

Socialist Challenge

FIRST THE RACIST TRICK, NOW

THATCHER PLAYS THE ORANGE CARD

TORY LEADER Margaret Thatcher continues to grovel in the political gutter for what she thinks are election-winning issues.

First came her attack on black people and her racist remarks about immigrants 'swamping' this country. Now she has promised Loyalist rule in the North of Ireland.

Thatcher has declared that Britain will stay in the North of Ireland come what may. Unionists would be given back most of their old powers by a Tory government.

For instance, Thatcher promised the Loyalists control over housing allocation — this means they will be free to give houses only to their own supporters, as they did in the past.

There is a parallel between Thatcher's racist and Orange cards. On race it was the Labour Government's tightening of immigration

controls which made racism respectable.

On Ireland, it is Labour which has already promised the Loyalists more seats at Westminster. And it is the Labour Government which has rejected Amnesty International's demand that it stops the torture of Irish political prisoners.

But the simple truth is that no British government — Labour or Tory — has a right to be in Ireland. That is one of the messages of a demonstration to be held in London on 9 July.

Another is to demand Prisoner of War status for Irish Republican prisoners. Let us give as impressive an answer to Thatcher as we can do on that day.

Assemble 2pm at Speakers Corner
SUNDAY 9 JULY

PERU ELECTIONS: FAR LEFT WINS 15%

THE ELECTIONS for a Constituent Assembly were held in Peru last Sunday. The first results we have received indicate a dramatic growth in the influence of the far left.

FOCEP (Workers', Peasants', Students' and Poor People's Front), the electoral front launched by the Trotskyists of the Fourth International, has gained 15 per cent of the vote. Ten of its candidates are now members of the Constituent Assembly.

VETERAN

Topping the list is Hugo Blanco, the veteran Peruvian revolutionary and leader of the Fourth International. Blanco, as readers will recall, was recently deported from Peru by the military regime.

It will now become extremely difficult for them to prevent him from returning and participating in the deliberations of the Assembly.

The bulk of the FOCEP vote was gained in the cities. The Financial Times reported on Tuesday that 'in some parts of the slums of Lima it registered substantial victories over all the other parties'.

The largest party appears to be the old nationalist grouping known as APRA (Popular American Revolutionary Alliance) led by the aging Haya de la Torre. It won 36 per cent of the votes.

The right-wing Popular Christian Party came second with 27 per cent, and FOCEP third with 15 per cent.

The pro-Moscow Communist Parties and the Maoists

were well behind FOCEP, but the working class parties as a whole appear to have one-third of the members of the Constituent Assembly.

DEFIANT

Together with the left-nationalists of the Revolutionary Socialist Party, they have nearly 40 per cent of the votes. At the very least this indicates that despite the efforts of the military junta the masses remain defiant.

The manifesto of FOCEP reflected the predominantly Trotskyist character of the electoral front. It linked its campaign to the mass struggles in Peru.

It was identified in the eyes of the working masses with the general strike which shook the

country on 22-23 May of this year. And it is clearly determined to use its presence in the Assembly to fight for a new Peruvian Constitution.

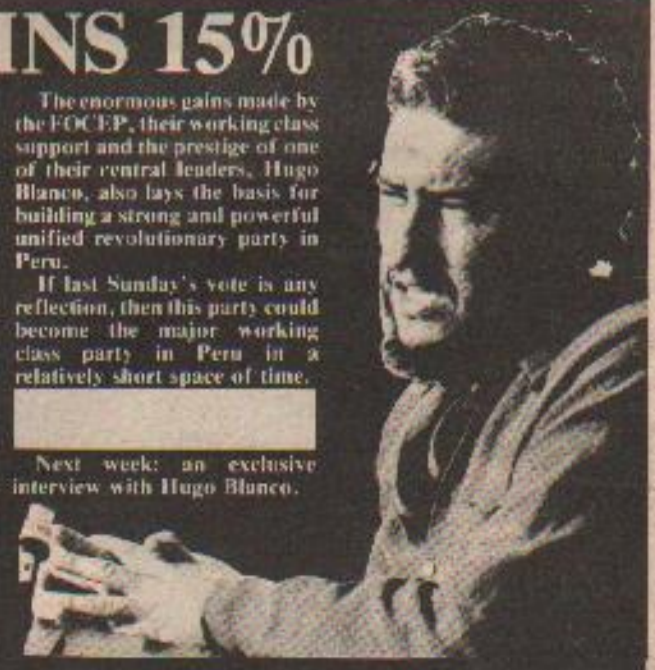
The draft it put forward in the elections emphasises the need to transform completely the existing economic and social relations in Peru, the replacement of the judiciary by elected 'popular tribunals', the disbanding of the standing army and the institution of 'armed defence committees of the workers, peasants, employees, young people, students, etc.'

What is important is that there will be at least ten members of the new Assembly who will fight for such a transformation inside as well as outside the bourgeois parliament.

The enormous gains made by the FOCEP, their working class support and the prestige of one of their vernal leaders, Hugo Blanco, also lays the basis for building a strong and powerful unified revolutionary party in Peru.

If last Sunday's vote is any reflection, then this party could become the major working class party in Peru in a relatively short space of time.

Next week: an exclusive interview with Hugo Blanco.



EDITORIAL

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China, Vietnam and internationalism

IN THE 1960s the Soviet Union withdrew its technicians from the People's Republic of China, stopped its aid programmes and subjected the latter to intolerable economic pressures.

This was because the Chinese had expressed important political criticisms of the Soviet leadership. The Chinese, quite correctly, denounced these actions as gross and flagrant betrayals of the 'spirit of proletarian internationalism'.

But it was much more than that. It was the reflection in world politics of the theory of 'socialism in one country'. This theory has been the cornerstone of Stalinist politics for many decades.

Problems have arisen because of the existence of other post-capitalist states apart from the USSR. Where these have been the results of popular social upheavals, the indigenous leaderships have maintained a certain independence from Moscow; in the case of Yugoslavia and China they were branded as heretics and treated as renegades by Moscow.

China has now adopted exactly the same methods in dealing with the leaders of a popular social revolution in South-East Asia: the Vietnamese communists. Having failed to win the Vietnamese to their own political conceptions, the Chinese are now using their military and economic weight to pressure them.

ECONOMIC AID CUT OFF

They have used Chinese nationalism in the most unscrupulous fashion and asked people of Chinese origin in Vietnam to return to the 'mother country'. They have cut off economic aid and expelled Vietnamese diplomats from three South Chinese cities.

It was Lenin who first raised the slogan of 'the international republic of soviet'. The lack of soviet (elected organs of popular power) in the USSR and China is related to the absence of proletarian internationalism in the functioning of these states.

Examples are numerous. The Russian invasions of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 were carried out solely to safeguard the political stability of the bureaucratic system in the USSR and the other Eastern European states: both events challenged the monopoly of political power enjoyed by the Soviet bureaucracy.

The Chinese attitude to most national liberation movements has, over the last decade, been determined exclusively by the Soviet attitude to the same. This puts the Chinese in the imperialist camp on numerous occasions.

It is obvious that their attitude to the Vietnamese is determined by purely national considerations. These then are the sordid and bitter fruits of socialism in one country.

An internationalist alternative would seek to unite the strengths of the workers movement in these states against the common enemy. It would, while preserving the national identities of states or regions, nonetheless strive to build an international soviet republic.

SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY

It is ironic that this sentiment appears almost utopian today: so great is the cynicism felt by many towards the actions of China and the USSR.

But the very fact that the USSR exists means that imperialism is unable to crush popular revolutions such as the Cuban and Vietnamese upheavals with impunity. It is true that this almost forces post-revolutionary states into the Stalinist straitjacket, but it remains a fact of some objective importance.

The existence of socialist democracy and proletarian internationalism would immeasurably enhance that importance. That is why revolutionaries must continue the fight for the internationalist conceptions so ardently defended by Marx, Engels, Luxembourg, Lenin, Trotsky and many others.

Our finances

AS REGULAR READERS of our back page will have observed, the newspaper, despite its successes, is still short of funds. In order to survive we need to raise at least £2,000 above our Fund Drive targets. This is due to the rising costs on virtually every front.

Our only source of income is our readers and supporters. No massive loans for us from institutions or states. We are therefore asking all our supporters to send us 25 over the next month.

If you prefer a regular bankers order we can despatch a form immediately. Otherwise it will mean cutting down a bit on cigarettes [good for your health in any case] and drink and possibly hair-dyes in order to send us a donation.

We aim to move to twenty pages sometime in 1979, but this will only be possible if you decide to chip in and help us.

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.

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HOME NEWS

The Government's monetary policy

JUDGING by the headlines in the national press over the past few weeks, the financial markets have been in a state of turmoil.

CPS, a group of socialist economists, explain the Government's monetary policy.

The story so far:
*Tax cuts in the April budget, followed by a 2½ per cent surcharge on employers' National Insurance contributions.

*Minimum Lending Rate (MLR) shooting up to 10 per cent in successive leaps and bounds.

*Frantic buying of Gilts and sharp price rises in the Gilt market.

*Reintroduction of a credit corset.

*Fears that the money supply was out of control, followed by rejoicing at the Chancellor's commitment to monetary restraint.

What does it all mean? Has anything changed? Have some of the contradictions been removed at-a-stroke?...Is inflation under control?

EXPANSIONARY

Writing in the *Financial Times* on 15 June, Samuel Brittan noted: '...in practice they (the Labour ministers) have been pretty good monetarists...'

Monetarists (Brittan among them) are right-wing 'free market' economists. They believe in the virtues of the free market, as an efficient instrument for allocating resources and preventing long periods of mass unemployment, in a climate of relative price stability.

Their idea is that expansionary government expenditure aimed at curbing unemployment leads to expansion of the money supply, which in turn causes inflation.

PRESCRIBE

Thus they prescribe simple, drastic medication: reduce public expenditure! Impose strict controls on money supply!

Gradually, the rate of inflation will decline and in the long run everything else being equal, stable prices and minimal unemployment (what they call the 'natural level of unemployment') will be enjoyed by all.

The monetarists themselves admit that the immediate effect of such policies will be to sharply push up unemployment. What matters is the long run. Unfortunately, as Keynes said, 'in the long run we are all dead!'

Lack of space precludes a detailed refutation of monetarism here, but it is clear that Healey and the Treasury mandarins are totally committed to this school of thought. The recent measures, aimed principally at controlling the money supply, provide a clear illustration.

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INFLUENCE

MLR is the rate at which the Bank of England will lend to the discount market. Originally known as the Bank Rate, it was set by the Bank, to influence money market rates and was an essential tool of monetary management.

In recent years it became MLR, a new-style, flexible bank rate, following rather than guiding money market trends. Effectively, the Bank was surrendering initiative to the market.

Now, in a sharp reversal — the April budget has re-adopted the old method. Again the Bank and the Treasury jointly decide what the rate should be. In two months MLR has increased by about 2½ per cent including 1 per cent on June 8.

TWOFOLD

The immediate impact is twofold:

*As money market rates invariably follow the lead of MLR foreign deposits are

attracted to (or stay in) the London market. This helps support the pound in the foreign exchange markets, by stimulating demand from overseas depositors.

*As the clearing banks also adjust their Base Rates, in line with MLR, all forms of credit become dearer.

IMMEDIATE

By simultaneously imposing a credit corset, bank loans become more difficult to obtain, as well as dearer. This curtailment of credit expansion has an immediate impact on the growth of the money supply.

One could think that that is all there is to it. In fact, things are not so simple, as these measures (MLR increase and credit corset) are only 'psychological' and aimed at boosting the demand for Gilts.

Gilts are Treasury Stock (bonds) and are issued either to absorb excess liquidity or — more commonly — to finance the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement.

FICKLE

Paraphrasing the fickle reactions of speculators and investors, a comment in the *Financial Times* of 14 June said:

'I am buying Gilts, therefore my bank deposits are falling, therefore the money supply is going down, therefore inflation is going to fall for ever and ever, therefore Gilts are a splendid buy!'

To a sane person this may sound like a quote from Alice in Wonderland. To a sophisti-

cated finance-capitalist, it is the quintessence of wisdom. Speculation is a self-fulfilling prophecy, a world of make-belief, always spurred on for the sake of securing a shred of extra profit.

So, guided by monetarist principles, all the Government was trying to do in a roundabout way was to create a buoyant market for massive Gilt issues (1.8 billion pounds in one week) thereby mopping up excess liquidity and, hopefully, denting inflationary pressures.

To do this it had to tempt speculators.

INFLATION

Looking at it all the other way round, Ernest Mandel wrote in 1975: 'Inflation itself feeds the demand for money capital and makes the closure of the tap creating credit and money all the more dangerous for business. It always means a sharp turn towards recession.'

This approach is just as valid now. Inflation is a complex phenomenon, the culmination of irreconcilable contradictions in the capitalist mode of production, not merely the result of excessive credit or monetary expansion.

INHERENT

To cut off the money tap can help fight inflation superficially; it cannot resolve any of the inherent contradictions. Least of all should we forget that continued recession and further unemployment are lurking round the corner.

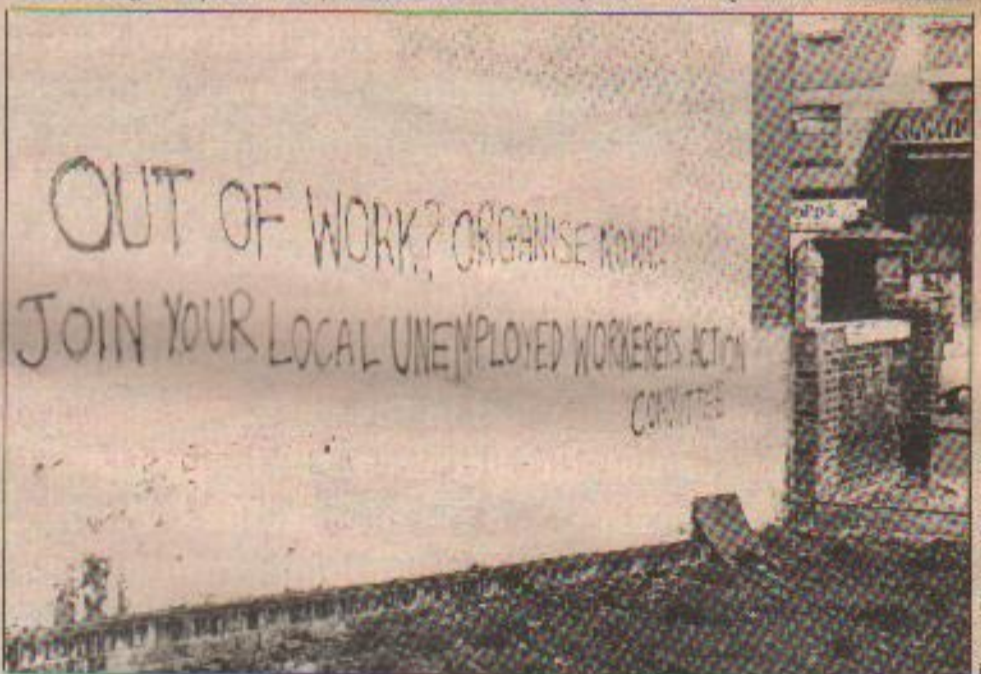


Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Pepin)

OUR POLICIES

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

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

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

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

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

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

3 The interests of workers and capitalists are irreconcilable on a world scale. Capitalism has not only created a world market, it has created world politics. Thus we fight for working-class unity on an international scale. This unity will in the long run be decisive in defeating both the imperialist regimes in the West and the feudal 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-communists' 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.

Derek Day demands: 'A school with no wogs'



Derek Day with Martin Webster

Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

Why Michele Day, 11, hasn't been to school for a year

DEREK DAY, who would like to be considered as Britain's most loud-mouthed racist, is being prosecuted for refusing to send his daughter to school. Socialist Challenge discovered last week.

Day's motives are racist. Yet it has taken the education authorities a year to act, and the Nazis will undoubtedly attempt to use the trial to create a 'martyr' in the image of Robert Relf.

GEOFFREY SHERIDAN reports.

Michele Day is 11, and according to her educational profile card has a reading age of 7.2. She has not been in a classroom since she left primary school last summer.

Yet it has taken the education authorities — usually prompt to act in cases of non-attendance — a year to bring her father to court. Magistrates are due to hear the case on 26 July.

The Labour-controlled Inner London Education Authority is aware of Day's motives.

Michele Day was due to be transferred to Haggerston girls' secondary school in Shore-ditch.

PREFERENCE

Parents can express a preference as to which school their child should attend. Derek Day wrote: 'A school with no wogs'. He added: 'There are enough bleeding wogs in this country and I don't want to have to put up with any more.'

As it happens, 70 per cent of students at Haggerston are white, 20 per cent more than at the two neighbouring secondary schools.

There are three Asian teachers at Haggerston, together with a West Indian, and a person of mixed race. Teachers at the school have made plain their opposition to fascism.

When the ILEA allowed the Front to hold an election meeting at the school three years ago, thirty of the staff joined a picket of the meeting.

But rather than show the same spirited opposition to a

self-declared racist whose pastime is to stand on the balcony of his flat yelling obscenities to passing blacks, education officials have tried hard to conciliate with Day.

At Haggerston there is normally a prompt response when students fail to turn up. If a student is away for more than two days, a form is sent to the parents.

If there is no reply, another form is sent and an educational welfare officer is asked to visit the home. A visit would rarely take place more than three weeks after the absence began.

Michele Day never did turn up at Haggerston or any other secondary school. Her case was dealt with at divisional level, under the personal supervision of K.J. Mason, head of the ILEA's Hackney division, based at Ockway House in Stoke Newington.

Derek Day claims that a private tutor from Bournemouth makes the two-hundred-mile round trip to East London to supervise Michele's education. There are no prizes for guessing the direction such lessons would take.

Day is a former member of the British Movement, and was a star speaker at the last NF conference. In the local elections in London, the NF's manifesto included a call for racially segregated schools. The Front's pamphlet *How to Combat a Red Teacher* invites parents and school students to denounce teachers who advocate racial equality or fail to glorify the history of the British Empire.

An ILEA spokesperson told *Socialist Challenge* that officials 'tried to negotiate with Michele's parents to try to come to some arrangement'.

These negotiations went to unprecedented lengths.

At a meeting with Derek Day at Ockway House, the racist took vociferous exception to the presence of A.N. Chin, the division's secondary school placement officer, whose appearance indicates his non-European origins.

OBLIGED

Mason, Chin's superior, duly obliged. Rather than defend the education officer and terminate the meeting at once, Mason told Chin to leave the room.

The ILEA explains: 'The officer concerned suggested he did leave to save him embarrassment and abuse.'

Two visits by an inspector to the private tuition set up by Day persuaded the ILEA it wasn't satisfactory, and the authority finally decided to take the issue to court.

The prolonged delay in taking effective action will not have benefited Michele Day. The ILEA admits that her attendance at primary school was poor, although no action was taken over this.

The teacher from Haggerston who interviewed her recorded: 'She is an extremely reticent child, very quiet and very frightened.' It was noted that Michele would need to go into a remedial department.

MEDIA

When Robert Relf raised his 'For sale to an English family only' sign outside his Leamington house in April 1977, and was prosecuted by the Race Relations Board, the fascists sought to create a martyr.

They were helped by much of the mass media, whose headlines about 'Race rebel Relf' openly suggested his 'heroism'. Anti-racists must ensure that Day receives no such treatment.

Derek Day will be no reluctant martyr.

News from nowhere

What's in a name?

THE PEOPLE'S Festival, organised by the Communist Party at Alexandra Palace last Sunday (see report page 6), was a jovial affair. As the *Morning Star* reported 'The CP was well represented by a majority of its districts, as was the YCL and its paper *Challenge*, but the Hackney Young Liberals, Tribune and the London Co-Op Education Committee were also there....'

And therein, as they say, hangs a tale.

A fortnight before the festival *Socialist Challenge* rang the festival organisers and asked for a stall. We were told that the necessary forms would be sent. None arrived. A week later we were told that the stalls were all taken and there was no room.

Being somewhat cynical, we decided an hour later to test this fact out.

We rang and asked for a stall. 'Who are you?' we were asked. 'The Hackney Young Liberals', we replied. 'Fine. We'll send you the forms' — which duly came in the next post. And so *Socialist Challenge* obtained a stall. There were a few red faces at the festival, but there was no question whatsoever of booting us out.

Many stewards and CP members said they were pleased to see us there and roared with laughter when they heard how we'd got in.

Why were we excluded in the first place? Nothing to do with the comrade organising the festival. It was the CP executive which decided by a vote not to allow the 'ultra left' any stalls. Which was a bit naughty given that the theme of the festival this year was 'Unity'.

'Mass poll' elects Birmingham AUEW right-winger

In the election for District President of Birmingham South AUEW, Roger Griffiths, a well-known local militant from Lucas's was narrowly topping the poll in front of Blackmore, the right wing candidate.

That is, until the Wychall Lane Branch sent in 472 votes — all for Blackmore. The average vote in all other branches was from around 20 to 60 votes cast.

Blackmore got more votes from this one branch than from the whole of the rest of the District.

He has now been declared elected.

Has Monty signed?

AT THE *Socialist Challenge* stall at the People's Festival we had our appeal for Rudolf Bahro, the imprisoned East German Marxist dissident, and obtained hundreds of signatures.

Scores of CP members signed, including Bob Rowthorne, Colin Chambers, Pete Carter, Jon Bloomfield, Gerry Leversha, Bill Ward, Karl

Dallas, and Phil Cohen.

A number of CP members while signing asked us: 'Has Monty signed?' This is a reference to Monty Johnstone, the party's well-known expert on the USSR and Eastern Europe.

The answer is No — Monty is still refusing to sign. Not, as he told us, because he agrees with the imprisonment of Bahro; but because he is fighting to get the CP leadership to take up the campaign.

That, he claimed, would be more effective than our appeal. We agree, but why counterpose the two? At the moment our campaign is the only one that exists. It is utterly sectarian to counterpose it to what is still a hope....

REGULAR listeners to Capital Radio's 'Open Line' will be familiar with Adrian Love's repeated and frenzied defence of British imperialism.

But on 28 February he really took the biscuit. A listener phoned in with some none-too-complimentary remarks about the National Front and argued that they should not be allowed to put up candidates in predominantly Jewish areas.

This was too much for our Adrian who replied that: 'Somewhere within the outward heavily exposed media-promoted National Front image there are some very sensible suggestions politically...within the Front there are people with good political ideas.'

An Angry listener wrote to the Independent Broadcasting Authority protesting at this garbage. The IBA has just got round to replying to his letter.

They say that of course Adrian Love was not putting his own political views (which presumably makes it all right) but touchingly, they do 'understand your concern' and are going to contact Capital's senior management.

(PS. Interesting coincidence: the IBA was the same body which censored the programme on the Amnesty report of torture in Ireland.)



ZELDA CURTIS' departure from the *Morning Star* was predicted in this column a fortnight ago. We look forward to reading her successor Mary Rosser's columns.

Meanwhile we print the following poem from an anguished *Star* reader:

Farewell then Zelda,
Doyenne of left press Fund Organisers
Your inspired rhetoric,
Your lively touch,
Which didn't amount to much,
but
Kept the *Star* going for an extra year.
It was f.s.d. when your name first appeared,
Now everything's decimal
How awful!
Forget Barbara Niven, who's Mury Rosser?
Zelda, you were the greatest,
We'll never forget ya!

Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

Sparks fly into action over NHS pay

ELECTRICIANS working in the NHS are likely to continue their work to rule for parity with contract labour despite the fact that their national executive will urge them to work normally. **TONY BROWNE** reports.

The dispute is over the failure of the Labour Government

to implement the proposals of the Davidson Report, an inquiry set up by Sir Keith Joseph, which recommended that electricians in the employ of the NHS were paid the same as those employed on contract work.

The executive of the electricians' union, EETPU, called a meeting of all its shop stewards in the health service nationally. This meeting decided on strike action to be organised on a district and area level.

With the postponement of the strikes the stewards organised the work to rule. In London this involves a first wave of 11 hospitals followed by a further wave of another 11 hospitals if Social Services Secretary David Ennals does not agree to the electricians' demands.

A steward at the Royal Free Hospital told Socialist Challenge that despite the obvious attempts of the EETPU leadership to sabotage the action the

dispute will continue. The only authority to call off the dispute would be another national shop stewards meeting.

At the Royal Free the work to rule has the support of NUPE and nurses and junior doctors. The NUPE branch will strike if troops are used.

LINKS

The solidity of the electricians is strong and they are determined not only to win their claim for £9 (15 per cent) but to maintain the links that this dispute has forged — especially the national conferences of electricians' shop stewards in the health service.

Toolmakers try dangerous tactic Militancy still there

2,000 toolmakers from British Leyland defied a call from Terry Duffy, president-elect of the Engineers' Union and stopped work on 12 June. They were supported by a further 1,500 toolroom workers on the night-shifts who attended a meeting in Birmingham. It was called by the unofficial Leyland Toolroom Committee, chaired by Roy Frazer. **JOHN GRAHAM** reports.

The continued support from Leyland toolrooms for the

Toolroom Committee shows the militancy displayed in the 4-week strike in 1977 has not been lost. But the decision to withhold union subscriptions to protest against the lack of support from the Union's executive is a dangerous move for the toolmakers to accept.

The blame for such moves must be placed squarely at the door of the AUEW leadership for refusing to accept the demand of the toolroom for separate bargaining rights. But the decision to withhold subscriptions will be used by the AUEW bureaucrats to further isolate rank and file support for the toolmakers.

The payment of a union subscription is not seen by the union member as a simple



financial act. It is seen primarily as a political act based on the very principles of trade unionism. That's why toolmakers stand to lose support which will be vitally important for the strike they are planning in October.

There is no way Leyland bosses, the AUEW officialdom, or the Government will accept the toolroom workers' demands without a massive struggle. Demands for a tripartite meeting between Leyland toolroom shop stewards, the AUEW officials and Leyland management would put the skids under the whole corporate bargaining set-up in Leyland. And both the management and the union bureaucracy are deeply com-

mitted to this set-up. It's a way to control pay claims and the struggles of Leyland workers.

But even if it was met — highly unlikely as in the 1977 strike the AUEW executive risked sacking the toolroom workers rather than concede — then the demands for parity with demonstrators would run straight up against the Labour Government's wages policy. Parity would entail an average of £20 per week. This kind of fight would need the support of the rank-and-file of the AUEW.

By advocating withdrawal of union subscriptions, the Toolroom Committee is giving the AUEW bureaucrats the best weapon that they could hope for to ensure that such support is not forthcoming.

NALGO conference

THE ANNUAL conference of the National and Local Government Officers Association, held last week in Brighton, displayed the inadequacy of the left in the union and the lack of politics on which to base a fightback, writes **DIANNE DESMULIE**, Harringey NALGO delegate.

In debates on both the Phase 3 settlement and future pay policies, the executive won support for pay restraint. Consequently NALGO is now committed to further government interference in pay negotiations.

It was the Broad Left-dominated Scottish district which provided the main — albeit an inadequate — opposition to the executive. Two important motions moved by them were successful.

One forced the executive to rescind its decision to reinstate three strike breakers; the other reaffirmed the supremacy of the conference. This followed the executive's action earlier in the year when it over-ruled a conference decision by calling off a one day strike in Scotland on the order of the courts.

Another successful motion called for the banning of the National Front from municipal premises. But perhaps the biggest surprise was the victory

gained for gay rights when the conference agreed that NALGO should not use council facilities in Scarborough while groups such as the Campaign for Homosexual Equality were prevented from using them.

Yet there was little debate on women's oppression, although a fringe meeting called by **Women's Voice** resulted in the likelihood of the calling a conference on maternity rights.

Such mixed results reflected the inadequacy and fragmentation of the left. The former leader of the left, NALGO Action Group, is a shadow of its former self.

A NALGO meeting defeated a proposal to attend a meeting with the newly-emergent Broad Left-type NALGO Progressive Alliance.

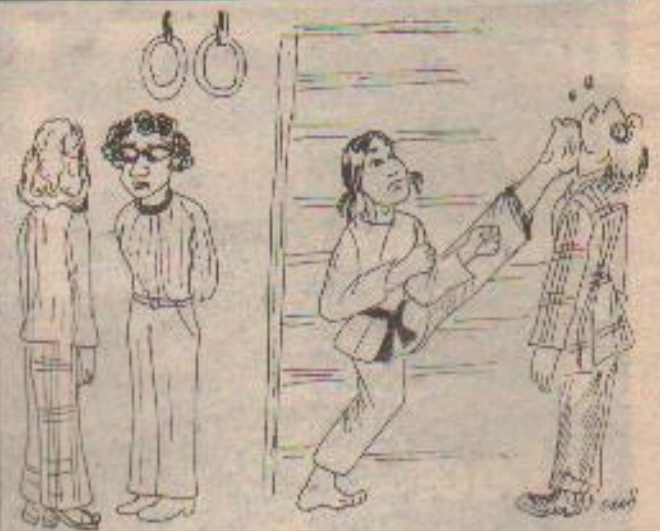
The NPA itself decided in favour of a democratic national conference, which if called and widely supported could go some way to rebuilding the left in the union.



Slipman leads students nowhere

'YES...and no'. This was the decisive response of Sue Slipman, president of the National Union of Students, to the Department of Education proposals which will undermine the independence of student unions.

She was speaking at a 400-strong NUS briefing conference in London last Saturday. **COLIN TALBOT** and **LEWIS DAVIES**, both members of the union's executive, report.



ITS MS ITERSUSH! THE GAMES INSTRUCTOR TRYING TO CONVINCE THE HEAD ON THE COMFORT OF TROUSERS FOR WOMEN

Working Women's Charter Breathing life into the invalid

THE WORKING Women's Charter Campaign held its third annual conference last weekend. Its main concern was to put new life into an ailing campaign.

Despite useful discussion, conference attendance revealed the problem: 60 delegates rather than the 300 of previous years. CELIA PUGH reports.

In the morning, speakers exchanged experiences of taking feminist issues into the unions. Most agreed that the Charter was still useful, but were dissatisfied with the present form of the campaign.

In the afternoon, delegates debated three resolutions. One that was adopted called for a transformed newspaper to take issues raised by the Charter into the unions. This could reinforce activities of women in different women's groups and labour movement bodies. Proposals to set up

union-wide Charter groups as the basis for a working class women's movement, and to completely change the present Charter into a full programme for socialism and women's liberation were rejected by the conference.

Hull delegates won backing for more regional coordination and involvement in the projects of the campaign. An appeal for an autumn conference to launch the new newspaper was issued.

New women from several white-collar unions were particularly enthusiastic about the suggestions for activity in the unions that arose at the conference. This optimism was shared by others. It must not be lost, but confirmed by really working for a successful autumn conference.

The first planning meeting is in Birmingham on 9 July. Everyone working, or wanting to work around aspects of the Charter demands is encouraged to take part in the organising meetings and to try and win wide support for the autumn conference.

The briefing conference was called by the Broad Left dominated union thanks to the efforts of the Socialist Student Alliance and the National Organisation of International Socialist Students to warn students about the dangers of the Government proposals.

FREEZE

The proposals will freeze student union incomes; remove control from larger unions of up to 60 per cent of their incomes; and will aim to get agreements between the NUS and education authorities on what unions can do with their finances.

SSA supporters had campaigned for a decision-making conference and the outcome of the briefing conference which the NUS leadership called instead, showed why a more authoritative conference was vital. Conference even failed, by a narrow vote, to agree to take indicative votes on the major issues!

So, despite the real dangers of the proposals, no vote was taken for or against them. And the 'Autonomy Charter' — which SSA supporters argue could be the basis of an active campaign to defend unions — was similarly left in the air.

Trevor Phillips, president-elect of the union, shared Slipman's approach. 'It's not a question of being for or against the DES proposals', he explained — and then proceeded to join his predecessor in a ferocious attack on the SSA and its new pamphlet about the proposals. The National Organisation of Labour Students took up the hysterical chorus against the doubts raised by the SSA.

If nothing else, the ferocity of their attack on the SSA proves the point: the proposals are a major issue, despite the leadership's protests.

RESOURCES

A full NUS conference in October is needed before any decision is made, and the SSA is right to throw its resources into fighting back. This growing realisation amongst students has obviously rattled the leaders of the NUS and the Broad Left.

New SSA pamphlet **Student Unions Under Attack**. Single copies of this pamphlet are available, price 10p plus 7p p&g from Lewis Davies, c/o TPSU, Polytechnic, Borough Road, Middlesbrough. Prices for bulk orders available on request.

HOME NEWS

London schools plan fight back

Schools for the chop

TWO HUNDRED students at Paddington School in West London made the headlines last week when they demonstrated in defence of their school.

DENNY FITZPATRICK, a chemistry teacher at the school and chairperson of its action committee, reports on Paddington's campaign against the cuts.

There was a time when the Labour Party passed resolutions calling for classes of 25 by 1980. Well, it's 1978 and the conditions are ripe.

Not only are there 50,000 unemployed teachers who could be put to good use, but there is also a fall in the school population (it's called 'falling rolls'). Smaller numbers of children could mean smaller classes and better education.

But instead, the Inner London Education Authority is using the fall in rolls as an excuse to implement cuts by closing or amalgamating schools.

Two London schools are at the forefront of the fight against this policy. In East London, the closure of Robert Montefiore was announced this week. We at Paddington are fighting a proposed amalgamation with Sarah Siddons and Rutherford schools in Westminster.

AMALGAMATION

Amalgamation would mean cuts in staff, and deterioration in educational standards, with children and staff having to transfer and move between three or four sites separated by a mile!

Both Westminster and East London teachers have fought for the ILEA to introduce an area plan to reduce class sizes in every school against the authority's singling out of two or three schools for the chop.

The Labour controlled ILEA argues that small schools can't offer the same opportunities. But this is rubbish — just a rationalisation for its education-cutting schemes.

What a school offers is dependent on the staff and facilities the authority allows it to have. If the education authorities continue to transfer and redeploy teachers as rolls

fall, no wonder things get worse.

That's why the staff, the parents, the students and the NUT branch are united in their call for the maintenance of all staff.

We have formed action committees to organise the fightback for a real alternative to the ILEA's cuts. But the National Union of Teachers has no national policy which can allow it to give the full

backing of the union to our activities.

The NUT's equivalent north of the border — the Education Institute of Scotland — has decided to advise its members to refuse to teach classes of more than 25 from the beginning of next term. The NUT leaders prefer a policy of dealing with the cuts locally as they arise.

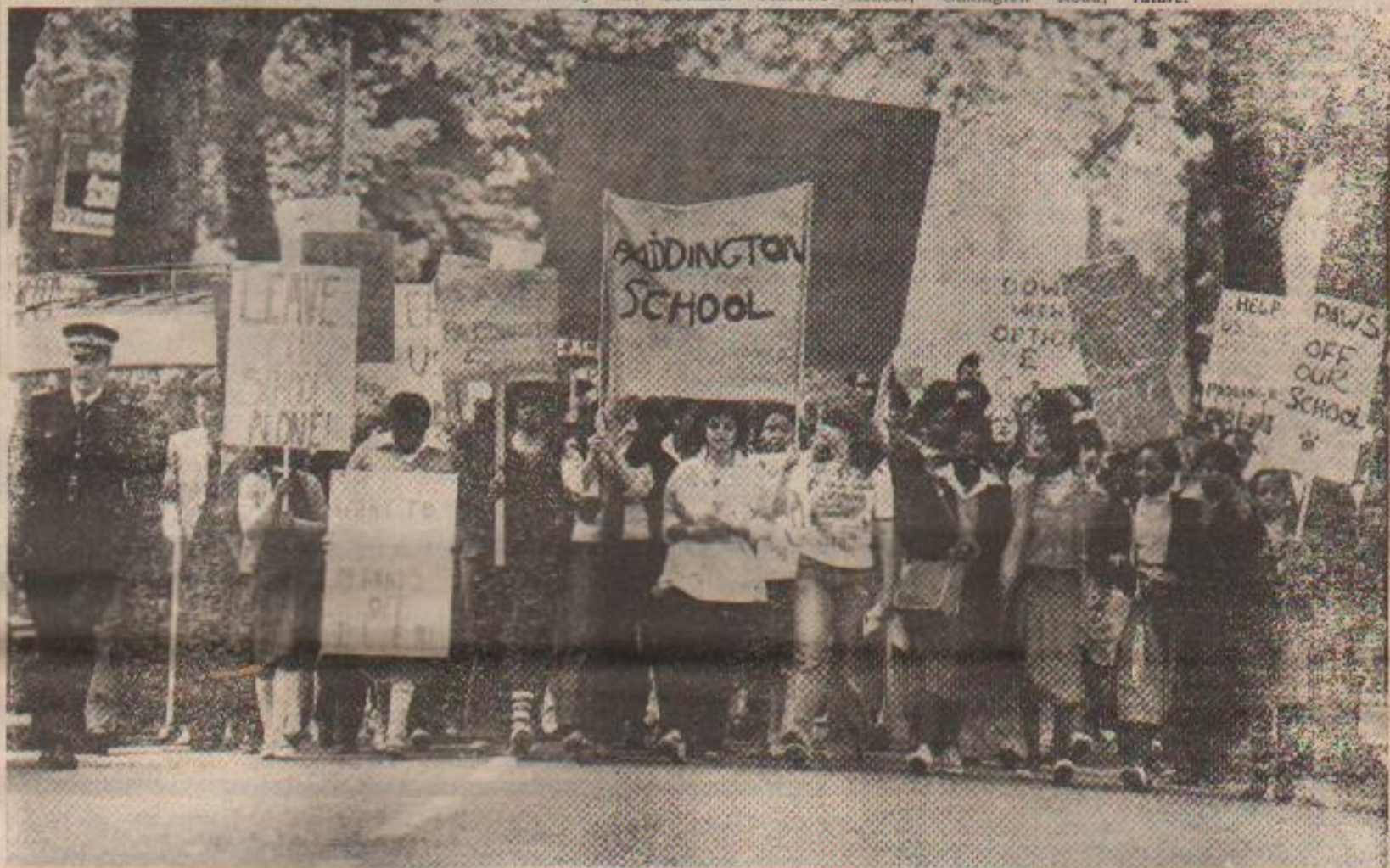
The campaign to be launched by the Socialist Teachers

Alliance for national action over class size will be an important counter to the NUT executive's inactivity. But the fight for reduced class-size must not be the fight of teachers alone.

Opposition to the Labour Government's education cuts needs to be forged throughout the labour movement. As a first step, send resolutions of support to: Paddington School, Oakington Road,

London W9 and to Robert Montefiore School, Vallance Road, E2.

PUBLIC MEETING on the future of the Robert Montefiore School, called by the ILEA. Montefiore Secondary School, Vallance Rd, London E2. Thurs 22 June 7.30pm. This is the last chance the people in the local community will have to make known their feelings about the school's future.



Manchester Hospitals

THE threatened closure of the Duchess of York Hospital for children in south Manchester has already provoked a sense of popular outrage. JEFF WEST reports.

30,000 people have signed the petition to keep the hospital open, and the car stickers and badges that have been produced are seen all over south Manchester.

The Area Health Authority formally proposed the closure last December, claiming that recent population trends show the birth rate is falling.

Population trends are becoming a popular argument for justifying closures of schools, reducing teacher training and now even children's hospitals.

What makes it more ridiculous is that until December the AHA had shown no sign of having noticed anything unusual in the population trends.

In 1976 £30,000 was spent on updating the operating theatre at the Duchess of York. Later that year a similar amount was spent in adding an older children's ward.

Many local doctors were not aware of how many new facilities the hospital had, until they saw a survey carried out by the action committee to save the hospital.

The AHA have also claimed

that they are going to convert the hospital for use by mentally handicapped children presently resident at Calderstone in North Lancashire. Although the action committee is sympathetic to the need for more care for the mentally handicapped, it does not see the solution in robbing Peter to pay Pauline.

Resolutions of support and donations to the fighting fund should be sent to the Duchess of York Action Committee, c/o J Stirton, Duchess of York Hospital, Burnage Lane, Manchester.

Domestic Violence Conference

THREE hundred women met in London on 11 June to review the first year of the Domestic Violence Act. The Act was introduced to give battered women more rights, particularly over their homes.

The conference concluded that this apparently progressive law did little to change the position of battered women.

The most visible attack on the Act came from the Court of Appeal, which ruled that it did not cover unmarried co-habitants.

The Davies v Johnson case reversed this ruling. The Law Lords said that Davies had rights over the home she had shared with her common law husband Johnson. But this case is now a point of academic debate rather than a real precedent.

The failure of judges, to

exclude violent men from the matrimonial home and of the police to use their power to arrest or exclude such men is well known.

The effectiveness of the Act is being further sapped by its misuse by many local authority housing departments, who force women to take actions under the DVA before they will regard them as homeless.

This is regardless of whether such action really offers an individual woman any protection.

This points to two things. Above all the continuing need for Women's Aid refuges — for funding and better premises.

And a real assessment of the needs of the victims of domestic violence rather than gestures in the statute book.

The conference was organised by Rights Of Women, the National Women's Aid Federation and the NCCL, who will be producing a full report in the near future.

Birmingham-Dunlop

Nearly 100 workers face the sack at Dunlop's Tysley works in Birmingham. The giant engineering and rubber company claims that the return on its investments is too low to justify keeping the factory open.

Dunlop hopes to have the entire work force on the dole by August.

Shop stewards are fighting the proposed closure and have

already produced a document giving an alternative view of the last few years at the factory. It details the low investment by the company and the low wages that it paid.

They are producing another report showing how to make the factory viable.

The stewards are publicising their case throughout the AUEW, in the local trades council and among Labour MPs.

The Dunlop Engineering Combine Committee of Shop Stewards has voted to back the fight to save the Tysley plant. Some stewards in the plant are already talking in terms of occupation.

East London Docks

EAST LONDON dockers are preparing for a national port strike if the plans to close the upper docks on the Thames go ahead.

The dockers have already started to seek support from local residents, as well as their own union, the Transport and General, for their fight to save the docks.

Closure would destroy between 15,000 and 20,000 jobs in an area where there is already 12 per cent unemployment.

The union made it known some time ago that national strike action would follow any port closures that left registered dockers without an employer.

London dock group members are expected to call for a recalled docks delegates meet-

ing. With the TGWU executive's agreement, this could convene a national

NEWHAM DOCKLANDS FORUM

OUR DOCKS STAY OK!

DON'T LET EAST END BECOME A DEAD END

PUBLIC MEETING WEDNESDAY 10 JUNE EAST HAM TOWN HALL 7.30PM. SPEAKERS FROM TRADE UNIONS THE DOCKERS AND THE COMMUNITY

DOCKWORKERS

conference to discuss the docks problems where the call for national strike action could be endorsed.

Meanwhile the Action Committee in Newham, set by the Newham Docklands Forum, is planning a rally, march and publicity campaign. It is also initiating a workers' investigation into mismanagement by the Port of London Authority.

Women's Aid

THE NATIONAL Women's Aid Federation made an unwelcome intervention at the Institute of Housing's annual conference last weekend.

The conference, for local authority and housing association personnel, was bombarded by cards illustrating a child's view of a typical Women's Aid refuge.

They show an old, run down house — all that many local authorities see fit to rent as refuges for women who need to escape from violence in the home.

The cards carried messages about other problems facing Women's Aid groups, including unnecessary delays in battered women being rehoused from the refuges and the non-implementation of the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act.

Women's Aid groups all over the country are fighting for decent refuge provision and decent housing for battered women.

The major obstacle is the attitude of the authorities. In many areas the view is 'She's got a perfectly good home to go to'; 'They say they are battered to jump the housing list' and other such enlightened opinions.

The Women's Aid Federation sees its demand for housing in the context of a wider campaign for the right of every person to a decent home.

'Half the Sky and Still No Roof' (30p) is the title of a recent NAWF publication on housing. For this and other information contact: NAWF, 51 Chalcot Rd, London NW1. Tel 01-586 5192.

HOME NEWS

Thousands at CP Festival

The politics of 'fun'

'THIS FESTIVAL brings together people who think politics can be about fun and freedom and the future'. If the emphasis is put on 'fun', then the Communist Party of Great Britain certainly fulfilled its aim at the People's Festival in London last weekend. DODIE WEPPLER was there.

Thousands of young and old jostled each other in the candy floss queues, at the bookstalls, in front of the tables laden with jumble and home-baking, and at the massive exhibition to promote the Morning Star. Films, theatre, bingo, football, music and ethnic dancing went on till it was almost midnight.

And if most went home weary from the crowds who came to share in the 'fun', they also left with a clear political message from the afternoon's rally. On the platform were Mick McGahey in the chair; Colette Privat, central committee member of the French CP; Giorgio Napolitano, political bureau member of the Italian CP; Alex La Guma of the African National Congress; and Habib Rahman from the Garner's strike committee.

DEMOCRACY

Both Privat and Napolitano echoed the need for 'many roads to socialism', but Privat also explained that Euro-communism was a recognition of the common problems and similar answers of European CPs — all marked by a concern for democracy.

Gordon MacLennan renewed the call for free collective bargaining and for a strong anti-Thatcher interven-

tion in the general election. He refrained from detailing the CP's own election plans.

One of the few debates was around the ANL. Paul Holborow stressed one theme: 'Let's have unity in action and build the ANL.' Peter Hain explained how the ANL was an 'emergency campaign' and so didn't need cumbersome delegate conferences.

SUCCESSFUL

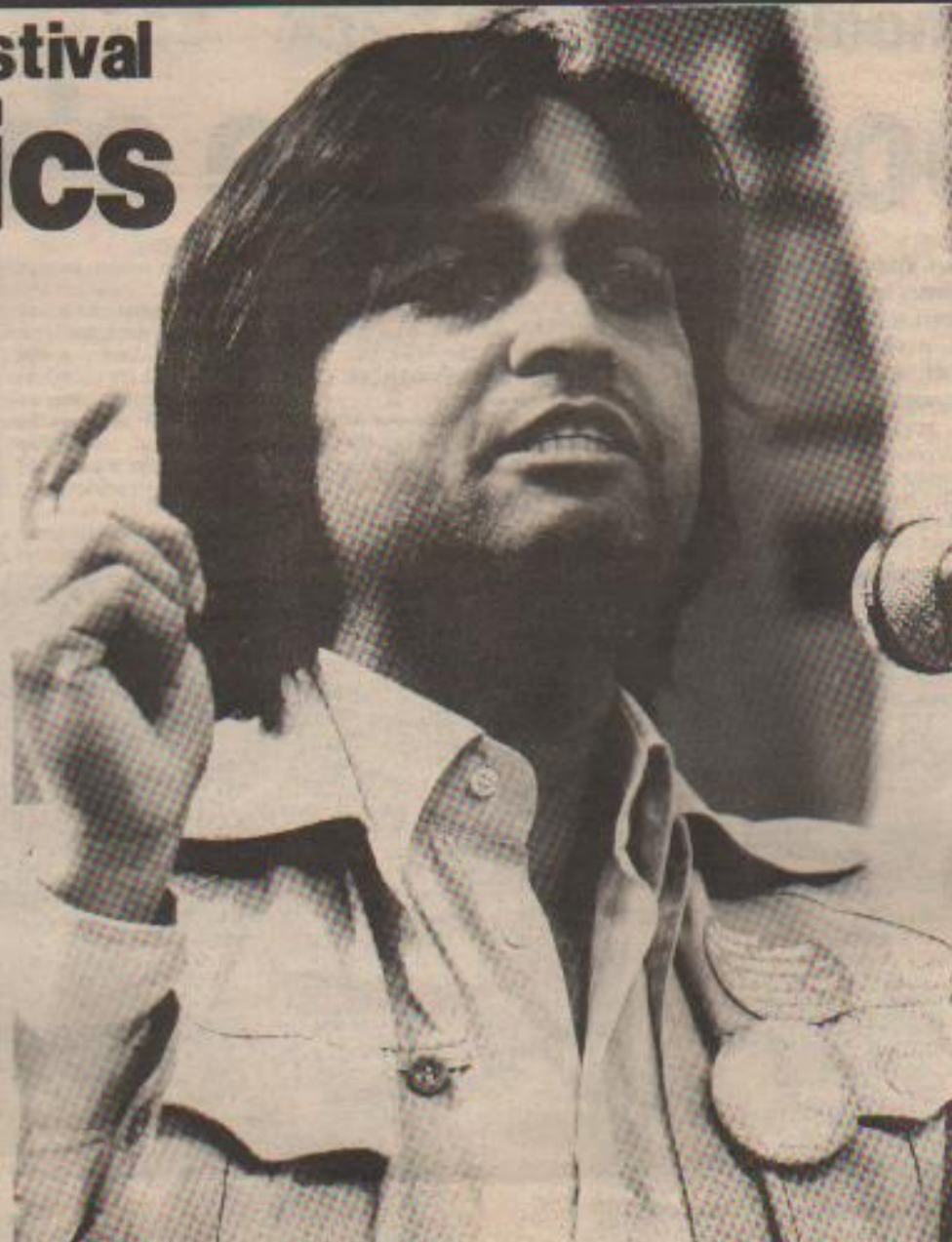
The most political intervention came from Dave Cook, the CP's National Organiser. He called for an anti-racist movement on a number of different levels. 'We need the one-off mass events of the ANL, but equally important are the local campaigns, the racism in education issue, and activity in the labour movement. But our aim must be to get implementation of existing anti-racist laws.' This latter point was repeatedly stressed by CP members from the floor, without getting a response from the ANL spokespersons on the panel.

The Festival was not intended as a political event ('We have serious debates at the Communist University', we were told). It was essentially a cultural/social get together. Within those terms it was a successful event.

The far left groups certainly need to take note of events of this character as they do serve an obvious function. An obvious corollary would be to organise May Day street parties and street festivals next year. One-day festivals/parties before marching off to join larger celebrations would be popular and would demonstrate that socialists do have a broader vision than their activities often indicate.

ENRAGED

At the end of the day, even those who wanted more than an enjoyable day out, got it. But this didn't occur in the events



HABIB RAHMAN, chairperson of the Garners strike committee, gave a rousing speech at the People's Festival in support of the London steak house workers, whose strike is now in its fifth month.

Because Garners' customers have to walk directly through a picket line, this struggle could be won by successful mass picketing.

The demand needs to be raised at the Garners conference on Thursday, 22 June, at 7.30pm, Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1. Why not invite a strike committee speaker to your union branch, trades council, or anti-racist committee, and call for it to 'adopt' an evening a week to picket Garners. See 'What's Left' for details.

organised by the Festival itself. The Morning Star exhibition seemed to attract more than a generous share of political exchanges. Many feminists were particularly enraged by the sexist cartoon that appeared in the Star the day before the Festival.

Others — like the handful of Yorkshire miners who sparked off a sharp debate with George Matthews — were more concerned with the overall direction of the paper. No they weren't selling hundreds of papers in the pits, they admitted. 'But how can we with the rubbish that's in the paper?' they asked.

The Socialist Challenge staff attracted its fair share of criticism as well, but the overwhelming response, especially from rank and file CP members, was very positive. (See News From Nowhere on p.3).

10th COMMUNIST UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

July 15-23
Polytechnic of Central London
Wide range of specialist and general courses, including British Labour Movement, Contemporary Marxist Theory, British State and British Road to Socialism, as well as City Politics, Popular Music, Sex and Class, Women's Liberation, Student Politics etc. Special one-day Symposium on the Future of Post-School Education.

Further details from: The Organiser, CUL, 10, 16 King St, London WC2E 8HY.

Racists Threaten

RACIST opposition is threatening to stop the march and concert planned by Newham Anti Nazi League and the Redbridge Campaign Against Racism for this Saturday.

A petition with 130 names has been handed in to the local council calling for the concert venue — Plashet Park — to be changed, because it will cause a 'disturbance' for residents in the area.

The petition is seen as a last ditch attempt by the National Front to stop an event which will give a big boost to anti-fascist forces in the area. The local ANL and the anti-racist committee are determined that the concert will go ahead. See What's Left for details.

ANL Conference

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

Norwich Fines

NORWICH magistrates last week imposed fines totalling £230 on four militants found guilty of distributing leaflets attacking the National Front which did not include a publisher's name and address.

A fifth person, who allegedly printed the leaflets, which were distributed during the local elections last year, was fined £200 including costs.

None of the magistrates objected when the prosecution asked a series of questions about membership, aims and objectives of the Socialist Workers Party.

So five people have been ordered to pay £430 in addition to their loss of wages for doing their bit to oppose the Front.

The Norwich 5 Defence Committee is appealing for money and hopes to take the case to a higher court; Norwich 5 Defence Committee, c/o 31 Clarence Rd, Norwich.

Cardiff Carnival

CARNIVAL AGAINST Racism in Cardiff, Saturday 15 July, Assembly 11.30am. At Llundain Square, Bute St. Bute. March via Queen St. to Sophia Gardens Pavilion. 1pm to 1.40pm. Rally with Neil Kinnock, Labour MP; Fartig All, Socialist Challenge; Mike Nugun, National Union of Seaman; a personal capacity; Ben Davies, SWales Executive NUM. 1.40 to 3pm. Events, displays, art exhibitions, games, theatre groups, music, food stalls, Sikh dancers, jazz bands, youth theatre. Evening Concert with the Cimarrons, Rik and the Last Days of Earth, the Survivors and local bands. Tickets £1. The Carnival Committee can be contacted at Transport House, 42 Charles St, Cardiff, S. Glamorgan. Tel. Cardiff 41936.

WHAT'S LEFT

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

NEWHAM Anti Nazi League together with Redbridge Campaign Against Fascism and Racism are organising a demonstration for 24 June. 'Punk, reggae and an Asian rock group. Social in the evening in East Ham Town Hall. March from Valentine's Park in Ilford at 1pm to Plashet Park in East Ham.

HELP Socialist Challenge by giving your jumble to the Hackney Supporters Group. If you want your jumble collected, ring Dodie on 359-5100; or bring it into the paper's offices within the next fortnight.

PICKET GARNERS: Main tickets every day, noon to 3pm and 5.30 to 11 pm at 389 Oxford St., London W1 (opp. Selfridges). 243 Oxford St. (Oxford Circus). 40-41 Haymarket; 56 Whitcombe St. (Leicester Sq.). Mass picket every Saturday at noon, 359 Oxford St. Donations urgently needed as strike pay is only 18. All donations to Garners Strike Fund, c/o TGWU, Rm 84, 12-13 Henrietta St., London WC2. 01-240 1050.

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

WOMEN'S LIBERATION badges, red on white available from J Wilson, 5C Leeds Poly, 24 June, Windsor High School, Imperial Road, Windsor, 27 June, New Town Community Centre, Aston, Birmingham, 29 June, Madeley Court Centre, Court St, Madeley, Telford, 29 June, Nuneaton Art Centre, Pool Bank St, Nuneaton, 30 June, Weld Community Centre, Handsworth. From 3 to 15 July, 8 pm, Roundhouse Downstairs, Chalk Farm N, London.

BRITXON Socialist Club — Lambeth Summer Festival. Music with Jabba, Rae Union, live Indian music, steel band. Food, bar, Lambeth Town Hall, 8.00pm, Wed 28 June. Doors open 6.45pm. Adm. 80p, kids 50p.

LEAMINGTON Anti Racist Committee public meeting: Immigration and Racism. Speakers: Ann Dummett and members of IWA. Spa Centre, Leamington, Sun 25 June 7.30pm.

'FIGHT RACISM' badges and T-shirts (badges black on white, shirts black on red) available for all anti-racists. Show where you stand during the long hot summer. Order yours now. Badges, 16p each plus 7p p&p; or 11p each for orders of ten or more. T-shirts, £2 each plus 15p p&p. From J Wilson, 5C Badges, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

CLEVELAND Anti Fascist Committee's Rock Against Racism with live groups and reggae disco — Thurs 28 June at the Rock Garden, Newson Rd, Middlesbrough, Bar till 2am. Tickets 75p from Teeside Poly SU, Southfield Rd.

HUDDERSFIELD Revolutionary Communist Group Public Meeting: Defend Irish Prisoners of War — hands off Tuosled. Wed 28 June, 7.30pm, Friendly Trades Club, Northumberland St.

PIRATE JENNY performances of Sirix Winning. Beginning 7.30pm, 23 June, Leeds Poly, 24 June, Windsor High School, Imperial Road, Windsor, 27 June, New Town Community Centre, Aston, Birmingham, 29 June, Madeley Court Centre, Court St, Madeley, Telford, 29 June, Nuneaton Art Centre, Pool Bank St, Nuneaton, 30 June, Weld Community Centre, Handsworth. From 3 to 15 July, 8 pm, Roundhouse Downstairs, Chalk Farm N, London.

CRISIS, socialist punk rock group will play at your benefit, social, etc. Minimum expenses only! Tel: Brookwood 3446.

A TORY VICTORY in the General Election will be a defeat for the British labour movement. But every working class vote that goes to Labour on the basis of support for its record will be an ideological and political defeat for the working class and for socialism. Socialists must combine political preparation for a fightback against right wing Labour policies with a drive between now and the General Election to keep the Tories out. Come to the Socialist For a Labour Victory conference in London on 15 July. Details from SCLV c/o 182 Upper St, London N1.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST Papers No 3. Theoretical journal of

the Revolutionary Communist Tendency. The Revolution: Capitalist Offensive and the Working Class. This issue examines the unfolding of the crisis in Britain during the past decade. It analyses reformism and explains why the working class has accepted the Social Contract. This assessment of recent struggles of the working class contains important lessons for the movement. Available from BM BCT (4), London WC1V 6XX. Price 60p plus 15p postage. Cheques and Postal Orders payable to RCT Association.

WEST LONDON United Troops Out Movement — Blanket protest about H-Block. Sat 24 June 11.30am. Shepperton Bush Metropolitan Line Tube.

SPIITALFIELDS: Socialist Unity supporters see Socialist Challenge every Sunday in Brock Lane. Meet at Nazari Restaurant at 10.30am.

EAST LONDON Socialist Unity benefit, Fri 7 July 8pm—1am. Charge and Disco and Bar Adm £1.

THE OTHER BOOKSHOP is celebrating its first birthday with a party at City University. Playing will be the Resistors and Charge plus a disco and bar. Fri 30 June at 8pm, City University, St. John's St. Adm £1 Ticket at door.

SOCIALIST and Musician's Voice are interested in forming a group in London Tel 01-823 6791.

Socialist Challenge needs a Designer

A candidate is needed immediately to work full-time on 'Socialist Challenge' and to do additional design work for FI Litho. Previous experience in any design or printing processes is desirable, but training will be given. Full details of conditions will be given on application. Apply with full curriculum vitae to the Manager, FI Litho Ltd., 328/9 Upper Street, London N1. (Positive discrimination will be applied).

IRELAND

Britain draws with Argentine

Mason rejects amnesty

QUESTION ONE: Who said of the report of the mission from Amnesty International that it 'lacked veracity and objectivity'?

QUESTION TWO: Who said of the Amnesty mission report that there was a need to 'discern the difference between truth and propaganda'?

Answers: The first of these not dissimilar responses came from the Argentinian Government replying to Amnesty's charges of violation of human rights in March 1977.

The second came from Roy Mason, on behalf of the Labour Government replying to Amnesty's charges regarding violation of human rights by Britain in the North of Ireland.

DELIGHTFUL

Last week Britain joined such delightful countries as Argentina, South Korea, and the Philippines in rejecting recommendations from Amnesty International.

The scale of the British rejection was not reported in the British press, which concentrated on Mason's arguments as to why his 'independent' inquiry should be in private, rather than as Amnesty suggested, in public. But this was only one of the recommendations Amnesty made.

It also suggested that 'the terms of reference of the inquiry should include consideration of the rules relating to

interrogation and detention, admissibility of statements, and the effectiveness of machinery for investigating complaints against the police'. Mason has rejected these terms of reference by confining the inquiry to examining 'police procedure'.

The third Amnesty recommendation concerned the inquiry having 'access to all relevant data on individual cases of alleged maltreatment'. Specifically this was concerned with the release of the reports of police doctors on injuries inflicted on suspects. Mason has denied the inquiry access to these reports.

MALTREATMENT

The final recommendation stated: 'Immediate steps should be taken to ensure that suspects being interviewed by the Royal Ulster Constabulary on suspicion of terrorism are protected against possible maltreatment.'

'Measures to this end should include access to lawyers at an early stage of detention.'

The Labour Government has remained silent on this

recommendation, so it can be safely assumed that it too will not be followed.

In other words, the rejection of Amnesty's recommendations by the Labour Government is absolute and without qualification.

For its part, the RUC has been content to offer the response which torturers all over the world come up with when they are exposed: 'Our methods have saved lives and brought about a dramatic improvement in security', said a spokesperson of the Chilean, sorry Northern Irish, police.

FARCE

The high level of farce surrounding the 'independent' private inquiry set up by the Government was further heightened in the House of Commons last week.

On Thursday Mason said that any political suspects with complaints should seek justice by referring their charges to the 'independent police complaints board'. And yet said Amnesty in one of its main conclusions, 'the machinery for investigating complaints against the police... is not adequate'.

But Mason's perverted cynicism didn't end by recommending justice from a procedure condemned by Amnesty.

He referred as well to the other 'inquiry' set up by Mason



to examine the death of Brian Maguire, who was found hanged in Castlereagh interrogation centre on 10 May.

PROPER

Mason attempted to avoid answering questions on Maguire's death by referring to the police inquiry into the case and the forthcoming coroners' inquest. In this light, said Mason 'it would not be proper

for me to comment further'. Which may indeed be the correct response, except for one thing: Mason went on to break his own rules by saying that Maguire's death was 'the first suicide in a Northern Ireland police station for 10 years'.

It only needed Enoch Powell to praise Mason for 'sticking to the proper procedures', for another typical British week in Ireland to end as it began: in well...hypocritical bullshit.

Women's group say

Support 9 July

The demonstration on 9 July in London in support of political status for all Irish political prisoners is attracting increasing support. Most attention has been focused on the treatment and conditions of male prisoners in Long Kesh.

But women prisoners in Armagh jail in the North of Ireland are also fighting for political status — and suffering for it. The **WOMEN AND IRELAND GROUP** explain and say why they are urging support for 9 July.

At present there are over 300 men and 24 women on protest for political status — for the right to be treated as prisoners of war rather than criminals.

BLANKET

For the men, because they refuse to wear the uniform of a criminal, it means they have nothing to wear except a single blanket.

For all prisoners each day on protest is one day's remission lost, along with all the normal 'privileges'. Many have been on protest for almost two years.

Women prisoners in Armagh are held in their cells 23 hours a day. At present they are allowed to wear their own clothes.

CONCRETE

But here too there are moves to institute a uniform. If these are successful, Irish women prisoners will also be forced to 'go on the blanket'.

At present the only reading material the women have is the Bible; they have no fresh air or exercise. Mail in and out is tampered with and often 'lost'.

The cells are completely white, with low ceilings and concrete slabs for windows. Many of the women are ill but

receive inadequate and inappropriate medical treatment. Tranquillisers are virtually the only medication available.

Pregnant women have no special diet or health care. Indeed, one 18-year-old woman who was five months pregnant was forced to take nightly hot baths.

FOREFRONT

Over the past few years Irish women have come to the forefront in the struggle against British imperialism. They have taken over much of the day-to-day responsibility for resistance in the community.

It is women, through involvement in Relatives Action Committees, who have organised active support for Republican and socialist prisoners. It is they who have largely been responsible for organising the mass demonstrations in the North of Ireland in solidarity with the prisoners.

ABUSE

Irish women face additional problems under the occupation. They are constantly subject to sexual abuse and harassment by soldiers and police. Sexual threats and the use of strip searches is common during interrogation. Rape by soldiers is a frequent occurrence. There are several cases where soldiers convicted of rape have avoided prison sentences in order to return to active service in Ireland. The deliberate wrecking of homes and raids which disrupt family life are a frequent event in the North of Ireland. This is part of government policy to demoralise and intimidate the Catholic population from giving support to the Republican forces. Even very young children are constantly harassed, arrested,

questioned and subject to physical and mental abuse. Several children have been killed directly by the British Army.

Solidarity with the liberation of Irish women requires

solidarity with them in the struggle against British imperialism. British women have a special responsibility to make their solidarity an active one. Support the prisoners — demonstrate 9 July.

UTOM Conference

Home soldier home

HEPATITIS has broken out in H-Block. This was the news given to the 230 who attended the United Troops Out Movement conference in London on 10 June, reports AILEAN O'CALLAGHAN.

The information on hepatitis was given by a speaker from the Relatives Action Committee who addressed the conference. She also told how two prisoners in Long Kesh have been transferred to the military wing of Musgrave Park Hospital in Belfast because they weigh under six stone.

An impressive platform at the conference included Horace Campbell of the Ngugi Wa Thiong'o defence committee; representatives of ZANU, the Zimbabwe anti-imperialist organisation; and FUEMSSO, the Malaysia student organisation.

Each of the speakers was able to point to the parallels between past and continuing experiences of the British state in their own countries and Britain's role in Ireland today.

Horace Campbell's remarks on British involvement in Kenya were reinforced by a film of the British Army's 'campaign' against the Kikuyu tribe in Kenya during the 1950s. This was the 'emergency' in which the infamous Brigadier

Kitson, now leading 'counter-insurgency' expert, gained his experience.

The high-point of the conference was the premier of the new anti-recruitment film **Home Soldier Home**. This is a 40-minute documentary which uses interviews with ex-soldiers as a way of showing the anti-working class and partisan nature of the British Army.

The film was followed by contributions from a number of ex-soldiers who told of their experiences in the North of Ireland.

The UTOM is shortly bringing out a pamphlet, 'British Soldiers Speak Out on Ireland' which features further material on the experiences of individual soldiers in the streets of Belfast and Derry.

If the conference is anything to go by, the pamphlet will be very worthwhile. It (30p & 15p p&p) and the film (which can be hired for £10) are available from Information on Ireland, c/o 1 North End Rd, London W14.



Ex-soldier GEORGE LENNOX at the conference

Photo: ANDREW WILKINSON (Report)

Trade union officials The new Perry Masons of the working class



AUEW boss Terry Duffy

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

The Socialist Challenge Trade Union Conference couldn't be more timely, writes PAT HICKEY, because today militants in the trade unions are facing a real crisis of perspectives.

Three years of incomes policy have passed. There is preparation for yet another round, and no section of the left appears capable of offering a way forward.

Since the end of last year, the leadership of the labour movement has made some remarkable advances. It has actually broadened its support in the mass organisations.

Just recall how easily the FBU strike was isolated, or how the right wing of the miners' union was able to impose productivity dealing in the mines. What has happened is that the government's apparent economic success has really given authority to the trade union leaders.

NOT SATISFIED

No working class person is satisfied with the incomes policy, the spending cuts, or unemployment. Yet these continue. More seriously, no coherent and consistent opposition has emerged in the labour movement with enough weight to seriously challenge — let alone hamper — the strategy of the labour bureaucracy.

It's not just the top bureaucrats that are implicated. At Leyland, each and every one of the leading shop stewards and convenors — bar a mere five — voted with management to slash twenty to thirty thousand jobs.

After the vote on these proposals, they gave Michael Edwardes, Leyland's boss, a standing ovation! Three months later, the Speke No. 2 plant closed without a fight.

Nevertheless, despite the setbacks suffered by the working class, its basic organisation at shop floor level remains intact. The shop stewards organisations are still strong and capable of leading a fight. Particularly in white collar unions, there has been a significant influx of new members and shop floor organisations have seen a new growth in sectors like health.

RESERVOIR

Union leaders are aware of these developments. And they recognise that the apparent economic stability is short lived. When the economy begins to visibly deteriorate again, they see an enormous reservoir of working class strength to be unleashed. That's why they have been quick to move on the ideological front.

The trend today is away from the independent organisation of the working class and towards relying on negotiations between the bureaucracy and the State. The Employment Protection Act, the Equal Pay Act, health and safety legislation, and so on.

The objective is to solve 'industrial relations problems' peacefully in special courts — with the myriad of new tribunals and conciliation services, where the main actor is the trade union official in his/her new role as the Perry Mason for the working class.

DISASTROUS

The bureaucracy has not today won decisive victories against the rank and file. We're not in a comparable situation to the aftermath of 1926, for instance. But the disastrous outcome of struggles launched by the toolroom workers, the Heathrow engineers and the fire fighters do make the emergence of action against the incomes policy that more difficult.

More importantly the alliance between the bureaucracy and the Labour Government, combined with the depth of the current crisis, poses major political problems. To rely on the spontaneous outbreak of struggles

or exhortations for more militancy is utterly insufficient.

The left has to take its own programme into the mass organisations and fight to win advanced workers to steps that can begin to impose a working class solution to the crisis.

Demands which can begin to unite the working class to do just that include the fight for the nationalisation of all firms creating redundancies; for work sharing; for a sliding scale of wages, and so on.

Yet for the past three years there has been no opposition capable of carrying out these tasks. The Communist Party's strategy of relying on left bureaucrats has led to nothing but defeat. The right in the Engineering Union is stronger today than when the Broad Left set out to rebuild the left in the '60s!

The strongest far left group — the Socialist Workers Party — has equally run into difficulties in the mass organisations. Its Rank and File formations have been incapable of polarising the base of the unions around class struggle policies against the bureaucracy.

ILLUSIONS

The Broad Left is a crystallisation of the illusions of hundreds of thousands of workers in labourism. Whatever the failings of the Broad Left as an organisation, when the CP takes a decision to move it will still be capable of pulling powerful forces into action. The most central problem faced by revolutionaries in the unions today is broad leftism; not the Broad Left.

Rank and filism is a different phenomenon. It reflects a real desire among militants to go beyond the CP and its allies, to build in opposition and independently of the Broad Left. But the failure of this current to confront social democracy and its attempt to go

around the bureaucracy has presented it with an instability in its base and other major difficulties.

The problem that Rank and File is seeking an answer to is: What is the best route to the base of the CP in the unions? That's why the Socialist Workers Party — the patron of Rank and File — called for united action with the Communist Party's Liaison Committee in Defence of Trade Unions.

It is a problem that militants at the Socialist Challenge Trade Union Conference also have to deal with. It is only with correct tactics to win unity in action with these forces that a real opposition to the Labour Government's policies can be built.

For this we do not need yet another organisation on the left; the task is not to build an alternative to BL and R&F, but to fight for an alternative to broad leftism and rank and filism.

LOBBY

In the lead-in to the next round of incomes policy, the TUC Congress will be a major focus for the working class. We should begin now to campaign for a lobby of the TUC against Phase Four, with an emphasis on unemployment and productivity dealing. We should call for a 35-hour week now, no productivity dealing, and a programme of public works.

We should try for a joint campaign with the SWP and aim for a joint campaign to involve the base of the CP.

The bureaucracy is now talking about the need for a shorter working week, but this is a fig leaf to cover their real purpose: another phase of incomes policy. The 35-hour week and the 'concern' about unemployment will soon go by the board when the employers dig their heels in.

They will even use it as the basis for productivity deals — 35 hours with no loss of production. We should grab the fig leaf and demand that the union leaders put their money where their mouth is: by organising a real campaign for the 35-hour week, an end to productivity deals, and measures to deal with unemployment.



The state of 35 HOUR THE FU SPARK LE

BEFORE Jim Callaghan goes to the country he will have to make a trip to Brighton. He will be looking for the backing of September's Trade Union congress for a new Phase 4.

Of course he won't call it that. Over six million trade unionists have just voted against it at their summer conference.

Callaghan has to move quickly. His single figure inflation will be back in double figures by Christmas. He will argue that the TUC-Government

alliance conquered inflation and that this alliance — at the expense of working class living standards — must be maintained if the Tories are to be

35 hour week - no

EVEN the fact that unemployment has increased by 300 per cent under this Labour Government is used by Callaghan and Healey as another argument for wage restraint.

They say that the only way to beat unemployment is to hold down wages, so that British exports can compete more favourably in the world market. Profits will rise, more will be invested and one happy day the dole queue will disappear.

Against this argument, union after union has voted for and in some cases, like the post office engineers, taken industrial action for the 35 hour week.

The Labour Government has declared itself against the principle. If we introduce the 35 hour week, they say, costs will rise, exports will get more expensive and...well, we know the rest.

NO EFFECT

But not all bosses are so opposed to the 35 hour week — on certain conditions. The Daily Telegraph would like to see it introduced. So long as workers take a cut in wages and production is kept at the same levels with the same workforce. Of course this would have no effect on unemployment at all. Everyone would have to work harder and the bosses would be laughing all the way to the bank.

That's why we must insist on the 35 hour week without loss of pay (that means an increase in hourly rates of about 12 per cent), and without productivity deal strings attached.

The impact of the 35 hour week introduced on this basis for every worker in the country would virtually end the dole queue overnight.

NO INTENTION

But the Labour Government have no intention of introducing such a measure through Parliament, and block it with incomes policy. So the fight must be on for every wage claim — both locally and nationally — to follow the example of the Ford workers' claim. This puts genuine emphasis on both a wage claim that can make up and safeguard real living standards and the demand for the 35 hour week. Conferences at a local level can synchronise action around such claims as well as drawing in the unemployed with mass action on the streets.

FORWARD PLANS

We must begin to raise the demand for work-sharing without loss of pay, calculating the length of the working week according to the volume of available production. Levels of output could be calculated if workers' demanded access to all the forward plans of firms and industries.

If enterprises cannot guarantee the basic right to work at a decent wage the State must be forced to take the responsibility for providing the finance to safeguard workers' interests. This means workers' exercising control at the point of production to ensure that no jobs are lost through nationalisation and that working conditions are maintained and improved.

The State already intervenes to try and cushion the effect of unemployment — particularly on the youth. Over 300,000 are maintained in employment by the various employment subsidies sponsored by the Government.

Cosmetic as this exercise is, it would be ridiculous to demand that these schemes cease. Full union rights and the union rates have to be established for

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TRADE UNION.....

the unions FOR WEEK: USE TO LEFT UNITY

kept out in the General Election. The trade union leaders will be doing all they can to ensure that the democratic wishes of the mass of trade unionists do not rock Callaghan's election boat. Pressure at the base of the labour movement and the need to put up a left smoke screen on the 12-month rule means that the demand for the 35 hour week will figure prominently in the

TUC proceedings. But once again there will be a catch when the TUC leaders insist that productivity deals must accompany any reduction in the working week. The key themes for a fighting opposition to the TUC-Callaghan manoeuvres must be 'No to Phase 4', 'No to the 12-month rule', and 'For the 35 hour week - No productivity dealing'.

loss of pay

all those working in these schemes. An urgent programme of public works to meet social need and employ the jobless is vital to create jobs for those who are used as a reserve army of labour by the bosses: youth, women and blacks. If there are any doubts about this fact they should be cleared up by the following figures.

Changes in unemployment 1974-77	
Under 25's	+ 307%
Over 50's	+ 52%
Women Workers	+ 310%
Male workers	+ 106%
Ethnic Minorities	+ 307%

All forms of action and mass mobilisation which can involve this massive pool of unemployed in self-organisation are necessary, whether they campaign for trade union membership and rights for the unemployed, 'raids' on factories to explain the case to those employed,

occupations of job centres, organisation around the dole queues or right to work marches.

But we have to learn the lessons of past struggles against unemployment, particularly those in Britain during the late 20's and 30's. The National Unemployed Movement led some massive struggles in the form of sit-downs, marches and rallies, but there was little response from within the ranks of the employed workers.

Without mobilising the power of organised employed workers in the factories, without mobilising the power of the working class against redundancies and closures through occupations and strikes, the economic strength to turn back the grinding wheels of mass unemployment cannot be achieved.

The campaign for the 35 hour week can be the modest beginning of such a mass movement.

Communist Party and trade unions Broad leftovers

FROM THE mid-1960s to the fall of the Heath Government, Britain saw a series of working class struggles unprecedented since the Second World War. The Communist Party was in the forefront of every major battle. Their strategy was: 'unite with the Labour left to win the movement to socialist policies'.

In the unions, from national executives to branch meetings, the CP allied with the Labour lefts, as the 'best fighters' against the right wing, the employers, and the Tories. They succeeded in occupying the space opened up by the left trade union bureaucracy. They mobilised for the demonstrations and strikes against the Industrial Relations Act and supported all wage claims in the period.

But since the election of Labour and the collapse of its left, a lot has changed. CLIVE TURNBULL explains:

The demise of the Broad Left in the AUEW, signalled so graphically by Bob Wright's defeat at the hands of a right-wing nonentity, Terry Duffy, reveals the bankruptcy of the CP's strategy. The old 'lefts' such as Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones had become the champions of the Labour Government's Social Contract, defending an incomes policy, cuts and unemployment.

VERBAL

The CP chose not to break with Scanlon. There was verbal opposition to Labour's austerity measures, even an LCDTU conference in three years, but no action, no independent initiatives, no break with Scanlon. The pattern was set at the special TUC in June 1976 where Ken Gill, the CP leader of the AUEW-TASS, abstained despite his union's decision to oppose further wage controls.

The most recent example has been the Speke closure. There was no real difference between the rationalisation of British Leyland in 1978 and that of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders in 1971. The working class was being asked to pay once again for a capitalist crisis of over-production and declining profits.

LABOUR

Only this time it was a Labour Government trying to save a lame duck. Tony Benn was not available this time to lead a demonstration through Liverpool against closure, as he had done in Glasgow seven years earlier. He was sitting in a Cabinet responsible for the sackings.

And the CP had also moved on, now occupying 'management' positions in this particular subsidiary of Great

Britain Ltd. through participation.

In the last two weeks of January, the Morning Star carried headlines opposing Michael Edwardes' plans to 'carve-up' Leyland. Derek Robinson, chairperson of BLMC combine shop stewards, Longbridge convenor, and CP member, even wrote a feature finishing with the cry: '... you have only one course... - close ranks, unite and fight the plan to carve up Leyland.'

The following day the Morning Star reported that at the Kenilworth meeting where Edwardes' proposals for 'Leyland to be split - 12,500 jobs for the axe' were presented, to 'have voted against would have appeared irresponsible.' And many CP members still wonder why the Morning Star is in a state of crisis!

REDUNDANCY

Acting 'responsibly' Robinson provided only token opposition when the Edwardes axe fell on the Speke No. 2 plant. 'Not a nut, not a bolt will leave the plant', thundered Robinson; but 'responsibly' he remained silent on how this was to be achieved. Nothing was done to mobilise for a fight against the full-time officials who were simply trying to negotiate better redundancy terms.

The Speke struggle highlighted the second major weakness of the CP's industrial strategy - its programme. The call by the BLMC combine shop stewards for opposition to the Speke closure was based solely on trade union solidarity - 'the operation of our long standing resolution on the transfer of work'.

But the Edwardes plan means closure

at Speke, redundancies at Longbridge, speed-ups at Rover, victimisation at Cowley, and so on. Instead of allowing Edwardes to play off one section of workers against another, an alternative to the Speke closure was needed which could unite all Leyland workers in a common struggle - for example, work-sharing with no loss of pay and the fight for the 35 hour week.

TRANSITIONAL

But the CP does not take the needs of the working class as its starting point. Its slogan is: 'Save Leyland'.

The employers want to 'save Leyland' as a source of profits from car components manufacture, with sections hived off to private capital once they have been rationalised at the expense of the working class. Militant workers, let alone socialists, can't participate in such schemes. Our starting point has to be the interests of the working class.

For socialists the day-to-day struggles are linked to the fight against capitalism through a system of transitional demands. These are demands which clearly identify the crisis - inflation, unemployment, etc - with the capitalist class, and offer a solution at the expense of that class.

INDEPENDENT

Such a method is based on developing the independent self-activity of the working class, placing no reliance on the trade union bureaucracy, or the bourgeois state, to carry through the struggle.

The third major weakness of the CP's industrial strategy is its failure to build this independent self-activity of the working class. When was the Broad Left ever mobilised as a campaigning organisation, taking the fight on wages or amalgamation onto the shopfloor? Where have CP members fought to build local committees of the LCDTU in the towns and factories up and down the country? What happened to the action committees called for by the 3,000 delegates of the Labour Movement Assembly in 1976?

REBUILD LEFT

The reaction of militants to the failure of the LCDTU or the Broad Left can't be to cheer, or imagine that some 'pure' alternative launched by revolutionaries can fill the gap. A fight has to be started for a united opposition in the unions on the key issues. This means fighting to rebuild the left in the unions, uniting with those members of the CP or Broad Left who are prepared to struggle.

The CP and Labour left cannot be bypassed or ignored. Despite the setbacks they still command a base out of all proportion to the small forces of the revolutionary left. Winning that base means fighting for united action with the CP and Labour lefts wherever possible, but organising independently the minute they hang back.

This is the political alternative we have to fight for at the Socialist Challenge Trade Union conference on 1 July.

Transport to SCTU conference

MANCHESTER: St Peters Square, 8.30am. Cost £2 Contact Socialist Challenge centre 061-236 2352.

SWANSEA: Contact Glyn Jones, Swansea 460473.

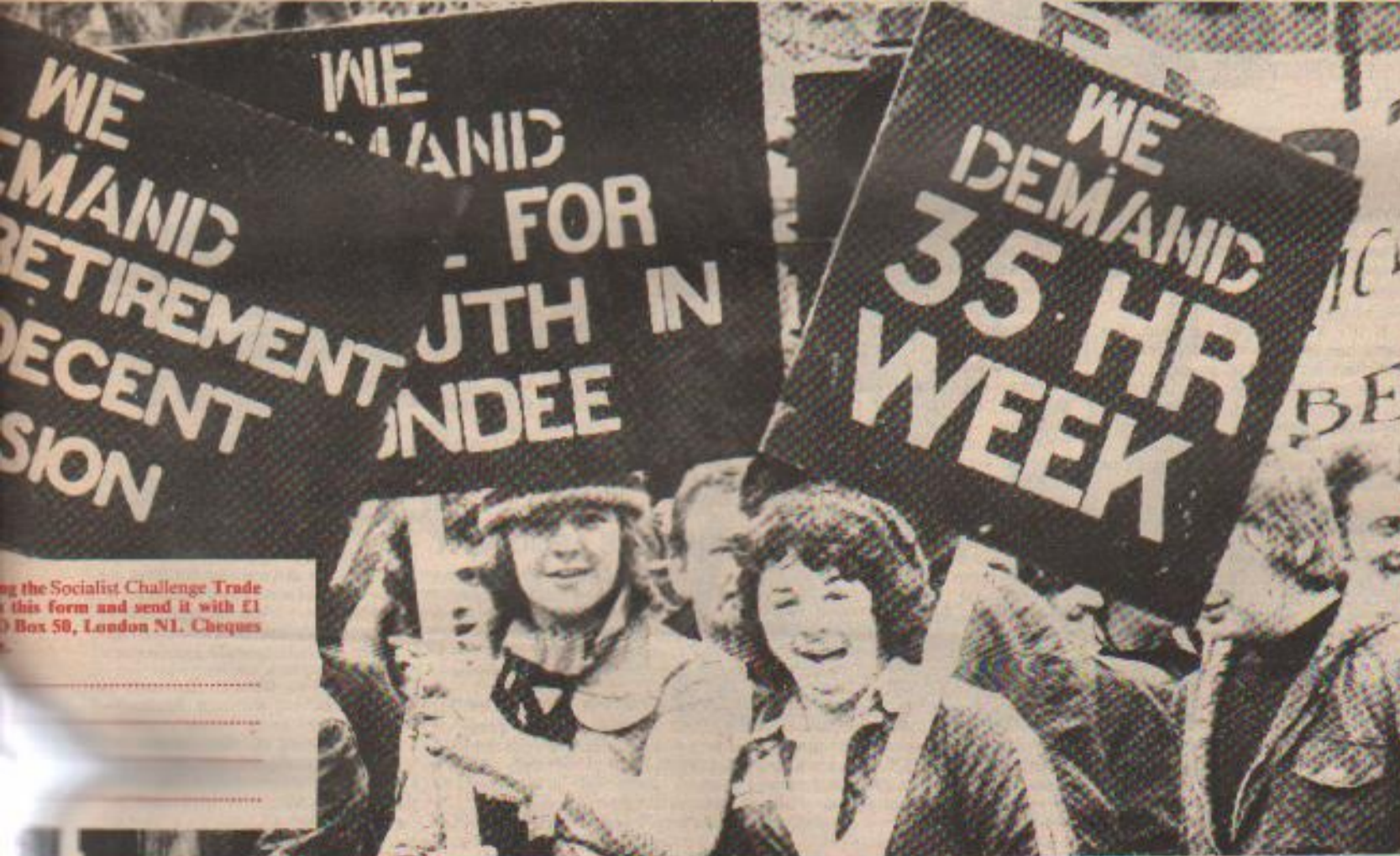
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INTERNATIONAL

French CP women challenge leadership

'Women's equality creates conditions for general progress'

'THE SOLE activity of women's groups is agitation of every kind directed against men in general, and not against the authorities and the big bosses... Their approach, beneath its apparently revolutionary language, leaves the real class questions totally on one side.'

With these words the women's organiser of the French Communist Party (PCF), Madeleine Vincent, appealed last week to party members not to get involved in the organised women's movement.

'Behind these groups', she said, 'one finds the Revolutionary Communist League (the French Trotskyists — eds) and increasingly

the Socialist Party, which seeks the most varied backing for its right-wing political orientation.'

Why this caricature of the women's movement? Because it's becoming a source of inspiration for women in the PCF. And that makes the party leaders feel threatened.

Vincent was replying to a public criticism of the PCF's line by five women members of the party. The latter have announced their intention of publishing a new journal 'addressing itself to all women and establishing a new relationship between Communist and non-Communist women' [details can be obtained from Annie Mejean, 72 rue

du Cardinal-Lemoine, 75005 Paris, France].

As usual, the PCF leadership have tried to make out that the Socialist Party is behind such 'factional activity'. In this case, however, the slander is particularly ludicrous because women in the Socialist Party have themselves just established a 'women's current' to fight against the their leaders' refusal to take the question seriously.

This debate is thus opening up simultaneously in both the mass parties of the French working class. Below we publish the bulk of the contribution by the five PCF women.

IN A SECTION entitled 'the immense work of our party' the Central Committee report of April 1978 refers last of all to the question of women. The activity of our party is estimated there as 'a much greater contribution to the liberation of women than a thousand speeches from those who think to give us lessons on this subject'.

We are told that 'our activity must certainly be enhanced and improved'; as Communist women we have searched in the report for the rudiments of analysis which could assist this enhancing. What a disappointment!...

What does the party propose in this sphere? Speeches, petitions, Central Committee sessions, initiatives which are not unimportant but which are insufficient to challenge and eradicate backward consciousness.

DRAFT LAW

We are referred to 'the draft law for the woman and the family' put forward by the party in the National Assembly, as the decisive element of a massive campaign in favour of women. But is this law known to men and women, Communists or not? In most cases, has its text not stayed tucked away in the drawers of our sections?

Has it been elaborated and discussed by the '220,000 Communist women' and by our male comrades? Who was it presented by? By three women and seventy men (3), that is, by the Communist group in the National Assembly.

Recently, to be sure, we have read some articles in our press about rape... But has the party encouraged mobilisation against sexual violence in all its forms, the daily hazards and anguish of women?

OPENING

The report discreetly refers to what the party did 'on the eve of the elections'. What was there? Two gatherings at the Mutualité. The publicity had once again been very limited. There were very few Communist women there.

However, at the meeting in Jean Christine Buci-Glucksmann and Jean Elleinstein [prominent PCF dissidents — eds.] took part, discussions between Communist and non-Communist women developed which showed a new way of bringing politics to life. It was an opening from which we expect much.

But there was no word of this meeting in l'Humanité [the party daily — eds.]. Hardly any of us knew what had happened there...

Why should all those who first spoke out for, made a commitment to, publicised and fought for contraception and abortion, against rape, and sought after a fashion to link up women's struggle with the class struggle be treated as givers of lessons and reduced to 'meagre cohorts of licensed feminists' (Jacques Frémontier in Humanité Dimanche, 8 June 1975)?...

'NATIONAL INTEREST'

One should recall here the 'firm opposition to birth control' of the projected law put forward by the PCF in 1956. The demographic argument



IMAGES of French women. Anti-rape demonstrators protest at pornography (above), and scene from the Cannes Festival (below).



invoked in this project was taken up again in 1973 in the proposed law on abortion and the interruption of pregnancy in terms of the 'national interest'.

If it's a matter of 'lessons', the party has recognised that they were well-founded without saying so, by changing its position after a 'delay', in trying to adapt itself to the demands raised by the women's liberation movement and feminists while at the same time continuing to run down the latter.

DELAYS

Has the party made progress? Yes. But how? By increasing the number of speeches whose content testifies to a very narrow view of women.

For example, there are very few texts in which the word woman is not immediately associated with the word family. The spirit of the draft law is equally based on this association.

In other respects, we do not deny the necessity of laws and above all of such a law. But what is a law by itself? What does its field of practical application become if it isn't the object of an ideological battle?

Why are there therefore these delays, or these advances so restricted that they themselves become delays? What has become of the PCF's practice of taking the offensive,

which led the Communists to present women in the municipal elections in Malakoff and Villejuif as early as 1925, when they were eligible neither to vote nor to stand? Why is it so difficult for our party today to be in the vanguard of women's struggles?

It finds its origin in a presumption expressed in these terms by Georges Marchais in December 1977: 'No, we are not "feminists" if that means opposing, as is sometimes done, women to men, women workers to male workers.'

Whether Georges Marchais likes it or not, this opposition cannot be reduced to an attempt by certain people, it exists! And each woman sees it daily in the oppression which she undergoes at the hands of men.

To be sure, the party talks about 'specific inequalities' — but in order to merge them immediately into the general struggle against 'big capital' and so erase this specific character. Thus the way in which the class struggle and women's struggle are connected is completely ignored...

The area of women's exploitation prioritised by the PCF is at work. In prioritising this area, the other areas of oppression and exploitation — the couple and the family — are whisked away.

The development of collective social facilities will not by itself do away with the phenomena of oppression which develop in the

family and the couple. These facilities are supposed to 'relieve' women, isn't that rather a strange idea of women, which thus fits in with reformist ideology?...

How, in fact, can we fight for equality without fighting against the way in which male ideology uses women in all areas of its application: in education, the family, work, sexual relations? How can we fight against rape without fighting against the sexual image that men have of women and of themselves, against the violence which men make them undergo?...

NUMBERS ARGUMENT

Finally, what about the position of Communist women inside the party? Is being in the Communist Party enough to declare oneself a feminist? Is the Communist Party as it stands feminist because it is the Communist Party?...

We are told that with our 220,000 women we will be the 'party of women's liberation'. But the numbers argument is no proof: one can be a woman and still a prisoner of 'backward consciousness'...

Women's commissions have been set up in the party (we should note that our leadership, so nitpicking in what concerns the statutes, is here tolerating unconstitutional bodies). But the women in these commissions

who have taken their tasks to heart are often quickly discouraged.

They meet with numerous prohibitions or indifference on the part of the leading bodies, indifference or hostility from the men. That is why these commissions, which could have been the starting point for a new practice, are restricted in their activity.

RESPONSIBILITY

It's also a question, of course, of our own responsibility as Communist women, for not yet having understood what is involved in such a battle.

Nothing is more crucial than the absence of information, which reinforces the lack of mobilisation. Women are in this way isolated from the struggles of other women outside and isolated among themselves inside the party.

A recent example: no information was carried in the party press announcing the protest demonstration against the violence, actually the torture, inflicted on young Heide Kempe at the time of her arrest by the police.

IDEOLOGY

So, what can be done to make up here for what the Central Committee of April 1978 calls 'the delay (of the party) — particularly after 1956 — in clarifying its policy and its theory'?

It's necessary first to look reality in the face, to admit that man's oppression of woman is very real, to take it into account and recognise that the struggle against this oppression, far from dividing the revolutionary movement, can only help it to advance. We should also remember our door-to-door canvassing and the responses of women: 'My husband isn't in!'

Sexist ideology divides, including in the working class; what is more, it turns a good number of women away from the struggle. Women, but also men, have every interest in struggling against this ideology, which aims to make one a superior being over the other. The struggle for socialism must take this in.

NEW FORMS

How can a party which, in the name of rejecting contradictions, doesn't encourage struggle inside its very own structures call itself revolutionary through and through? The women's commissions must take up all aspects of women's struggles.

We must discuss out together the new forms of action and information, and take part in the struggles led by the women's movement — not any longer in an individual and isolated manner, but in a massive way.

Along with Mireille Bertrand (a member of the Political Bureau — eds.), we think that 'specific demands, that is, the struggle for women's equality, do not end up in a search for a static equality, but create on the contrary the conditions for general progress'.

MICHELE GUENON, ANNIE MEJEAN, JULIETTE NICOLAS, PEGGY-INES SULTAN, NICOLE-EDITH THERVENIN.

INTERNATIONAL

Cuba and Ethiopia

Distant cousins once removed

IT WAS a curious episode. The Cubans, strongest backers of the Ethiopian regime, smuggled an exiled oppositionist into their Addis Ababa embassy.

When Negede Gobeze, a leader of the Meison party, was discovered, the Cuban and South Yemeni ambassadors were expelled — at least temporarily.

RICHARD CARVER asks whether this strange incident signals a change in Cuban-Ethiopian relations.

According to the West German daily *Die Welt*, which carried the fullest account of the incident, Soviet, Cuban, and Yemeni officials talked to Negede about the replacement of the ruling Derg with a civilian regime.

The *New York Herald Tribune* confidently repeats this interpretation. In an article marred with factual errors, it asserts that there is an open split between Havana and Addis Ababa.

Another source of the apparent conflict is the situation in Eritrea. Since the Ethiopian victory over the West Somali Liberation Front in the Ogaden, Prime Minister Mengistu has launched a major offensive against Eritrea, which is almost entirely controlled by the various nationalist movements.

GARRISONS

The initial aim was to relieve garrisons in the major cities. The Eritrean capital of Asmara was closed to all land transport for three years. Now the siege has been partially broken.

But beyond that it is difficult to establish the facts. For a time there was even a dispute among the Eritrean forces about whether the offensive was taking place!

In an Amhara-language broadcast monitored in Nairobi Mengistu claimed that Cuban and South Yemeni troops were involved in the offensive — a claim reinforced by the press of the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front.

But in an English transcript of the same speech distributed to journalists in Addis, there was no reference to the Cuban troops.

Some of the Western press has said that the Cubans have refused to play any military part in the Eritrea offensive.

Certainly the whole affair threatens to become politically

embarrassing for Cuba. In the 1960s Cuba and the newly independent South Yemen were the first powers to arm and train the Eritrean guerrillas against the imperial regime of Haile Selassie.

In numerous interviews Fidel Castro has failed to come up with a convincing theoretical reason for opposing the Eritrean struggle. He can only argue that Eritrean self-determination will weaken the unity of the 'Ethiopian revolution'.

In fact, as every previous instance shows, unity is only possible on the basis of free association of the Eritrean and Ethiopian working class.

Castro half-realises this, which at least partly explains his support for the old Soviet plan for a 'Southern Red Sea Confederation', which he unearthed during Mengistu's visit to Havana in April. To Castro's chagrin, Mengistu was unmoved and used the Havana trip to launch one of his more virulent verbal attacks on the Eritreans.

FEDERAL

The Soviet Union also sees this as the right moment to revive the federal plan. The Kremlin must be worried about the extent of conservative Arab aid to the Eritreans.

The Eritrean Liberation Front and Eritrean Popular Liberation Front, which are finally on the verge of fusion, receive extensive Arab backing.

Recently a small right-wing 'third force', confusingly named Eritrean Liberation Front-Popular Liberation Forces, has increased its influence, mainly because of Saudi money.

So, after years of near-genocidal Ethiopian attacks, Eritrea becomes worthy of a 'political solution'.

The Negede Gobeze incident indicates a similar dis-



EPLF training camp in the Sahel.

agreement over the character of the Ethiopian regime as a whole.

The Cubans' discussion of the establishment of a civilian regime ill accords with Castro's public pronouncements about what a marvellous revolutionary Mengistu is.

But here the prime mover is the Soviet Union. Moscow is discovering what Washington found before: that the Derg is an unstable and unpredictable means of controlling the Ethiopian masses.

The weakness of the state apparatus — and the virtual absence of any native capitalist class — meant that the leaders of the anti-feudal revolution were forced to rely on a high degree of mass mobilisation.

The Mengistu faction rode along on this mobilisation — at the same time as viciously repressing its more independent manifestations.

For Soviet purposes the Meison is altogether a more

reliable instrument, since it has a strong base within the local committees — which are the most important form of popular mobilisation.

Moscow has long hoped to transform the Meison into a pro-Soviet Communist Party. That option seemed closed when the Meison went underground last year — in protest at, among other things, the Derg's Eritrean policy.

FACTION

But both the Soviet Union and Cuba have resuscitated this plan, worried by a possible pro-Western turn from Mengistu and encouraged by the pro-Moscow faction within the Derg.

At a recent meeting to discuss the release of imprisoned Meison leader Haile Fida, the Soviets and Cubans were backed by the group led by Lieutenant Legasse Asfaw, who holds the important post

of regulating political-military affairs.

Unfortunately the superficial attraction of a 'political' solution to both the national and military questions is undermined by the small problem that both Cubans and Soviets have the wrong politics!

Their failure to tackle the territorial problem is bound up with a refusal to attack the Ethiopian state. Nothing could be further from the minds of the Moscow bureaucrats than socialist revolution.

Western propaganda about a Soviet master plan for Africa is misplaced, because the strategy of developing spheres of influence within the framework of peaceful co-existence with imperialism leads the Soviets to tail-end the petty bourgeois regimes whom they are trying to influence.

The federal plan for the Horn of Africa is far more concerned with trade routes and Indian Ocean naval bases than with the interests of the masses in the region.

DISTORTED

And what goes for the Soviet Union goes for Cuba too.

Castro may act in a spirit of distorted proletarian internationalism, but he is still wholly dependent on the Soviet Union for sales of Cuba's main export, sugar.

It is inconceivable that major policy decisions such as the twists and turns in Ethiopia could be taken without Soviet backing.

A serious internationalist approach would mean support for the Eritrean struggle and development of independent mass organisation to overthrow the military regime.

And that is light years away from the Cuban strategy.

AFRICA

Zaire: external ball out

Zimbabwe: internal revolt

in struggle

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Polish workers jailed

A HUNGER strike has started in Poland in protest at the jailing of the editor of an independent trade union paper and the simultaneous jailing of two sellers of the newspaper.

The editor of *Robotnik* (The Worker), an unofficial workers' newspaper which has been appearing since the autumn of last year, was arrested on 28 May when 40 political police officers invaded a private flat where a meeting of *Robotnik* supporters was taking place. Wlasek Wyzkowski, the *Robotnik* editor, was jailed for two months.

In a separate incident the following day two *Robotnik*

sellers outside a factory in Lodz were arrested and jailed for one month each. They are Elzbieta Lewinska and Edward Jessian.

The Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign has called for the immediate release of these jailed trade union activists and views the case as a blatant violation of freedom of the press and assembly. The President of the campaign, Phillip Whitehead MP, has written to the Polish authorities calling for the release of those jailed.

Messages of protest should be sent to the Embassy of the Polish People's Republic, 47 Portland Place, London W1.



THE Anti-Apartheid Movement's torchlight vigil on the second anniversary of the Soweto uprising, on 16 June.

Earlier in the evening a solidarity demonstration called by the African Students Union had attracted 200 people. The small impact of the demonstration can be largely put down to the failings of the AAM leadership.

After the ASU had rescheduled its march to Friday to fit in with the AAM, the latter refused to publicise or build for the demonstration. The result was that the march ended up an exclusively African and far left affair — and because of the inconvenient timing a small one at that.

Intercontinental Press combined with Inprecor

A REPORT of a French CP cell's discussion of the recent Central Committee report, by a Trotskyist who was invited to take part, is featured in the latest issue of *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor* (Vol. 16, No. 24).

Also in this issue: Joseph Hansen discusses the differences between Castro and Mengistu over Eritrea; F. L. Dery reports on the Rouge festival in Paris; Jon Britton examines Carter's austerity

policy; and the election programme of the Peruvian Trotskyists is reprinted.

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

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INTERNATIONAL

Argentina Swedish holiday snaps embarrass junta

THE BEST teams in the World Cup have been France and Sweden.

True, neither of them qualified for the second stage. But the World Cup is about a lot more than football.

The French team went to Argentina more or less committed to trying to do something about the political prisoners — particularly those who are French citizens or of dual nationality.

They were made aware of the problem largely through the efforts of the boycott campaign. This had a tremendous impact. An opinion poll in France just before the team left showed 50

per cent in favour of such an initiative by the players.

And it produced results. At the time of writing it was reported that a number of the 21 French citizens held in Videla's prisons had already been released.

SILENT

The Swedish team also distinguished themselves. When they turned up in May Square in Buenos Aires on the afternoon of Thursday 8 June, they looked as if they were just out on a tourist trip. But their cameras weren't aimed at the normal 'sights'.

Every Thursday afternoon a very different sight can be seen — perhaps the most moving in Argentina today. That is when the mothers, wives and other relatives of those who have 'disappeared' gather in a silent

demonstration.

Usually they are rapidly dispersed by police. But not this time — not under the gaze of the Swedish footballers, a Swedish TV team, and a number of other journalists also in the know.

As the police dithered, those whom the junta calls the 'madwomen of May Square' took heart. They began to pour out their stories to any passers-by who would listen — even to the police.

Finally, still further encouraged by the continued presence of these foreign observers, they marched in procession down one of the busiest streets in Buenos Aires before dispersing. Only then were the police able to step in and make a few arrests.

So, as the sorry episode of this World Cup draws to a close, we can at least say: well played, France and Sweden!



Steel hard Helmut

ONE PERSON who believes in mixing politics and sport is the German manager, Helmut Schoen.

In 1936 he was a prominent player in German football at a time when Hitler — like Videla today — was using sport to whitewash the image of his regime. Our photo shows his team (Schoen is third from the right) giving the Nazi salute.

Today it has been revealed that Schoen welcomed a notorious Nazi war ace to a secret training session of the German team in Argentina. Ex-colonel Hans-Ulrich Rudel, who does not pretend to have modified his views, was shown around while journalists and former World Cup player Guenter Netzer were barred from entry.

The president of the West

German Football Federation defended Rudel's visit. He claimed that this Nazi was someone 'with full rights' like every other West German.

Tell that to the German citizens who have been reported missing in Argentina. But the Federation has refused to raise their case with the junta. That, after all, would be mixing politics and sport!

Spanish democratic rights



Thought police hit rush hour

THE old ways die hard in post-Franco Spain. Several weeks ago morning rush hour travellers on the Barcelona metro were surprised to see the newspaper kiosks surrounded by police. They were carefully ripping out one particular article from every copy of the magazine 'Interviú'. TERESA BARRAL explains why.

The article was on Antonio Roson, the senior member of a powerful Galician family renowned for its brutal role in the civil war and its later intimate involvement with the Franco regime.

Interviú had documented Roson's responsibility, as military commander in parts of Galicia, for the murder and torture of Republican sympathisers, his ruthless dominance of local political life after the war, and the extent of his family's power — one brother is now Civil Governor of Madrid, another was Civil Governor of Tenerife.

Tipped off on the contents of the article, Roson had the magazine seized by the police — without bothering about the formalities of court action.

The seizure of Interviú is the latest incident in the struggle for the defence of 'liberty of

expression'.

The phrase was born in April when the cast of Els Joglars, a Catalan theatre group, were put on trial before a military court, for alleged 'insults to the army' in a play.

Four of the cast received two years each in gaol for this 'crime'; two others escaped to France before the trial and now have the distinction of being the first post-Franco political exiles.

At about the same time the editorial body of Saldá, a left-wing magazine, was imprisoned for a short period for an article containing 'insults to the Monarchy'.

Then came a steady string of actions against other left groups and papers. In the latest case *Combate*, the paper of the Fourth International, has been the victim of a further two actions taken by the military —

for 'slights against the Armed Forces'.

Two comrades are already in 'provisional liberty', on heavy bail, for earlier cases.

The campaign to suppress the left press and cultural groups is only part of a broader right-wing offensive. These powers of censorship reveal the persistence of legislation and power structures from the Franco era.

SENSITIVE

In both the Els Joglars and Roson cases the suppressions were aimed at events that happened during the dictatorship. The history of those years is a sensitive area for many of those currently in power.

Roson is a case in point. The local political godfather has re-emerged in democratic clothes not only as a deputy in the new elected parliament but also as President of the Autonomous Government of Galicia.

For the mass of the population an alternative history of those years is vitally necessary; for an understanding of their

past and their present which can give a guide to action in the present confused political situation.

Management tried to pretend they were civilians. But Patrick and Moise weren't taken in. They refused to touch the luggage and were sacked on the spot.

Said Moise: 'We'd been made aware of the situation in Argentina by the papers, through the actions of the boycott campaign. We thought it was a good opportunity to act.'

The next night their mate André was on duty. About midnight he was called to open the door for a client who had forgotten his key. Who should it be but the Argentinian captain Oliva!

André turned round and went back downstairs. 'I'm not opening the door to any of these officers', he told the receptionist. That was his job gone too.

THREE LIFT attendants have been sacked at the Maurice Hotel in Paris for refusing to carry the bags of a military delegation from Argentina!

André was on duty. About midnight he was called to open the door for a client who had forgotten his key. Who should it be but the Argentinian captain Oliva!

André turned round and went back downstairs. 'I'm not opening the door to any of these officers', he told the receptionist. That was his job gone too.

The affair caused quite a hubbub. Socialist Party leader Francois Mitterrand even insisted on shaking hands with the three.

But for Mitterrand it was just a gesture. In response to the situation in Argentina he has done precious little except veto the Socialist Party's support for the boycott campaign.

Patrick, Moise and André put their jobs on the line for the sake of their brothers and sisters in Argentina. Let the leaders of the Socialist 'International' hide their faces in shame.

MINORITY

Only a small minority of Spaniards regularly read newspapers and magazines (where the left has a small but important presence).

For many people, especially in the rural areas, TV is the sole source of news and opinion.

In the two and a half years since Franco's death his name has scarcely appeared on the small screen, nor have references to those 40 years; for TV watchers the man and his regime might not have existed.

Radio Television Espanol continues to be the 'best TV network in Spain': incompetent and corrupt at some levels but unchanging, centrally and tightly controlled at others.

The Government has defended bitterly its privileged access and control. A 'control commission' set up with parliamentary representation was packed, with half its members appointed directly by the President, Suarez.



MARIA MAEZTU — one of the imprisoned Els Joglars theatre group.

So the struggle for the defence of liberty of expression is important and complex. The present frontal assaults on the left are the most visible aspects of a much broader problem.

Unfortunately even at the elementary level of defence of those now under attack, both the main left opposition parties, the Socialists (PSOE) and Communists (PCE), have refused to wage more than a verbal fight.

Worse still they actively defused the campaign that was growing amongst student and cultural groups and many left organisations around Els Joglars. For the PCE and the PSOE the peak of their

campaign came with a parliamentary debate on Els Joglars and the use of military law against civilians.

Their triumph was the extraction from the Minister of Culture of a reassuring statement. The Barcelona paper *Mundo Diario* quoted it the next day: 'There will be no more Joglars'.

Scarcely a week later the same paper was having to report that 'three members of the group Onomatopéya are to appear before the Juzgado Militar... for a comic strip containing insults to the army... the code of Military Justice which allowed the trial of Els Joglars is still in operation'.

BEFORE THE industrial revolution, most work was done in or around the home; the household was an economic unit. But the factory system eliminated many of the productive functions of the family. Work was split from family life, threatening its disruption.

This is why the early working class defended child labour. It preserved the traditional ties between children and their parents, particularly with their fathers who taught them a skill.

At the beginning of this century a section of the working class was still opposed to ending child labour, but for different reasons... the need for the wages. The 1902 Trades Union Congress carried the Gasworkers' Union resolution to prohibit the employment of children under 15 by 535,000 votes to 514,000.

As Jack London comments in *The People of the Abyss*: 'When 514,000 workers oppose a resolution prohibiting child labour under fifteen, it is evident that a less-than-living wage is being paid to an immense number of the adult workers of the country.'

SEXUALITY

Taking children out of murderous conditions in mills, potteries and mines was a necessary defence against capitalist exploitation, but in itself this is not a socialist solution to the issue of child labour.

A socialist analysis of this question stems from Charles Fourier and Robert Owen at the beginning of the 19th century. Both influenced Marx, and their ideas were taken up by William Morris.

Fourier saw the necessity of integrating children into the productive process: 'Education is perverted if, from the age of about two when he [or she — eds.] takes his very first steps, the child does not spontaneously devote himself to productive work.' The example he gives is 'the shelling and sorting of peas'!

The analysis of Fourier and other 19th century writers clearly needs to be developed to apply to our present technological society and the possibilities of its socialist transformation.

A crucial issue which is even less a part of socialist thinking is children's sexuality, though the work of Wilhelm Reich is a notable exception. Reich's contribution was to stress the positive aspects of children's sexuality and how they are suppressed in a capitalist society.

In *The Sexual Revolution* Reich gives an interesting account of the children's home founded in August 1921 by the Moscow psychoanalyst Vera Schmidt. The teachers were told there were to be no punishments, no praise or blame, no violent demonstrations of affection. Masturbation and sexual curiosity were not forbidden. Toilet training was not forced. The authorities withdrew financial support from the home, and from April 1922 it was provided with food and coal by the German and Russian miners' unions. Nevertheless it was eventually forced to close. Reich concluded: 'The work of Vera Schmidt was the first attempt in the history of education to give the theory of infantile sexuality a practical content. As such, it is of historical importance. Undoubtedly, Schmidt was the first educator who, purely intuitively, grasped the necessity as well as the nature of the alteration of human structure in a practical manner.'

BEMOANS

'And, as always in the course of the sexual revolution, authorities, "scientists", psychologists and established educators paved the way for regression and defeat, while trade unionists, without any theoretical knowledge, showed in a practical way that they had grasped the full importance of the problem.'

To this must be added the political position of children. Children in our society are usually seen as inferior or incomplete beings in much the same way as women are, a point which Shulamith Firestone emphasises in her *Dialectic of Sex*:

'Women and children are always mentioned in the same breath ("Women and children to the fore!") The special tie women have with children is recognised by everyone. I submit, however, that the

Socialist Childhood

CHILDHOOD has received little attention from socialists, with the exception historically of the question of child labour and its elimination. But the problem of childhood and children for socialists is far more complex than that.

MARTIN HOYLES and **ESTHER SARAGA** look at some of the problems raised and review a recent issue of *Humpty Dumpty*, a radical psychology magazine, which dealt with childhood and child care.



nature of this bond is no more than shared oppression.

'And that moreover this oppression is intertwined and mutually reinforcing in such complex ways that we will be unable to speak of the liberation of women without discussing the liberation of children and vice versa.'

A similar parallel can also be drawn with attitudes to the working class. In *A Kestrel for a Knave*, written by Barry Hines in 1968, the headmaster makes a speech to the boys he is caning.

He bemoans the lack of respect in young people today compared to the past:

'They look it then, but not now, not in the day of the common man, when every boy quotes his rights, and shouts off home for his father as soon as I look at him.'

Compare Matthew Arnold's fear of the assertion of working class rights in 1869:

'More and more this man and that man, and this and that body of men, all over the country, are beginning to assert and put in practice an Englishman's right to do what he likes: his right to march where he likes, meet where he likes, enter where he likes, hoot as he likes, threaten as he likes, smash as he likes. All this, I say, tends to anarchy.'

PROTECTION

A number of adults have been concerned about the rights of children. Jean Valles, after being exiled for his involvement in the Paris

Commune, attempted to found a league for the protection of the rights of children and dedicated his novel *L'Enfant* to all oppressed children.

The National Council for Civil Liberties has produced a pamphlet called *Rights of Children* and there is a book *Children's Rights* with contributions by writers such as Leila Berg, Michael Duane, and A. S. Neill.

On the whole writers involved in this issue come from the libertarian or anarchist tradition. Unfortunately, socialists have often ignored the subject. The result is that children's rights often look suspiciously like bourgeois rights.

ATTEMPT

For instance, John Holt in *Escape from Childhood* talks about a child's right to own, buy and sell property, to borrow money, establish credit, sign contracts etc. He is not concerned about what sort of social forces are necessary to make an improvement in children's position. He thinks the changes he proposes could take place in any 'reasonably intelligent, honest, kindly, and humane country'.

Clearly socialist proposals on the position of children can only take place in a socialist society, and even then they are far from inevitable in the same way as women's emancipation is not inevitable.

At the moment, however, socialist proposals have not been worked out and this is why the recent issue of *Humpty Dumpty* on 'Child Care' (*Radical Psychology Magazine* No.9) is to be welcomed — as an attempt to

develop further our analysis of childhood from a 'feminist-socialist perspective'.

It begins by looking at the changing ideologies of childcare in the last 50 years — Truby King, Spock, Bowlby — and Lee Comer concludes that there is 'no common sense and there are no universal truths about child rearing'. She points to the contrasting attitudes to children in agricultural as compared to industrial societies.

This line of argument is developed in the second article 'Who's Deprived?', by reference to research done in Zambia which shows up the 'ethnocentrism of theories of intellectual development'.

These two perspectives — historical and cross-cultural — are the necessary ones to begin the analysis. Historically we need to go back further, at least to the 17th century, to chart the changing attitudes to childhood of the rising bourgeoisie and the system of schooling they initiated which has become such a dominant force in shaping modern childhood.

IDEOLOGIES

Also important is the advance of medicine which affected infant mortality and hence attitudes to children. For example, as late as the end of the 19th century Trotsky describes how he was one of eight children:

'Four died in infancy, of diphtheria and of scarlet fever, deaths almost as unnoticed as was the life of those who survived. The land, the cattle, the

poultry, the mill, took all my parents' time; there was none left for us.'

The changing ideologies of child care must clearly be related to the history of childhood itself. Child psychology is a 20th century phenomenon, the psychologists having taken over as the 'experts' from the medical authorities, who were themselves preceded by the religious authorities. Experts like Mia Kellmer Pringle (the director of the National Children's Bureau, who believes that the State should pay women to stay at home with young children) are extremely powerful, both in the formulation of social policy and their popularisation in the media.

TRAP

A rejection of particular experts can lead too easily to the view that parents know best, or that it's all a matter of 'common sense'. This view ignores the fact that parents do seek advice, and that 'child care' manuals are extremely widely sold and read.

In 'Adults with children' two workers with children try to give advice on the basis of general principles. These are presented in a vacuum. Why should we accept their ideas rather than Pringles? Any principles of child care must reflect a theory of childhood and child development, hence the difficulty of developing alternative principles.

A major problem for socialists is to avoid seeing children as a completely separate group in society with no relationship at all to adults. Or to lose the dimension of childhood which is precisely to do with growing into adulthood. This is a trap often fallen into by those advocating children's rights.

On the other hand behaviourism must also be avoided. Thinking that you can simply condition children to be non-sexist for example.

This latter issue is sensitively explored in an article called 'Gender rules, OK?':

'My problem, as a feminist parent, is twofold: What is the nature of sex-identity? In the society in which I live, how can I confirm my child's sex identity and at the same time struggle against the behaviour patterns traditionally seen as appropriate to this sex identity?'

The author gives fascinating examples of how complex a question this is and asks finally:

'How can we encourage non-sexism without being authoritarian, without thwarting our children's developing personality and autonomy?'

FUTURE

Two articles discuss the vital question of day care provision. 'Who Minds State Care' critically examines the different forms of state provision, child minding, which is the most widely used, day care (organised under Social Services departments) and nursery education (organised by Education Departments).

The author points out that the state has no overall child care policy. But similarly there is no organised radical dialogue about child care. 'For most child care workers the debate is still at an extremely low level'. That there is likely to be a very positive response to such organised discussion is indicated by the recent meeting of trainee nursery nurses at which hundreds of students turned up.

The article on the Defoe Day Care Centre points to the importance of nursery workers in different sectors getting together, particularly to fight cuts.

The editors of *Humpty Dumpty* list areas they wish to be examined in future issues — political priorities for left-groups around child care, men's role in child care, children's sexuality, children in full-time state care, psychological 'wisdom' about child care, and the ideology of the family.

To this could be added children's collective political action at school, siblings, gangs, youth culture, the National Union of School Students. In other words, seeing children as subjects and not just objects of study, and connected with this the importance of hearing children's voices first-hand, rather than transmitted by adults.

Humpty Dumpty is 45p per issue and subscriptions are £2. Back issues include No. 5 (Prisons/subnormality) 15p; 6/7 (Mental illness), 30p. From: *Humpty Dumpty*, 5 St John's Terrace, Belle Vue Road, Leeds 3.

Three views on anti-racist conference...

1

LIKE MANY other organisations, we sent delegates to the Anti-Racist, Anti-Fascist Coordinating Committee conference. It is true that many important decisions were taken, including a favourable attitude to the Anti-Nazi League, but many problems remain unsolved.

The conference did not organise workshops as part of the plan. This meant that aspects of fascism that many delegates wished to discuss were ignored, leading to unbearable tensions in the conference which in turn led to delegates withdrawing.

Further, the conference lacked clear action perspectives and only matters of internal organisation were resolved. Even here a significant setback occurred because the two black delegates standing for election to the co-ordinating committee withdrew as they did not think ARAFCC offered anything for the black community.

This, sadly, is generally true. In this respect ARAFCC must be realistic and realise that as yet it only represents a good part of the anti-fascist force and even combined with the ANL would not be the anti-fascist force. To us this is the most striking thing to come out of the conference.

ANL GROUP, (Forest Hill, Sydenham and Peage)

2

ON 3-4 JUNE the first national anti-racist, anti-fascist conference was held. The organisers operated on an extremely open basis and some useful discussion took place.

Unfortunately a lot of antagonism was also generated and at the end of Sunday's session some delegates, particularly blacks, gays, and women from the WARF movement, dissociated themselves from the structure set up by conference.

Leamington Anti-Racist Anti-Fascist Committee (LARAFC) is extremely concerned that the present disagreements should not be allowed to permanently prevent the unification of the anti-racist, anti-fascist movement. For our part we wish to emphasise our support for the new national co-ordinating committee — due to be set up based on regional bodies.

We are glad that the conference rejected the advice of sectarians and resolved to work with the Anti-Nazi League. But for the present we think that there is a great need for a separate body which can raise such issues as the Immigration Acts, sexism and racist



violence. Existing groups can find a voice through such a structure.

A premature entry into the ANL would prevent our movement making a distinctive contribution — trying to assess the experience of the last few years' work should be the major aim of the National Committee once established.

Some comrades are concerned with the sexist appeal of fascism. Others feel that 'anti-racism' rather than Nazi-bashing is the answer. Some people think that the policy of physical confrontation of the NF is being watered down by ANL members anxious for respectability.

Hopefully a national body should be able to encompass all shades of opinion. In the immediate future it could help to co-ordinate an intervention into the forthcoming ANL conference.

It would be useful to point to the suggested minimum programme passed by the June conference, which indicated how locally to implement general positions of principle (such as opposition to immigration controls). The local committees could help to enliven a debate at the ANL conference by utilising their experiences. A democratic national committee would also be an example for the ANL to follow.

Finally approaches of reconciliation must be made to the disaffected comrades — neither side must be allowed to parade on their high horses.

ANTI-RACIST, ANTI-FASCIST COMMITTEE (Leamington)

3

DAVY JONES'S report of the ARAFCC conference (8 June) was far too diplomatic for the anti-racist movement's good.

The purpose of this conference was clear — to unify and consolidate part of a national anti-racist leadership. Yet many delegates seemed oblivious to the opportunity. Acting as if the entire movement were present in the hall, they made 'position' statements like hunger rioters scrambling for a piece of the anti-racist cake.

This behaviour was sectarian, not in itself, but in its blinkered view of how to build a mass movement. The idea that this can be done on full revolutionary positions leads in practice to the movement's disintegration.

While it's true that both sexism and racism divide the working class, it's self-defeating to imagine they will

both be defeated by a single blow, as the idea of an anti-racist/anti-sexist campaign implies.

There's bound to be tension in trying to maintain the unity of the WLM, fighting sexism and building a united anti-racist campaign, because the latter will reflect sexism as it gets implanted in the labour movement. But we should all be aware that the time-honoured activity of exploding contradictions does not always have positive results.

So we must ask these comrades: where do you think the trades council delegates went when they walked out? To raise our demands in the unions, the factories — their families? Or back to the reformist leaders who we know spell ultimate disaster? To all but the wilfully blind, the answer is obvious.

A collective discussion now can create a united campaign which neither incorporates nor submerges all political differences; but this will only happen if we eradicate the practice of using democracy to generate quite such unproductive polarisation — be it in a meeting, or between revolutionary organisations.

Splitting peas, is, after all, a mug's game.

JOHN THACKARA (North London)

...and two on Afghanistan

1

IN HIS article (8 June) on the recent leftist coup in Iran's eastern neighbour, Afghanistan, Tariq Ali pointed out how this event is bound to bring nothing but trouble for the Shah and his repressive regime. This is excellent news.

But what is absolutely incredible about Tariq's piece is the way in which he played down Soviet involvement in Afghanistan. Instead he waxed lyrical about the Afghan revolution perhaps proving 'yet again the originality of the historical process'.

Is he serious? Doesn't he realise: That Afghanistan is a landlocked country bordering the Soviet Union, its main economic supplier and

customer. That the Soviet Union provides the Afghan army with most of its weaponry — and most of the uniformed coup leaders were Moscow-trained. That even before the revolution, Afghanistan under the old autocracy was effectively within the Soviet sphere of influence.

With the Soviet Union demonstrating its strength all over Africa, does Tariq really believe that the Kremlin leaders will allow a nationally independent Marxist regime to emerge on the Soviet doorstep?

This letter may sound pretty pessimistic. But socialists must try to be realistic about the chances of revolutionary success in countries where strong countervailing influences operate from within and without.

A good illustration of where realism has been lacking is revolutionary Portugal. During 1975 many European socialists were carried away in delight, only to be stopped dead in their tracks by the November 1975 counter-coup.

In a revolutionary situation there are several general lessons applicable in a wide variety of situations, lessons which possess more validity than the local traditions of the particular country. However, the actual mechanisms for seizing, consolidating, and wielding state power have not been seriously looked into since Lenin's time.

Situations such as that of the Portuguese revolution of 1975 should be studied as closely as the Bolshevik seizure of power in order to more clearly identify what can go wrong in a national revolutionary situation. Obviously Tariq and the left generally have not done this, or he would not have headed his article: 'Another Portugal — on the Shah's Doorstep'.

To forget about the eventual debacle and to focus instead on the earlier optimistic phase of the revolution is to increase the chance of the disastrous Portuguese scenario re-occurring elsewhere in the near future.

TOMMY GALLAGHER (Manchester)

2

TARIQ ALI'S article on Afghanistan (8 June) did not, I think, pose the problems involved in terms of Marxist analysis.

The regime defines itself as 'national democratic'. We have heard such claims from Communist parties

before — it means reformism in a backward country while attempting to maintain a capitalist economy, even to develop it.

But the implications of this policy for a country like Afghanistan are explosive. For example, *The Guardian* reported that the new regime has frozen prices while granting wage rises as high as 40 per cent. In the absence of a massive rise in the productivity of labour, which could only be got by attacking the working class, this means that capitalists will withdraw their commodities from the market.

The regime is trying to meet demand by releasing goods held in bond by the previous regime for tax evasion. But such makeshift solutions cannot last long. Then we will hear cries of 'sabotage' from the regime and accusations of 'Communist mismanagement' from its enemies.

All this will be taking place together with resistance by the landowners to land reform, of religious conservatives to (bourgeois) equality for women, not to mention the 'nourad issue'.

The regime must either retreat and be overthrown by imperialist-backed reaction or mobilise the masses to carry out the reforms, nationalise the private capitalist sector (such as it exists) and attempt to plan the economy with the aid of the neighbouring Soviet Union. This means dropping the pretence of 'national democratic revolution' and facing the open wrath of the imperialist powers and their reactionary allies in the region.

The whole question carries interesting implications not only for Afghanistan and its neighbours but for the whole of Soviet/imperialist relations. It might clarify the Soviet Union's world strategy.

No wonder Carter has been playing it cool. While going over to a verbal offensive on Korea, Angola, and Ethiopia, there has been no word of Afghanistan — yet it can't be far from the thoughts of US and British strategists.

LIONEL HOLLEY (Bath)

In order to encourage as wide a range of contributions as possible, the length of letters printed will normally be kept down to 400 words. All letters may be cut at the Editor's discretion.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE EVENTS

NORTH WEST

WARRINGTON Socialist Challenge group meets regularly. Ring Manchester Socialist Challenge offices for details: 061-238 2352

GREATER MANCHESTER Socialist Challenge School students who support the paper and would like to get involved in anti-fascist activity please contact Chris 273 5947 (daytime), or Steve 225 4287 (evening), or write to Manchester SC Centre, c/o 14 Piccadilly.

PRESTON Socialist Challenge supporters can be contacted by ringing Preston 546 6.

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

SOUTH MANCHESTER Socialist Challenge group meets every other Thursday at the Albert Inn, off Wilmslow Rd. Help sell Socialist Challenge between 11.30am and 1pm at Moss Side shopping centre or Longsight Market, Dickenson Rd. Further information from 061-235 2352.

LONDON

HARROW Socialist Challenge sup-

porters meet regularly. Details from PO Box 50, London N1 3PX.

GREENWICH, LEWISHAM Socialist Challenge group meets fortnightly. Details from Ray on 01-659 1187.

NEWHAM Socialist Challenge Forum meets regularly. Details from PO Box 50, London N1.

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

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

HACKNEY Socialist Challenge supporters meet fortnightly on Wednesdays at the Britannia Pub, Mare St., 7.30pm. Next meeting, 5 July. Why we're marching for political status for Irish prisoners on 9 July.

CAMDEN Socialist Challenge supporters sell papers every Saturday at Inverness St market in Camden Town from 11-3pm. Join us every Saturday 12-3 on the Gainers' picket at the Oxford Circus branch, and on Mondays at the EGA picket!

CAMDEN Socialist Challenge groups meet on 5 July with Dave Bailey on Workers' control. Venue from New on 01-359-8258.

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

ISLINGTON Socialist Challenge Supporters Group meeting on 28th June at 8.00pm in the Homingford Arms, Offord Road, N1. Subject is 'Imperialism and Zaire'.

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

YORKSHIRE

YORK Socialist Challenge is on sale at the York Community Bookshop, 73 Wakegate or from sellers on Thursdays (12.30-1.45) at York University, Vanbrugh College; Saturdays (11.30-3.30) at Coney Square. **YORK Socialist Challenge** group produces a regular local news bulletin. Any enquiries about the group or the bulletin to SO, 210 43, Grosvenor Terrace, York.

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

NORTH EAST

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

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

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

NEWCASTLE Socialist Challenge local supporters are active! If you want to join them, phone Pete on 06321 29057.

SOUTH WEST

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

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

SCOTLAND

For information about the paper or its supporters' activities throughout Scotland contact Socialist Challenge Books, 64 Queen St., Glasgow. Open Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday afternoons. Phone for alternative arrangements: 021-7481. Wide range of Fourth International publications.

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

DUNDEE Information about Socialist Challenge address from 64 Queen St., Glasgow. Join in SC sales outside Bells Corner at Halfon Street each Saturday 11am-2pm.

SOUTH EAST

COLCHESTER Socialist Challenge supporters sell the paper every Saturday outside Gaters from 10.45am-1pm. Further information or local activities from Mike, 11 Angles Rd, Wivenhoe.

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

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

BRIGHTON Socialist Challenge jumble sale, Resource Centre, North Road, Brighton, Sunday 24 June, 10-3pm.

WALES

CARDIFF Socialist Challenge Forum meets next on Friday, 7 July, at the Four Elms Pub, Elm Street — off the Newport Road.

MIDLANDS

For details of activities at local supporters throughout the Midlands contact the Socialist Challenge Centre, 78b Digbeth High Street, Birmingham, 021-643 9209.

BIRMINGHAM Socialist Challenge forum: 'Which Road to Socialism?' Sowerby Brian Heon, 7.30pm, 22 June at 78b Digbeth. Open to all supporters of the paper.

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

UNDER REVIEW

Dylan concert Hurtling back at five times the power

AS CAPITAL Radio DJ Roger Scott lamented shortly before the first night of Bob Dylan's European tour: 'It's tough going to see a living legend'.

What with the public relations, the scramble for tickets, the venue — Earls Court is like the inside of a concrete supertanker — everything seemed set for a Grade A anti-climax. QUO MO JO was there.

This reviewer, for one, was more concerned with thinking up perceptive things to say about the middle-age of the '60s generation than with enjoying a concert.

In the event, Dylan smashed preconceived ideas and reservations before the first number was half way through.

Nostalgia keeled over and died as Dylan's new band was revealed as a tight and powerful rock ensemble: 11 musicians, including electric organ and piano, saxophone, three women vocalists and two drummers.

Both opening numbers were from Dylan's new album *Legal Streets*, and were as different from the 'folk poetry' of early Dylan as the ANL is from CND.

Moving into an amazing version of 'Mr Tambourine Man' — half-way through before the front-row stalls cheered a welcome — it became clear that an extraordinarily successful transformation of old music into new was taking place.

Words remained the same, but the emphasis changed to spotlight lines that had been hidden for years.

OPTIMISTIC

'Tangled Up in Blue', slowed down, gave us the now optimistic line: 'All those people, they're an illusion to me now' — Dylan saying goodbye once and for all to the vegetarian, tea-cosy-hat generation.

In the mid-'60s Dylan's music acted as a catalyst for a generation of western youth. His music was powerful precisely because of its immediacy, spontaneity, and its ability to capture the rhythms of rebellion.

Nobody ever claimed he was a great musical technician — his success was a result of a sensitivity to the spirit of the times.

'GURU'

Now the times are different. Dylan told a journalist recently: 'If you're smart, you just gotta keep going, you're just not going to stand still'.

You can, of course, regard this as a basic tenet of successful show business — Dylan is no patron saint dedicating his life to the revolution; but you can also recognise here the creativity and dynamism which seemed, during the early '70s, to have been lost from our music.

The new version of 'Maggie's Farm' was a good example. It



was as if Dylan had climbed back into the heart of his old music and come hurtling out again at five times the speed and power. A dramatic presentation of 'It's alright Ma' was built around a series of crescendos at the chorus and a rock riff that nearly blew the

song apart.

Then we had a version of 'We shall be released', anthem of the love generation, which ended with a self-parody — the 'guru of the new consciousness' actually making fun of himself!

There was also the anti-imperialist 'Signor' — over-

turning tables, disconnecting cables' — to show that while there may be no Vietnam, Dylan's horizons are still wider than his own eyebrows.

Here, perhaps, was the key to the concert's success. It's always enjoyable to see and hear good new rock music — there's little enough around — but Dylan seems to have re-emerged from the desert of 'music about myself' through which his parched fans have trudged for nearly ten years (who, today, would dare admit to having a Leonard Cohen record in their rack?).

HEALTHY

To make new music out of old, when both old and new are great, is surely evidence of a healthy and dynamic relationship with the history of the period itself.

Much has been said about the significance of the new wave music at the centre of the ANL Carnival — well, people have said it was significant at least.

Comparative criticism is seldom fruitful, and the last thing we want now is a 'my decade's better than your's' debate, but the contrast between the new Dylan and the new wave is going to be fascinating to observe.

RECYCLED

For the complexity of a savagely recycled oldie, 'Don't Think Twice It's Alright' in reggae, or 'Maggie's Farm' at 50mph, would seem to leave more openings to the future than new wave music which draws much of its power from its novelty, and from its audience's lack of preconceptions (whose age, of course, is quite immaterial).

We'll see. For now, it's on with the 'Fight Racism' badge and off to see Eric Clapton.

Alternative theatre Why the left is losing out

One of the first statements put out by the Tories last month when they gained control of Wandsworth council in South London was their intention to get rid of Battersea Arts Centre.

The centre, the Tories announced, was serving up left-wing propaganda in the guise of theatre and other arts. MARGARET FORD, a member of Pirate Jenny, writes on the problems facing political theatre groups.

Unfortunately, the right wing understands the importance of the cultural backup to preserving the capitalist status quo in a way that the left rarely appreciates, let alone contests.

The Arts Council, in this year's grant allocations, cut several socialist theatre groups, including May Day and Recreation Ground.

North West Spanner in Manchester had a tough fight against Tory manoeuvres to eliminate them.

The pressure of socialist theatre groups to maintain a

high standard of work as well as a large number of performances is constantly increasing, without any corresponding increase in subsidy.

The Arts Council argues that the theatre groups it subsidises have artistic freedom, which is supposed to include the freedom to create and maybe fail.

FAILURE

But the reality is that failure of any kind by any of the groups means the end of subsidy, which is usually greeted with delight by the right and comments from the left to the effect that 'their last production wasn't that good anyway'.

Socialist theatre groups desperately need the support of other socialists. This support can by all means be critical, but most importantly the plays must be used as a backup or introduction to the work being done by socialists.

All too often we perform to audiences really anxious to discuss and, more importantly, to take up the issues raised in a play.

But through a lack of any real leadership enthusiasm quickly wanes, and the left has missed another opportunity.

Pirate Jenny is currently touring a rewritten version of

Sir is Winning by Shane Connaughton, a play about the William Tyndale dispute. It is being done in conjunction with a speaking tour by Terry Ellis and Brian Haddow, who were both sacked from Tyndale.

The play raises many issues about education, not least what can be done about winning the reinstatement of the Tyndale teachers.

Audiences have been large and often anxious to take some action. But as in the case of our previous play on racism by David Edgar, too few of the committed left have turned up to channel an enthusiastic response into action.

The cost and strain of putting on touring political theatre is enormous. Pirate Jenny and other groups need your help. Apart from your presence at

productions, we need clean, comfortable accommodation for the company when on tour for which we are more than happy to pay a fair price.

In this way, the company can make contact with other socialists in the towns in which we play and obtain some constructive feedback on our work.

At present we are struggling to pay exorbitant B&B costs,

as well as attempting to deal with frustrated actors who badly want to feel that their work has been of some value.

If you can help with accommodation, which would probably be only twice a year at the most, please contact: Jenny Rees, Pirate Jenny, 11 Acklam Road, London W10. Tel 01-969 2292/3. See What's Left for details of performances.

Pirate Jenny Theatre presents SIR IS WINNING

By Shane Connaughton
Directed by Margaret Ford & Kate Phelps



THE OTHER BOOKCLUB

Sponsored by Socialist Challenge and The Other Bookshop.

The Other Bookclub will provide five selections a year, of new works of Marxism and classics of the labour movement, at least two of which will cost less than £5. All members must take at least two of the selections.

List one: 1968 and After by Tariq Ali (cover price £5.25)
Harry McShane: No Mean Fighter by Harry McShane and Jean Smith (cover price £2.95)
Price to club members: £5.30 plus 25p post.

List two: Ernest Mandel, From Stalinism to Eurocommunism, New Left Books, (Cover price £2.95)
John MacLean, In the Rapids of Revolution, Allison and Busby, (Cover price, £3.50).

Price to club members £4.20 plus 30p post.

I wish to buy selection 1/2 and enclose £ . . . I agree to abide by the rules of The Other Bookclub.

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12 Shifts of Gear.

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A sensitive and human play about changes in a peasant village in Chile during the Allende regime.

26 June-22 July, at 8pm

SELF-DEFENCE IS NO OFFENCE!



A WEEK after a gang of skinhead youth went on a racist rampage in Brick Lane, East London, 2,000 anti-fascists were on the march on Sunday in support of the Asian community of Spitalfields. MICK GOSLING reports.

The march was called by the Anti-Nazi League and led off by the Bengali Youth Movement, which provided the most vociferous and militant contingent on the demonstration.

Earlier in the week the Tory Greater London Council had attempted to justify its plans to introduce apartheid housing in Spitalfields to an angry meeting of five hundred local residents, both black and white.

Initially the Tory plan for 'black only' blocks had been passed off as a concession to alleged Bengali demands for housing on exclusive estates to protect themselves from racial assaults.

GIFT

But by the meeting on Tuesday 13 June, Jean Tatum, the GLC housing chairperson, was claiming she had been 'misquoted'.

It was these 'misquotes' which were a gift to the racists and fascists who could paint a picture of white families being driven out of their homes to make room for blacks — something which not a single black person in Spitalfields

wants.

A few days after these 'misquotes' appeared in the press, the Nazis of the National Front instigated a racist rampage in Brick Lane. This Sunday all they could muster were a few dozen lunchtime drinkers protected by many more police.

PREDICTABLE

The response of the local Labour MP, Ian Mikardo, has been predictable. Mikardo told Tuesday's meeting that he had spoken to the Home Secretary Merlyn Rees about bringing increased patrols into the area.

As a result the local population will have to contend with the tender mercies of the Special Patrol Group who have been swarming over the area for the past week.

Dan Jones of Stepney Trades Council told the rally following Sunday's demonstration that he was pleased to see the SPG and extra police in the Brick Lane area rather than at Grunwick.

These comments were roundly booed by most of the demonstrators, who had been

carrying placards and shouting slogans supporting the organisation of self-defence.

SKINHEAD

The short-sightedness of expecting the police to protect the Bengali population is shown by the fact that the local police are still equivocating on the racist character of the skinhead attack and of the recent murders of Altab Ali and Kenneth Singh.

Only three white youths have been charged in connection with the Brick Lane rampage, despite the fact that 20 were arrested. It was the Asian youth who fought over the fascist assault largely before the police arrived.

The message that came through loud and clear from Sunday's march is that the Bengali population, with the full support of anti-racists and the labour movement in the area, must organise its own defence.

SELF-DEFENCE IS NO OFFENCE!

Correction: The Spitalfields report last week wrongly stated the number of Asian teachers at the Robert Montefiore School. There are, in fact, over ten such teachers at the school, and the head is Asian.



SUNDAY'S DEMO in Brick Lane. It's not only there that self-defence is needed. On Monday evening 30 NF heavies from Hoxton disrupted an ANL meeting in Manor House, North London.

Photo: ANDREW WARD (Inset)

OUR FUND DRIVE

'HEREWITH a little something for the fund drive to show we've not forgotten you. Will try and make it a regular thing. Through your pages, we would like to ask other SC supporters in Glasgow, Paisley, Hamilton, Aberdeen, Dundee, Stirling, Falkirk, Perth, Peebles and Thurso what they are doing for the fund drive.'

This note accompanied a 60p postal order for the fund drive. While it is true that by looking after the pennies the pounds will look after themselves, hopefully the Edinburgh Socialist Challenge group plans to do a little better than that! Besides Paisley beat Edinburgh supporters by two days and sent £1.

The reminder to the rest of Scotland is well timed. Apart from our school student supporters in Thurso the rest of our Scottish groups are notable

by their absence from our list of fund drive credits.

Since 1 January apart from Thurso, Paisley (£1) and Edinburgh (£2.60), all the other Scottish groups have contributed nothing.

However the groups in England and Wales have no better record. Since the new year only 14 local groups of supporters have raised more than £10 — and that in the space of over 20 weeks. The roll of honour is as follows:

Bolton £40; Cardiff £60.50; Harrow £50; Hull £33; Leeds £10; Leicester £40.35; Manchester £49.20; Norwich £15; Nottingham £10; Oxford £85.27; Preston £10; York £13; South East London £92; South West London £36 and Camden £24.

From that list only six have made more than two contribu-

tions. Those are Camden, Cardiff, Leicester, Manchester, Oxford and South East London.

That record may not sound glowing. But in comparison to the rest of the groups who, in over five months, have raised nothing, it is positively outstanding. In the land of the blind the one-eyed supporters rule.

HOPEFUL

We hope that in the remaining weeks of this month all our groups will redeem themselves by rushing a contribution to the fund drive. You have 14 days.

This week's fund drive total of £189.85 was greatly boosted by the proceeds of the Dylan raffle. That netted over £120 for the fund. There is an excellent way for local groups

to raise money. Contact the local town hall for details! You need permission, which is easily done.

Our thanks this week to:

In memory of Robert Langston	10.00
Anon Tower Hamlets	5.00
J. Pollock	20.00
K. Martin	2.00
H. Abdulla	2.00
Paisley supporters	1.00
Preston supporters	5.00
D. Plowman	5.00
Anon.	2.00
P. Sheppard	5.00
Islington reader	5.00

Silvana	1.00
R.H.	1.00
P. Hale	1.00
Edinburgh readers	0.80
Dylan raffle	121.25

To date we have raised £1,610.31. With just two weeks to the end of this quarter we have just under £900 to raise. We appeal to all our supporters to give generously.

Equip us!

IT MUST be that time of year again. Our stock of functioning

typewriters is rapidly dwindling. Our Invicta portable circa 1920, for example, is a fine machine to look at, but it's less than brilliant at pounding out revolutionary articles.

When we appealed for equipment last year, comrades generously donated a couple of typewriters. We are now renewing the appeal. So if you have a spare machine under your bed, or can obtain one really cheap, do pass it on.

We have also, believe it or not, practically run out of paper to type on. We're quite happy to accept scrap paper, so long as one side is blank!

Summer sub - £2

Want to be sure of Socialist Challenge for the summer?

There are two easy ways to be sure of receiving Socialist Challenge every week during the summer. At that time it may

be difficult to obtain the paper regularly because our sellers or you may be on holiday.

Firstly, take out a special cheap subscription, £2 for 3 months — fill in the form on this page.

Secondly, place an order with your local branch of W. H. Smith, through a procedure called 'Customers Special Order'. This is operative through most branches of Smiths. However, as they have no branches in Scotland it only applies to our English and Welsh readers.

Domestic: 6 months, £5. 12 months, £10
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Cheques, POs and Money Orders should be made payable to 'Socialist Challenge'. Complete and return to:
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—Karl Marx