise after the Lewisham demo on 13 Aug. Tel: Southampton 777227 ext 3460 (evenings) for information.

SWEDISH comrade seeks room in London 27 September-25 October. Please reply with details of rent and location to Birgitta Sandström-Lagerantz, Svartensgatan 6111, S-116 20 Stockholm, Sweden.

CRITIQUE Conference: 'The 90th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution and the World Crisis'. Speakers: Georges Haupt, Ernest Mandel, Hillel Ticktin, Fernando Claudin, and Andre Gunder Frank, Oct. 21-23. Registration £2.50. Further information from The Secretary, Critique, 31 Clevedon Road, Glasgow, G12 0PH. Tel: 041-339-6267; or Critique Office, 9 Poland Street, London W1. Tel: 01-734-3457.

HARINGEY Troops Out Movement meeting on 'British Strategy in Ireland'. Speaker: Steve Palmer (RCG), 8pm, Tuesday, 13 Sept., Tottenham Trades Hall, Bruce Grove, London N17.

HARROW Abortion Obstacle Race, new 40-page pamphlet by Harrow NAC. Orders from: 01-863-2294.

BRITTON Books, new socialist shop now open in South London, at 60 Loughborough Road, SW9. Distributors for Chartist Publications. Mail orders. Shop open on Thur. and Fri., 1pm-6pm. Further information from: 01-733-8953.

ASTMS Rank and File Conference, Saturday 17 Sept., 12.30-5pm, National Union of Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Hall, 14 Jockeys Field, London WC1. Further information and proposed agenda from the Steering Committee at 1st Floor Flat, Elmwood, Abbots Lane, Kenley, Surrey.

RED LAQUER THEATRE requires Full-Time Administrator, to begin October, £50 per week. Written applications by 4 Sept. with SAE stating: administrative/political experience, reasons for interest in job. Also required, for minimum six month contract in new play touring community venues, begin 14 Nov., I.S.M./Sound technician. 2. Performers M&F, singers and musical skills advantageous. 3. Musician/performer. Detailed applications with SAE by 11 Sept; interviews 19-24 Sept. To: New Blackpool Centre, Cobden Ave., L512 5PB. Tel: 0532 792281/8.

BOOKINGS wanted for two Recreation Ground plays on racism, Black and Blue and a play for youth. National tour for trade unions and anti-fascist groups starts October. Contact: Recreation Ground, 31 Winchester Road, London NW3. Tel: 01-722-7334.

CAMPAIGN for Democracy in the Labour Movement, Car Workers Conference, Sunday, 19 September, 11am-4pm, Digbeth Institute, Birmingham. Credentials from, Ken Lea, 44, Devonshire Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham 20. Price 50p.

9 SEPTEMBER 7.30. A meeting, in solidarity with the Chilean popular resistance, commemorating the 4th anniversary of the military coup and 4 years of bitter struggle of the Chilean people against the military dictatorship. Speakers from Chilean political parties and Latin American folk music. At Fulham Town Hall, Fulham Broadway, London SW6.

NUCLEAR POWER. Special issue of Peace News gives full coverage of anti-nuclear activity around the world. 25p (inc. p&D) from Peace News, 8 Elm Avenue, Nottingham.

LOBBY LABOUR conference to demand abortion rights. Assembles: Conference Centre, Kings Road (between piers) 5 October, 12 noon, Brighton. London departure point: coaches leaving Hudson Place, Victoria at 10.00. Price: £1.50. For further details and booking contact: Astrid Laver, 57 Trinity Rd., London N2 8JJ.

TROOPS OUT Movement Forum: Women and the Irish Struggle. Speaker: Eileen Fairweather. Friday 9 September 8.00pm, Rosebank, Tottenham Court Rd., London.

TRADE UNION and Co-op Esperanto Group. President Jack Jones. Chairman Stan Newens MP. International language Esperanto is easier to learn: favours no nation and will save millions. Details: Dave Vitzel, 28 Penderel Road, Hounslow, Middx.

Tribunal on British Crimes in Ireland Basques give their backing

Last month two representatives of the Student Movement Campaign on Ireland were abroad in the USA and Spain working on the International Tribunal on British Crimes Against the Irish people. One of them, BRIAN LYONS, has just returned and has sent us this report.

THE IRISH struggle has attracted increasing international attention over the last year. The current world-wide debate on 'human rights' and the finding of the European Court that Britain was guilty of torture are two obvious reasons for this renewed interest.

On this basis we thought it possible to assemble all the reputed fighters and activists, recognised internationally for their participation in the struggle for human and democratic rights, into one body which would commonly indict the British Government.

Already the planning committee for the Tribunal has established contact with organisations in the USA, Norway, Holland, France and Ireland, and on the basis of our activity in the Basque country we have begun to realise the scope and impact of the Tribunal as it was originally conceived.

My activity in the Basque country began with a sponsorship drive which resulted in endorsements from a number of prominent lawyers, 2 deputies to the Spanish parliament (Ortzi and Bondres) and some well known literary figures such as Ramiro Pinilla, a member of the Spanish Communist Party (PCE).

Pinilla was so enthusiastic about the Tribunal that he immediately took me to the Bilbao branch of the PCE. I talked extensively with one of their organisers who expressed his support for the Tribunal and promised to raise it at the next meeting of the PCE leadership.

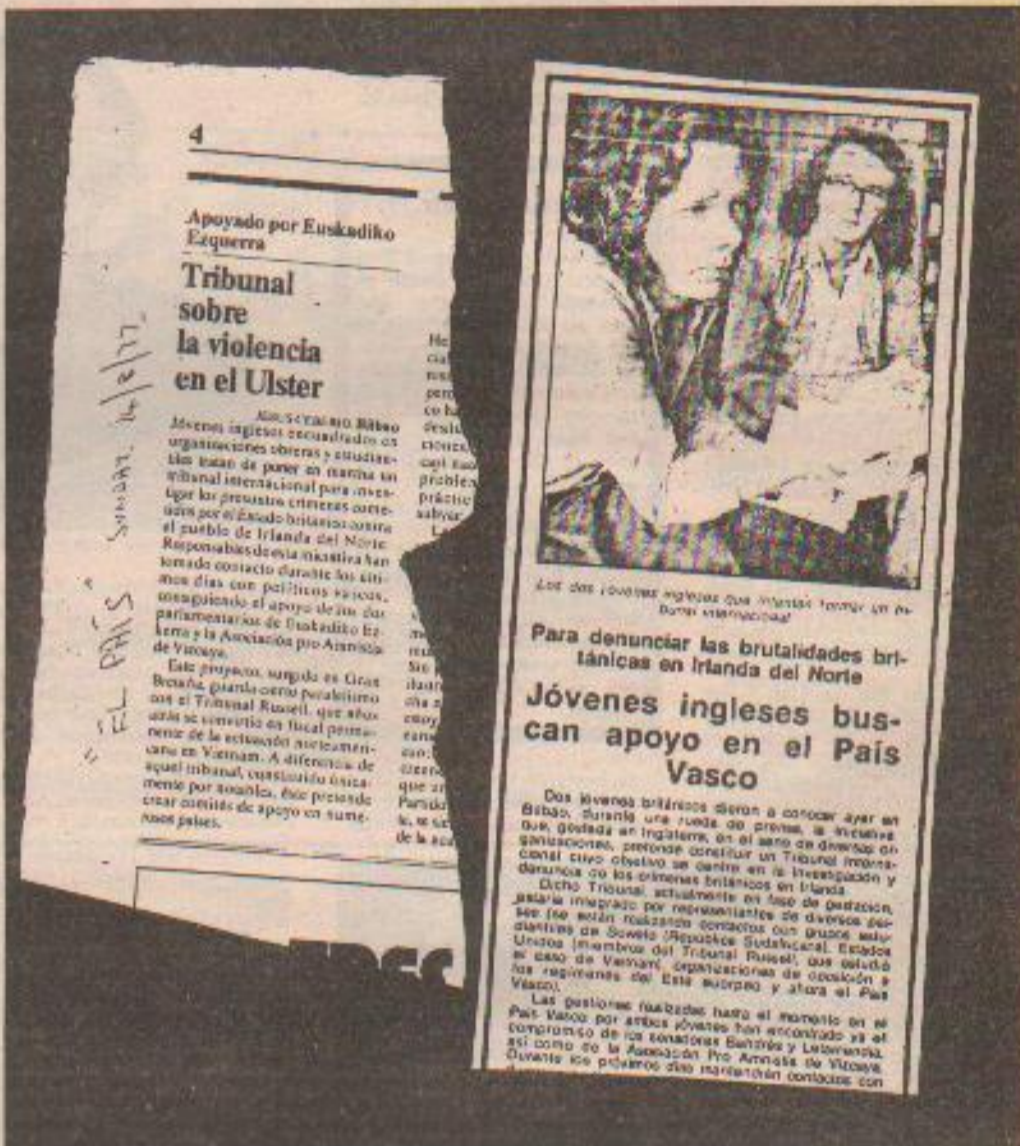
The most important commitment we received was from an organisation called BEPSA — the pro-Amnesty Commission of the province of Vizcaya. BEPSA gave its unconditional support to the Tribunal and promised to raise it at a full delegate meeting of all the pro-Amnesty Commissions throughout the Basque country with the aim of building a Basque support committee.

We held a press conference attended by all the mass circulation dailies. Subsequent reports appeared in these daily papers, a two-page illustrated interview in a magazine called Cuadernos which has a circulation of 50,000 and a 15-minute interview transmitted by a Catholic-owned Bilbao radio station.

It is obvious there is a huge reservoir of support for the Tribunal in the Basque country, which we have only begun to tap in the space of one week's activity in Bilbao.

We intend to extend the campaign to other parts of Spain and Europe, but the success of this will depend largely on our ability to build the Tribunal in the British labour, student and women's movements.

* The next meeting of the delegate planning committee for the Tribunal will take place on Tuesday 13 September at 7.30pm in the Northumberland Arms, Kings Cross Road. The committee needs all the support it can get. So why not get yourself delegated or come along as an individual in the meantime.



ORT: Under the gaze of Uncle Joe

Under the genial gaze of Uncle Joe, the first congress of the Revolutionary Workers Organisation (ORT) staked its claim to be his legitimate successor by expelling four delegates who dared propose an alternative to the leadership's political resolution. RICHARD CARVER continues his look at the Spanish far left.

The congress, the first in the party's seven year existence, was conducted in a blaze of publicity — the ORT is now legal. So it was something of an embarrassment when, amid the ORT's frenzied defences of bourgeois democracy, the expulsions were plastered over the front pages of the national press.

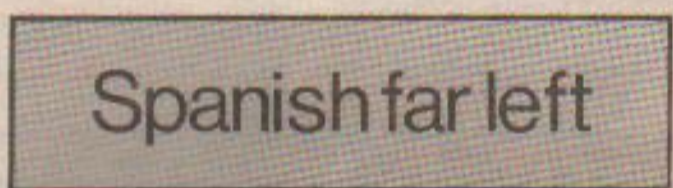
WELL-IMPLANTED

A ten year gestation gave birth to an organisation which is the best implanted of the far left parties, particularly in its home territory of Pamplona. It now claims 16,000 members — which is not too much of an exaggeration, though the 200,000 it claims for its 'Unitary Trade Union' can probably be reduced by the power of ten.

Of all the Spanish parties the ORT now has the closest links with Peking — though the Chinese are anxious not to stir things with the Suarez Government by recognising it as an 'official' section. The ideological coherence provided by 'orthodox' Maoism is important since it tends to inoculate the organisation against the latent crisis throughout the Spanish left. But that is not to deny the ORT's

staggering political poverty. The Congress 'vindicated' the party's previous political line by unanimous decision (after the expulsions). The fact that their highly sectarian election campaign only brought in 40,000 votes (a fifth of the claimed union membership) was not even a cause for comment.

The question of fusion with the PTE (Labour Party of Spain) was not a subject for debate at the congress (though it is in the



national press every other day), which was to ignore the central question in the ORT's future perspectives.

The main topic of discussion was a series of helpful hints to Senor Suarez on what a bourgeois democratic constitution should look like. Under Francoism and in the pre-electoral period the ORT was a consistent exponent of the Popular Front — an alliance with the 'democratic' bourgeoisie for

the implementation of the 'first stage' of the revolution.

The stunningly bankrupt constitutional document is worthy of examination only because it shows that the perspective has not changed one iota. Spain is defined as a 'constitutional democratic state' in which all powers emanate from the people — quite how is as mysterious as the transubstantiation of water into blood.

The constitutional documents of the Socialist and Communist Parties dodge the problem of the monarchy by making no mention of it. The ORT uses another dodge: put it to a referendum. Unfortunately for the ORT that one has been tried before — by General Franco 30 years ago!

The list of democratic rights guaranteed by the constitution seems admirably egalitarian — no discrimination on grounds of sex or race — until you read that there is to be no discrimination on the basis of social class. This, presumably, is what is meant by powers emanating from the 'whole' people.

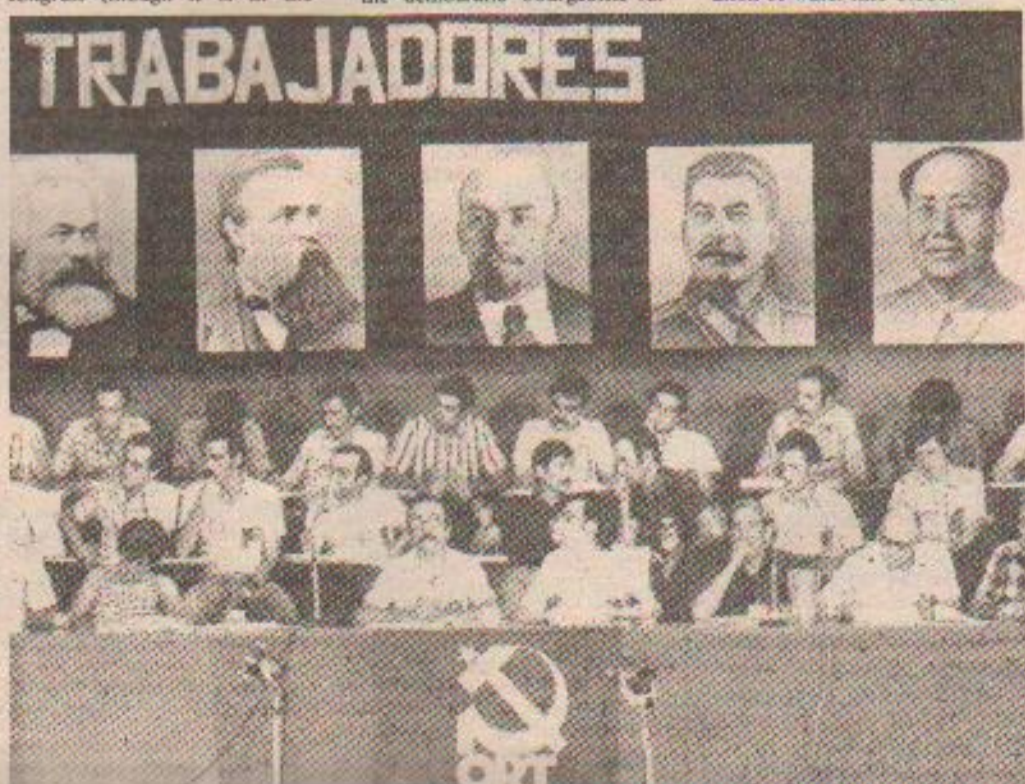
FOREIGN POLICY

The international report had little more to recommend it, since it was merely a digest of current Chinese foreign policy, slightly modified for local consumption. Most interesting was the call for the European countries to 'unite, economically against the United States and militarily against the USSR'. The logical conclusion of support for the EEC and NATO is now drawn. Instead the ORT makes recourse to its faithful ally, the referendum.

With its ideological coherence, strong proletarian roots and probable international finance, the ORT is better placed than the larger PTE. It would be surprising if its recent growth is not extended in the coming months.

Already the principal international significance of the ORT is that it is the largest and most influential pro-Peking party in Western Europe. The logic of its adherence to Peking, which is the main guarantee of its internal stability, is towards capitulation not just to the 'democratic' bourgeoisie but to the giants of the EEC and NATO.

Socialism in One Country Mao-style has no more to recommend it than the variant peddled by the dozen of the ORT congress.



The Conference of Socialist Economists

A personal view

MORE THAN four hundred people spent three days in Bradford in July, at the eighth annual conference of the Conference of Socialist Economists. Over eighty papers were presented in more than forty workshop sessions; as well as a large contingent from Germany, there were comrades from Japan, the USA, France, Scandinavia, Holland, Italy and elsewhere. All this was ample evidence of the vigour of the CSE. How has it developed, and what are its aims today?

The CSE was formed in January 1970 at a conference called by a small number of socialist economists. The aim set out in the original circulars for that conference was to develop the critique of political economy within the socialist movement. From the start, the CSE was avowedly non-sectarian, drawing its membership from socialists of all parties and groups and of none. It was also international, with a small but growing membership outside Britain, and contacts with similar groups in other countries.

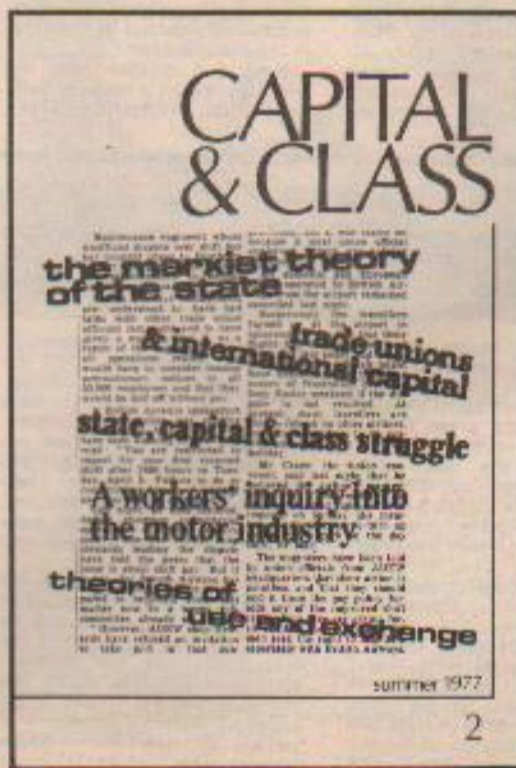
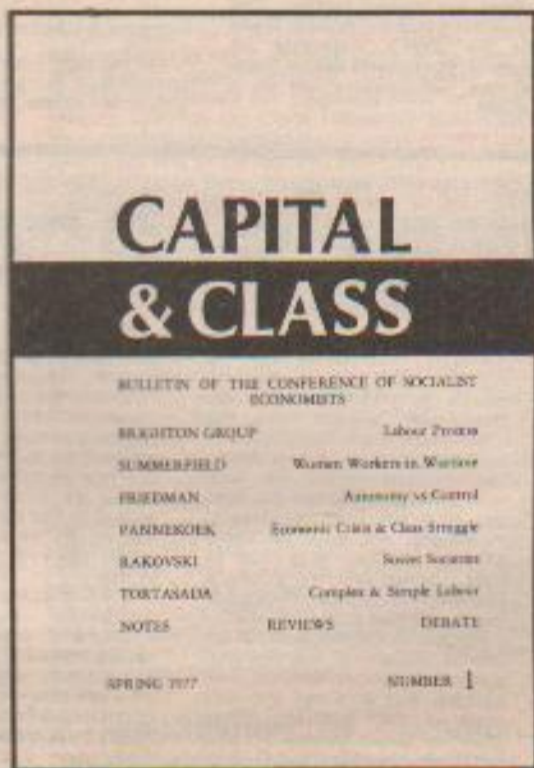
In the first few years, nearly all CSE members were 'practising economists', lecturers and students in universities and colleges; most looked to CSE as a forum for progressing beyond radical or critical economics of the 'Cambridge school' of left-Keynesianism, towards a Marxist critique of bourgeois economics and capitalist society. Not surprisingly, therefore, most of our work had a rather academic and introspective slant, and tended to be eclectic and politically rather confused.

EMPHASIS

From about 1972 the emphasis shifted. By then, CSE had about 250 members, with a growing number of non-economists. An internal Bulletin was launched in December 1971, and activities became more and more regularised. There were demands for CSE to develop more practical, politically relevant work, but the real shift in emphasis was towards a thorough study of Marx's critique of political economy, and the creation of a Marxist tradition in this field in Britain. Old debates were revived, and new ones launched — on value theory, crisis, productive and unproductive labour, money, imperialism. Many members took part in *Capital* reading groups, and contacts developed with Marxists working on political economy in France, Germany and Italy. In addition, the *methods* of work began to change, with the formation of on-going working groups on housing, women and other topics.

By 1975, membership had grown to around 500, with a third outside Britain, and only a minority of 'economists'. The Bulletin was well-established, but only circulating within CSE. Activities were expanding, but CSE remained a rather shadowy organisation, scarcely known in the left at large, and administered rather amateurishly by a very small group of dedicated volunteers.

A growing number of members felt that we were getting



by Hugo Radice

bogged down in the re-hashing of traditional debates over Marx's critique of political economy; discussions were seen as too abstract, and limited in scope. This led to a decision to hold the 1976 conference on the subject of *labour process*, covering both theory and concrete analyses, and to organise it on the basis of collective work over the preceding year. The result was a very successful conference of 250 or so members in July 1976 in Coventry.

Many of the workshops were prepared collectively by local groups or working groups, and topics covered included historical studies in the labour process in particular industries, analyses of the motor industry today, of domestic labour, of the internationalisation of capital and labour, as well as more theoretical discussions. The 1976 conference also decided to transform the Bulletin into a properly published journal entitled *Capital and Class*, to be linked closely to collective work going on in CSE.

COLLECTIVE

The 1977 conference on 'Class Struggle, the State and the Restructuring of Capital', was the culmination of a much more developed process of collective work: in the year leading up to it, there was a preparatory dayschool on some topic nearly every weekend, and nearly all the established local CSE groups participated. As a result of this work, and the launching of *Capital and Class*, membership is now around 1,200. CSE continues to be successfully non-sectarian and international; the administration is now more formally structured,

involves more members, and manages, so far, to remain reasonably open, democratic and non-elitist. But how is it likely to develop in the future? What can CSE's role be in relation to the working class and its organisations?

First of all, CSE is not, and will not be, a political party: there is no sign of any disagreement with this view among CSE members; and secondly, in consequence of this, CSE provides an *open forum* for Marxist debate. There is no attempt to suppress or avoid the taking of political positions, but since CSE itself does not act politically (in a narrow sense), it can sustain debate between widely differing views on a comradely basis.

Thirdly, the list of CSE's working groups shows that its collective work now offers a vital potential *servicing role* to the movement at large, particularly in analysing specific areas of state policy, particular firms and industries, etc. Related to this is an equally important potential *educational* role, as yet much less developed, involving closer links with the unions, community groups and adult education. In both these areas, the expansion of CSE's publishing activities into books and pamphlets can play an important part. We plan to launch a book club-based series of titles in 1978.

Fourthly, a 'Conference of Socialist Economists' is increasingly a misnomer (although no-one has yet come up with a replacement name). CSE is determined to *break down* the barriers, not only between different 'intellectual disciplines', but between 'intellectuals' and 'workers'. Obviously, socialists cannot overcome the effects of

the capitalist division of labour overnight, but we must consciously fight against it, *without* adopting the anti-intellectual posture so common on the left, whose main effect is to *disarm* the working class by reducing theory to dogma, and understanding to blind faith.

In summary, through its collective work, its conferences, publications and other activities, the Conference of Socialist Economists is now opening out, and seeking to play an active part within the socialist movement. We do not claim to have all the answers, but we believe we are asking the right questions, and discussing them in the right way. If you want to take part in our work please join us.

ACTIVITIES

Annual Conference

The 1978 Annual Conference is planned for July in Bradford, with the provisional theme of 'The crisis of British capitalism in the 1970s'. Preparatory work is now getting underway. The conference will consist almost entirely of workshops prepared by working groups and local groups of CSE, or individual members.

Dayschools

Most of these are organised by working groups around particular themes: some are informal, others discuss pre-circulated papers. These are planned for the next few months:
Housing workshop: 17 September, Birmingham. Mainly on Local Authority Direct Labour Departments.
Social policy group: 17 September, Manchester. On Social work, education, ideology of planning, retirement.

Ideology group: 22 October, London.
Marxist Philosophy of Science and the Critique of Value Theory: 29 October, London. (Science in late capitalism group).
State expenditure group: 30 October, London.

How the CSE is Organised

The supreme policy-making body of CSE is the Business Meeting of the Annual Conference, open to all members with one vote each. At this meeting, elections are held to all posts. Between Annual Conferences, policy-making is the function of 4-monthly Business Meetings, composed of delegates from functional committees, recognised local groups and working groups, and affiliated groups and journals in the UK and abroad.

Administration proper is by a series of functional committees and a small secretariat, linked in a Co-ordinating Committee meeting every 2 months or as necessary. The functional committees are: Editorial Committee of *Capital and Class*; Books and Pamphlets; Membership; Information and Publicity; Annual Conference; Education. The secretariat consists of a Treasurer, and a Secretary with 2 Assistant Secretaries, whose task is to act as a clearing house and convene meetings of the delegate bodies.

CSE membership entitles you to take part in all CSE activities, to receive *Capital and Class* and the CSE Newsletter, to vote at the Business Meetings of the Annual Conference, and to stand for election to any post.

Books and pamphlets

CSE published two pamphlets in 1976 through Stage 1 press: *The Labour Process and Class Strategies*, with reprinted articles by Panzeri, Sohn-Rethel, Patoix, Bolgna and Tronti, giving some background material from European Marxism on the labour process; and *On the Political Economy of Women*, containing two essays by the Political Economy of Women group, 'Women's domestic labour' and 'Women, the state and reproduction since the 1830s'. Both these pamphlets have now been reprinted and are available from Stage 1, or from CSE (50 members at reduced prices).

Following a decision of the 1977 conference, the Books and Pamphlets Committee is now preparing a book series to be launched in 1978, mainly through a book club which will be open to non-members also. The aim is to produce short (128pp) books at low prices (£1.25), covering a wide range of topics. We hope to produce 8-8 titles per year, including concrete analyses, collections, introductory theory works, and historical reprints; and to offer book club members titles from other publishers at greatly reduced prices.

CSE Newsletter

The Newsletter appears every two months, and provides up to date information on CSE activities. It also acts as an information exchange between members, gives reports on committee meetings and decisions, etc.

Local groups

These are organised around the common interests and activities of members. We hope to build up a system of servicing local groups from the 'centre', for example by providing speakers, reprographic help, etc.

For further information write to: CSE, c/o Department of Economics, Birkbeck College, 7-15 Gresse Street, London W1P 1PA.

Martin Shaw and Socialist Unity

IT IS amazing that Socialist Worker (27 August) can claim that the voting at Ladywood was a defeat for the National Front, by pointing out that 'their vote of 888 was less than the combined vote of the three black candidates'. For it was precisely the SWP's decision to stand independently of Socialist Unity which helped to split the socialist and anti-racist vote, and make it appear as though the NF had gained a victory. As you point out, if the whole of the revolutionary left had mobilised in Socialist Unity, it is possible that we would have beaten the NF and the Liberals; our support would have been obvious to all instead of requiring tortuous calculations in the pages of Socialist Worker.

As a longstanding member of the International Socialists, and now the SWP, I can only repeat more forcefully what I said after Stechford: that the SWP's refusal to collaborate with the rest of the revolutionary left is only

bringing the organisation into disrepute. The poll of 152, after all the excuses of Socialist Worker have been taken into account, is still a pathetic figure when set against Socialist Unity's 534.

The reinstatement that never was

I should like to be able to make these points within the SWP, but I was suspended for a second time from membership of the organisation on 2 July. Since you reported my original suspension and reinstatement, readers may be interested to know that the latter proved a very brief and farcical affair.

First, my reinstatement in June was made conditional on my acceptance of the decisions of the SWP conference at the end of that month. In fact, conference changed policy on the issue on which I was originally suspended (support for other socialists where the

SWP was not standing), while rejecting any actual collaboration. Despite the change, my local SWP committee passed this resolution only three days after conference. Taking into account conference decisions and Martin Shaw's irreconcilability with them, the Hull branch of the SWP suspends Martin Shaw and recommends his expulsion.

I was not notified of this move; indeed it was timed to take place while I was in London for the SWP's 'Marxism 77'. I had not even been informed of any conference decisions, let alone been asked my views about them. When informed of my new suspension, I wrote to the local branch, the central committee and the control commission to protest at this flouting both of my elementary rights and of the conditions imposed at the time of my reinstatement.

Now, two months after my new suspension, I have received no official notification of my

expulsion from the Centre. I am informed by the local branch that I am 'no longer considered a member'.

Only tactical differences?

Hull SWP wrote, ironically, in their letter suspending me: 'Despite our many differences it is appreciated that these are of a tactical rather than fundamental nature. This being the case, Hull Branch expresses the willingness to work with you in any common action which will further the struggle for socialism'.

I naturally welcome these sentiments, however hollow they may seem in this particular letter, and hope they may have some practical meaning, not just for me but for other socialists with whom the SWP's differences are mainly tactical. The only thing that can prevent it will be the SWP's insistence on putting its interests before those of the revolutionary left as a whole.

Although I hope that the SWP will eventually form part of a united revolutionary socialist party in this country, it will have to change considerably to do so, and the nature of the organisation makes it very difficult to influence these changes from below. It is clear from repeated experience that any oppositional grouping will be dealt with by organisational means.

Indeed, if any issue is fundamental it is this: the contempt of the SWP leadership for workers democracy both inside the organisation and in the wider movement. I repeat the challenge of my 'Open Letter', still unanswered: will the working class believe in a fight for socialist democracy led by a party which shows few signs of it in its own workings?

Support Socialist Unity!

For my part, I feel there is no choice but to join the considerable forces outside the

SWP seeking to build a unified revolutionary socialist movement fighting for and based on genuine workers' democracy. Locally I shall be active in the Hull Socialist Alliance, which includes the IMG, members of the Working Women's Charter, ex-IS/SWP comrades, and independent socialists (the local SWP have refused to be involved).

Nationally, I should like to express my support for Socialist Challenge, and particularly for the Socialist Unity campaign. I would urge all serious, non-sectarian revolutionary socialists, and particularly groups and individuals from the IS tradition, to support both these initiatives. Whatever doubts and criticisms we may still have of the IMG, they have made considerable steps towards the kind of socialist unity which are needed, and it is our responsibility as well to see that these are successful.

MARTIN SHAW (Hull)

Socialist Challenge EVENTS

SCOTLAND

For information on Socialist Challenge contact Scottish Socialist Socialist Challenge bookshop, 64 Queen Street, Glasgow (Tel: 041-221 7481). Open weekdays 10-4. Late closing Thursday 6.00pm. Wide range of FI publications.

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

SOUTH/WEST

PORTSMOUTH Socialist Challenge readers group, every Monday, 7.30pm at Wiltshire Lamb pub (upstairs), Hampshire Terrace. Next meeting 12 September on 'Reformism: The Labour Party'.

SOUTHAMPTON Socialist Challenge group meeting, 15 September: 'The crisis in the Communist Party', at the Anchor pub, East Street, 8pm. For complete list in series contact: 26 Tennyson Road, Portsmouth.

YORKSHIRE

SHEFFIELD readers meet fortnightly, 7.30pm, the Lion Hotel, 3 Nursery Street (off the Wicker), Sheffield.

NORTH WEST

For details of activities in the NW write or ring the Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre, Third Floor, 14 Piccadilly, Manchester 1. 061-238 2352.

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

BURY Socialist Challenge group meets at the Royal Hotel, Silver Street every Tuesday at 8pm.

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

LONDON

SOUTHALL Supporters group meets fortnightly. For details phone 01-573 5095.

HOME COUNTIES

BASINGSTOKE readers' meeting every Tuesday at Chute House, Church Street, 8pm.

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

MIDLANDS

For details of activities of local supporters contact Socialist Challenge Centre, 76b Digbeth High Street, Birmingham, (021-643 9304).

Martin Walker's book

PAUL FOOT'S review of *The National Front*, neatly exposes Martin Walker's confused and contradictory attitude towards the fascists and gives him a well-deserved verbal bashing. Nevertheless, the claim that Walker's book 'will substantially assist the advance of Britain's main fascist party into the political mainstream' is nonsense.

Walker's almost exclusive concern with leadership wrangles means that he fails to investigate just what kind of people make up the NF rank and file and what it is that attracts them to fascism. On the other hand, the book does provide lots of useful information about the fascist leaders and shows quite clearly that they are long time racists and Nazi supporters. It does this by providing detailed

evidence of their involvement in fascist organisations over the last 25 years. Fountaine, Jordan, Tyndall and Webster, etc, have accumulated a wealth of experience and as much as we are totally opposed to their politics it is a mistake to dismiss them (as Foot does) as mere 'cats' and nasty bogeymen. We can hate and despise them but we should not underestimate them.

Foot correctly emphasises the racist and authoritarian nature of the so-called populists, but he then skates completely over the idea that there are different strands or currents within the fascist movement. These differences are evidently not worthy of serious consideration: some fascists wear jack-boots, some don't — a fascist is a fascist is a fascist! True, but also untrue because it is completely inad-

equate. Walker's Populist versus Neo-Nazi characterisation is over-simplified but at least it reveals an awareness that although all fascists have the same destination, there is more than one road to choose from. The divisions in the NF flow from differences about the best way to build a strong fascist movement. We have to know what we are fighting in order to fight it effectively and Walker's analysis should be extended not merely derided and dismissed.

Racism is unquestionably the central feature of the NF programme and it pervades all their politics. But it is not the only plank in their platform. They organise demonstrations and sell their newspapers, but they also attempt other forms of mass work in the trade unions, community and tenants associa-

tions, youth groups, and among the unemployed. They present coherent positions on inflation, housing, the EEG, the growth of social violence, etc. To many people they appear as nationalists rather than fascists and in a period when traditional values are decaying, the fascist appeal to the nation and to the 'old virtues' of duty, obedience, family ties, etc seem attractive to many.

The fascist notion of a 'natural community', a 'nation above divisions of class, faction and vested interests' is illusory but it undoubtedly appeals to those who see their old familiar world crumbling around them. Presumably Foot would see all this as 'half-baked sociology' but we cannot escape the fact that the NF will be running almost 300 candidates in the next election

(as compared to 10 in 1970, 54 in February 1974 and 90 in October 1974) and with a hard core of over 1,000 activists, are reputed to have a membership of 15,000. The majority of their members and sympathisers are not the Nazi brutes of Foot's review and it is vital that we do try to understand just why they are attracted to the Front.

It is obviously not enough to simply call the NF Hitlerites and Nazis. In fact, it is precisely this approach that makes our anti-fascist propaganda often seem more crude and simplistic than that of the fascists.

C. THOMAS (Leeds)

(This letter has been edited for reasons of space. We remind readers that maximum length of letters should not exceed 400 words — Ed.)



Police with riot shields protecting the fascist demonstration in Lewisham

The Catholic Church

BOB PURDIE ('Comment', 4 August) may or may not be right to judge James Kirkup's poem 'The Love that Dares to Speak its Name' a 'valuable contribution' to an 'understanding of religious belief. But he is certainly mistaken in his next judgement on Neil Belton's article on the Catholic Church ('Surplus Value', 7 July). 'Belton', he writes, 'made the bourgeois liberal error of trying to understand that Church in terms of an unexamined rationalism which starts out by dismissing as unreal the key element which holds together this contradictory institution, namely that people believe in religion, and that they do so for ascertainable reasons'. This criticism is inaccurate, irrelevant and uncomradely.

Far from espousing an 'unexamined' bourgeois rationalism, Belton's opening paragraph contains three explicit references to the contradiction between the historic cultural goals of the bourgeoisie and the contem-

porary persistence of powerful and organised religious belief. The workings of this contradiction in the institutional history of one major communion formed the subject of his article. Purdie is quite right to insist that the 'objective fact' of religious belief must be 'understood', and also right to observe that Neil Belton's article did not address this problem directly. But this was hardly culpable in an article whose unmistakable purpose lay elsewhere. To respond to a short politico-cultural account of the Catholic church in the age of imperialism by complaining that it did not provide a materialist explanation of religious belief in general is simply perverse. And if, given the limited scope of his discussion, Belton seemed too impatient of religious belief, it was because — like Bob Purdie and all who as Marxists have the honour of inheriting a tradition long since deserted by the bourgeoisie — he rightly views it as an instance

of 'superstition'. Was it presumptuous to take this for granted in an article written for a paper backed by the International Marxist Group?

Coming from a leading militant of the IMG, the manner of this criticism was no less ill-judged than its substance. For casual and erratic name-calling was — and remains — the chief literary hallmark of the sectarianism that the organisation has now resolved to fight and overcome. The Socialist Challenge initiative will never founder on the misapprehensions of a single paragraph from the letters page. But 'the good Lord dwells in details', and if Bob Purdie is really 'disappointed' in Neil Belton's article, he should surely try to reply to it with a measure of care and balance. Should we accept his recommendation of tact and sobriety in discussions of religious belief and yet tolerate less in disagreements among fellow socialists?

FRANCIS MULHERN (London)

Anarchist Worker

THE ANARCHIST Workers Association/Libertarian Communist Group welcomes the decision of the AWA/Provisional to take part in Socialist Challenge. While we have no intention of carrying on a petty sectarian distributive campaign, we must nevertheless take up some of the points raised in their letter you published last week.

The characterisation of the expulsions carried out at our public conference as a 'bastardly manoeuvre; demagogically carried out against a 'tendency' for political reasons, followed by a mass of resignations (which is dishonest to say the least).

The AWA was born out of the anarchist and libertarian tradition after the events of 1966. Rejecting the ultra-sectarian and anti-organisational attitudes of the anarchist movement of the time, the development of the organisation at many points left behind those who were 'unable to stomach the new politics'.

Recently the AWA has attempted to transcend the contradiction between class struggle anarchism and revolutionary Marxism, a contradiction based on real and deep historical divisions, and this will be reflected in the change of name to Libertarian Communist Group later in the year.

Other major changes adopted recently, all opposed by the Left Tendency, include support for national liberation struggles, recognition of the need for a revolutionary programme to respond to the real needs of the working class, and working with other groups on the left on a clear basis of principled agreement in united fronts.

In the months before the Spring conference, the Left Tendency

refused to carry on a political debate with us, never once replying to the issues we raised in our main document 'Towards a Programme'. Instead they resorted to personal abuse, physical threats and even crude racist comments.

By the conference (which was attended by over 70 per cent of the membership) it was clear that the two factions could not continue to exist in one organisation. A series of motions proposed by them, which if passed would have dismantled the organisation, were rejected, the Left Tendency was asked to consider their position and withdraw.

Their reply was 'Not until you say yourselves "anarchists", whereupon the seven members of the Left Tendency were expelled. In accordance with the conditions for behaving in a manner calculated to sabotage the organisation, two members resigned immediately.

While none of us retained the idea of the expulsions (the proposer of the motion suffered a violent attack of nerves) they were clearly necessary. Our understanding of libertarianism does not extend to allowing disruption and sabotage.

One of the terms of abuse used by the Left Tendency was 'Trotskyism'. This the AWA/LCG is not Trotskyist, we see the clear need for united work and debate with the left, in particular on the role of the revolutionary organisation and the form of struggle against 'capitalism' and ultimately the form of workers power. We intend to ensure that these questions are taken up, and welcome debate on them.

LONDON AWA/LCG

Censorship in TV drama

by Clive Goodwin

SEVENTEEN YEARS ago I sat near Golden Square, a Granada story editor, solemnly crossing out all the 'My Gods' in a Dorothy Parker script and substituting 'My Heavens'. Later I took my courage in my hands and complained to my immediate superior, Derek Granger. But he would have none of it and condemned me for being a moaning minnie. What I was doing was not censorship, he claimed, but merely the application of good taste.

I soon learned two things about censorship in TV drama. One: that it goes on all the time. And two: It is not a question of censorship' is the phrase one hears most often in censorship struggles. I don't apologise for the slightly gossipy nature of this opening. The history of censorship in TV is a series of such petty encounters.

The unwritten rules and the various ways around the rules become a kind of idiotic game. There is something quite absurd about a group of men sitting around a table and seriously discussing the nature of the verb 'to fuck'. But censorship is a great deal more than the crossing out of taboo words. The first problem is to try to define it and to know when it is happening. All writers will confirm that the latter is often quite difficult. As one put it to me, it can be a kind of 'whittling away over a period of months'.

In drama there is a crisis — there has been a huge cutback in the actual number of plays produced. There is a loss of confidence and morale amongst writers, producers and directors. Department heads who used to be left alone to solve their own content problems are now constantly harassed from above. Everybody wants to get in on the act. And there has been a severe attack of censorship, most apparently from the BBC.

I requested an interview with Aubrey Singer to discuss censorship from his side. I received the following reply. 'If you wish to talk about censorship, you are asking to see the wrong person. I do not censor programmes: I am the managing editor of a channel (BBC-2) and I make editorial judgements.' Censorship, in its most apparent form, occurs when the publishers interfere with what the creators are trying to say: when the suggestions (rulings) from above impede or tamper with the meaning. But censorship does take many varied and insidious forms.



Vote LABOUR

X BILL BRAND

BBC-TV's Bill Brand: a neutered message?

1. Direct

By this I mean the overt removal of words, lines, scenes, and (sometimes) whole productions from the screen. Take, for instance, the following BBC plays. All were bought, cast, rehearsed and made, but not transmitted. *Article Five* by Brian Phelan: a moral tract about the widespread use of torture as a repressive weapon.

Censored Scenes from King Kong by Howard Schuman: 'A once radical journalist learns that several scenes of violence and love were excised from the original print of *King Kong* (which is true). He builds a paranoid fantasy about why those scenes were cut: eventually involving the government and fascism.' The irony here is that the play is very much about censorship. The author maintains that he was never confronted directly by the BBC about the ban and all his information was innuendo and hearsay.

Prowling Offensive by Howard Barker: 'A Tory Home Secretary blackmailed for a sexual misdemeanour by a class-conscious pimp.' This was an enjoyable play that offended Christopher Morahan's 'good' taste. He rejected that description of

his motivation insisting that the 'production was not up to BBC standards'. This is a phrase one often hears as a euphemism for censorship. If it is an excuse it must be nailed as such.

The Balcony by Genet: This is the most recent example we have. It was an Open University production in a series with other plays including *Ubu Roi* and *Woyzek*, all of which ran into censorship troubles. They were originally scheduled for 11am on Sunday, but the BBC insisted on changing this to 8am on Saturday and in *Woyzek's* case — because it was slightly more 'shocking' — 7.40am! *The Balcony* was thought too disgusting even for dawn viewing although the Open University have since been unhelpfully informed that it could go out after 9pm. They don't have any slots after 9pm.

Turry Dan by Peter MacDougal: This is a kids' ghost story and the author says that he has been given ten different dates for transmission but each time he looks in the *Radio Times* it's not there. Its banning is something of a mystery, but it's something to do with the minefield I have not ventured into in this article marked 'Not suitable for children'.

Another form of 'outright' banning is the rejection of completed scripts. This is rather more difficult to evidence because of the sheer volume of exhibits. Many authors have at one time or another had a script rejected. Of course perhaps it was just not good enough. But there are cases of rejected scripts on 'difficult' subjects and a suspicion of censorship arises. One example comes from Barrie Keefe who submitted a play called *A Rare Complication* (three characters, one set). The play was basically an interrogation play in which a racist policeman attempted to break a black on a murder charge using racial hatred as a weapon to swiftly break the man and gain a quick confession to the crime he had not committed. ATV replied classically: 'We found the subject matter rather distasteful'.

2. Application of common sense principles of good taste

There are always good professional reasons for turning scripts down. Every day editorial judgements are made that are genuinely believed to be instinctive but are of course the products of the training and social grooming that the mind has undergone. Decisions are made by executives very mindful of job security about scripts written by authors who are sometimes desperate to get their plays on.

The taste consensus hides areas that TV drama cannot or will not touch. The taboos are passed osmotically downwards through the TV chain of command. Every producer 'knows' what's expected of her or him and more importantly what is not expected.

Personally I have never seen or read or imagined anything that I do not think could be shown on television. Experience has taught me to trust the author not the censor. So often it turns out that it was the censor who misjudged the degree of public offence, not the artist.

3. Self-censorship

Overt censorship can be opposed overtly but censorship can subvert the writer looking for success and income and monitor plays even before pen is put to paper. This can and does work subconsciously on the writer's work and obviously we cannot expect to learn much about that. But I did ask a dozen television writers whether they had ever not written a play because they felt the subject matter would prevent production.

One writer replied: 'Those are the plays I write'. But six said Yes and gave examples. They ranged from 'a play about a man made supremely happy by the death of his mother' (Tom Clark) to Peter MacDougal's belief that there were several plays he could not write including a sympathetic portrait of a violent Glasgow youth.

There is a view that self-censorship is the most reliable and repressive form of censorship we have. It is believed that the media are expertly run by cultural managers on behalf of a stable non-elected group essentially reflecting middle class privileges and power. None of the rules have to be spelt out: they are institutionalised. In other words the media reflect the society we have and can only be changed by changing that society. This in a committed writer can lead to over-determinist despair about the impossibility of doing anything useful except joining the nearest and most sympathetic political organisation.

Certainly if one tries to generalise a description of the massive drama output you can end up with a view of society not dissimilar from *The Times* correspondence columns. Some congratulation is due to television for shaking off the middle class theatrical heritage it began with and putting onto the screen a working class content that was totally new. But it is still true that TV reeks of solid city father virtue. It is full of brave cops, but when did you last see a brave trade unionist? *Leads United* (rejected by



'Brave' cops galore — but not trade unionists

Granada as 'too expensive') would be a good answer. But that was in 1974 and the director, Roy Battersby, has somewhat mysteriously not directed a play (other than one 30-minuter) since.

4. Appointment

Control of content with the least fuss means getting the right people into the right jobs. The law of libel makes it impossible to give examples. We all know men and women who have the qualifications for the highest ranks of the BBC hierarchy but we also all know that they will never be offered those jobs. But the BBC as the public service company does present a more open opportunity and does go through periods in its history (usually short lived) when anything appears to be possible. Some ITV companies are run like close family concerns and as far as dramatic possibility is concerned are just blackholes.

5. Political censorship

If politics is about the way we live together then there is a sense in which everything including all censorship is political. But when people talk about political drama they usually (and I think quite wrongly) mean left wing drama.

In my view it has been established beyond doubt that the BBC checks some of its appointments with Special Branch and disturbing cases of which the best documented was Ken Trodd's have come to light. It goes on all the time — there was another case recently when only the prompt action of the producer saved the situation — and apparently only with the BBC. ITV does not have the same connections with the Yard. This kind of political discrimination must be stamped out immediately. It should of course — like race and gender — be illegal.

There is in Drama Departments a reluctance to recognise political factors. I am told the situation is different in Talks and Features where a politically literate minority audience is assumed. This minority is never assumed in drama. It would be much healthier for the left if it started calling spades spades and asserted its right to a share of air time. There is a tendency to pretend to accept the prevailing view that drama and politics have very little to do with each other and then to imagine one is smuggling left wing opinions onto the hearthrug.

One area of overt censorship is the Northern Ireland conflict. It is a fact that the average *Sunday Times* reader is far better informed about Ireland than the most avid TV viewer who absurdly will have a far better idea of what Los Angeles looks like than Belfast.

A minor European war is being fought inside the British Isles and the freest television service in the world has swept it under the carpet. The record of American television was far better on Vietnam. But I am referring to Talks and Features. There weren't any plays.

6. Scheduling and financial control

Many writers feel literally constrained by the programmers' demands to carve plays up into 'sausage like lumps' and it has been said most forcibly by Robert Muller that this is a form of censorship. I agree. Here are some lines on the subject from Trevor Griffiths' play *The Party*.

'Joe (checking watch): Do you want to talk about the ninety?' (90-minute play).

'Slovan (reclining, eyes closed): Jesus Christ, Joe, I sometimes wonder if there exists a background you couldn't adapt to. It's a play, Joe. Somehow or other, when it's written, it will be squeezed and tugged and shunted and fattened and printed until it finally slurps and slithers into the ninety minute ... bole ... your masters have graciously reserved for it. (Pause) It's a play, Joe.'

Finance is one of the many professional reasons that will be given for not doing hard things.

7. Preferred models

John McGrath's MacTaggart Lecture presented a superbly argued 'Case against Naturalism' and opened up an important debate. The anti-naturalist position as far as censorship goes is that there is a revealed idea of what constitutes a television play. Writers who transgress that model have a much harder time getting on than writers who conform. It is claimed that the dominant characteristic of the preferred model is naturalism: that although *Crossroads* may be the opposite end of the pole from the best of Loach and Garnett, it is still the same pole.

But the attack on naturalism goes even further and it is at this point that temperatures start to rise. It has been put to me that naturalism is not the dominant mode by accident. It flourishes as a virile political tool for mediating reality: for softening and toning it down. Naturalism is, in a word, reactionary.

As one writer put it: 'It is the child of nineteenth century rationalism that believed the universe was composed of matter. It relies on well-rounded characters justifying everything they do and investigating in scenes of observable reality what the world is actually like. But except on a level of fuzzy snapshots it fails to communicate anything except a romantic emotional fudge.'

To quote McGrath: 'To take two examples, recently transmitted: *Days of Hope* and *Bill Brand*, I would estimate that if *Days of Hope* had said, clearly, what its makers wanted to say, it would never have been made — certainly never shown. Why then was it made and shown? Simply because the naturalistic form allowed it to imply, but never to say what they meant. Its meaning could become blurred, mediated. It could, indeed, be excused, passed off as something else. *Bill Brand* suffered the same ambivalence: was *Bill Brand* a serious character who 'stood for', in a symbolic way, in a fictional world, the values the author admired; or was he just another type from the gallery of modern man an interesting, maybe significant, specimen of a left-wing failure? Or was he a confusion of both? The naturalism of the form did not allow the author to distinguish between Brand's politics and his personal life, or to make his attitude to either at all clear. There was a political debate going on, and a personal saga: the author was obviously trying to say something about both — but what?'

I don't know if this argument is correct but if it were true it would be a most damning case of censorship by imposition of form. It is curious that with one exception all the banned plays mentioned earlier could be described as anti-naturalistic.

When television drama began it raced ahead of the theatre and found ways of dealing with ordinary life in an exciting dramatic form. But if art — like industry and science — is to stay alive in a fast-changing modern world it must constantly re-examine and question the forms it is using — the way it does things. I am not convinced of the case against naturalism but I am sure a place must be found in television for new forms of writing.

The theatre is full of styles and television should be. It is distressing how little is seen on the screen of our two greatest writers: John Arden and Edward Bond. Television drama should be as rich and varied as our theatre. If an innovative dramatic genius were to appear now would s/he be done on TV? I used to think Yes — and may have been right — I now think No — and may be wrong. But if I am right that is perhaps the ultimate in censorship.

CLIVE GOODWIN was trained as an actor, joined Granada TV as story editor in 1959 and subsequently worked as a producer for *Rediffusion/ABC*. In 1955 he founded and for 10 years edited the theatre magazine *Encore*. For the last 11 years he has been a literary agent.



Censored — Censored Scenes from King Kong

Socialist Challenge

NATIONALISE

GRUNWICK

Enough is enough

George Ward has gone far enough. The sight of this tinpot boss defying the massed ranks of British trade-unionism has become a familiar, if nauseous, spectacle.

He refused to let his employees join a trade union. He has defied the Scarman Report and refused to re-instate the dismissed strikers. Backed by Robert Moss and John Gouriet of the 'National Association for Freedom' on the one hand and Tory MP's Gorst and Joseph on the other, he has thrown down the gauntlet. It is time that his challenge was answered.

Ward has stated that he will close down the factory rather than re-instate the strikers. The labour movement must answer back and quickly. It should demand that Grunwick's is nationalised and run by an elected workers committee.

This is not empty day-dreaming. It is the only way that the long-suffering Grunwick strikers can be guaranteed a permanent victory.

Socialist Challenge is for mass action to cut off all supplies to Ward and all other measures to isolate him. But the next round of mass action should lead to the occupation of Grunwick, backed by trades unions and designed to get the factory nationalised under the control of those who will work in it.



"WARD, JOHN, WE GOT US SOME FINE TARGET PRACTICE ON OL' SHERIFF SCARMAN!"
"YUP, GEORGE, NOW WE KIN FIX THEM PESKY INJUNS!"

Socialist Challenge

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A Welcome Boost

IN THE FIGHT for survival Socialist Challenge set itself two targets. Firstly the slaying of the dragon by raising £1800 for the fund drive by the end of September. Secondly, boosting subscriptions for the paper. In the four months from June to September we hoped to win 2750 of new subscriptions.

As we go to press we have just topped £1000. A great success for the paper. This is just one indication of the political impact Socialist Challenge has made. By the end of this month our revised subscription goal is £1250. Let's go on to greater heights.

The summer break seems to have done wonders for our sellers. A couple of London supporters, having just collected 25 papers to sell during the week,

went on to the cinema to see Lucky Luciano. There was a long queue, and the two comrades took out their copies and sold them all! Another supporter sent us a letter suggesting selling the paper at football matches now the new season is underway.

£190 SHORT

The fund drive also passed the four figure mark this week. This brings the total to date to £1095.84. At the end of August £128 in bankers orders fell due. A welcome boost. But that still leaves us £190 short if we are to keep on target for the £1800 goal by the end of September. So dig deep and keep the money rolling in. Our thanks to all those supporters who give us a regular contribution by bankers order.

