

# Socialist Challenge

INCORPORATING RED WEEKLY

BUILD A SOCIALIST OPPOSITION FOR A UNIFIED REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION

12p

SUPPLEMENT  
14 July 1977

This is the poem which should have been on the back page of this issue of Socialist Challenge. However, as you can see from the blank space, it was not printed. Our printers decided and the management concurred that they would not print the poem in question. We are therefore distributing it as an insert in the paper.

AS WE GO TO PRESS; Judge King-Hamilton has sentenced Denis Lemon to nine months suspended and fined Gay News £1000. We print the poem for which Denis was found guilty below. We reprint it as part of the fight for freedom of expression and the press, and civil liberties. We hope that other labour movement papers will do the same.

## The Love That Dares To Speak Its Name

As they took him from the cross  
I, the centurion, took him in my arms  
the tough, lean body  
of a man no longer young,  
beardless, breathless,  
but well hung.

He was still warm,  
While they prepared the tomb  
I kept guard over him.  
His mother and the Magdalen  
had gone to fetch clean linen  
to shroud his nakedness.

I was alone with him,  
For the last time  
I kissed his mouth. My tongue  
found his, bitter with death.  
I licked his wounds  
the blood was harsh.

For the last time  
I laid my lips around the tip  
of that great cock, the instrument  
of our salvation, our eternal joy.  
The shaft still throbbed, anointed  
with death's final ejaculation.

I knew he'd had it off with other men  
with Herod's guards, with Pontius Pilate,  
with John the Baptist, with Paul of Tarsus,  
with foxy Judas, a great kisser, with  
the rest of the Twelve, together and apart.  
He loved all men, body, soul and spirit, even me.

So now I took off my uniform, and, naked,  
lay together with him in his desolation,  
caressing every shadow of his cooling flesh,  
hugging him and trying to warm him back to life.  
Slowly the fire in his thighs went out,  
while I grew hotter with unearthly love.

It was the only way I knew to speak our love's proud name,  
to tell him of my long devotion, my desire, my dread -  
something we had never talked about. My spear, wet with blood,  
his dear, broken body all open wounds,  
and in each wound - his side, his back,  
his mouth - I came and came and came  
as if each coming was my last.

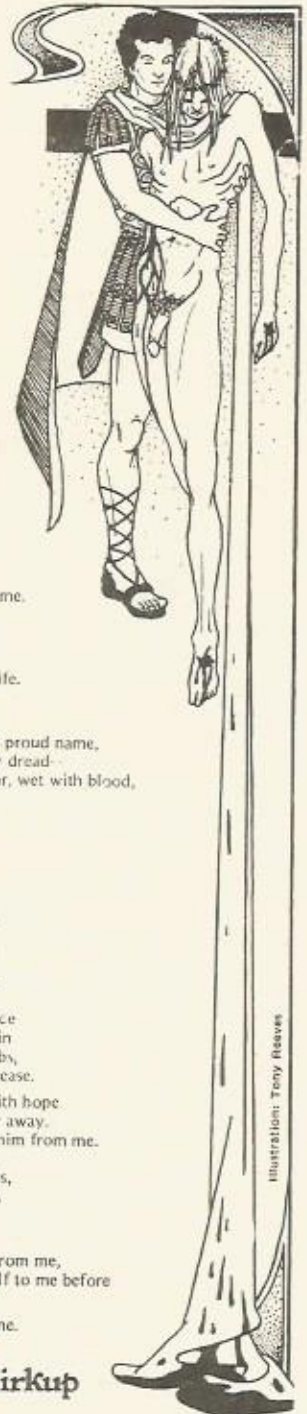
And then the miracle possessed us,  
I felt him enter into me, and fiercely spend  
his spirit's final seed within my hole, my soul,  
pulse upon pulse, unto the ends of earth  
he crucified me with him into kingdom come.

This is the passionate and blissful crucifixion  
same sex lovers suffer, patiently and gladly.  
They inflict these loving injuries of joy and grace  
one upon the other, till they die of lust and pain  
within the horny paradise of one another's limbs,  
with one voice cry to heaven in a last divine release.

Then lie long together, peacefully entwined, with hope  
of resurrection, as we did, on that green hill far away.  
But before we rose again, they came and took him from me.  
They knew what we had done, but felt  
no shame or anger. Rather they were glad for us,  
and blessed us, as would he, who loved all men.

And after three long, lonely days, like years,  
in which I roamed the gardens of my grief  
seeking for him, my one friend who had gone from me,  
he rose from sleep, at dawn, and showed himself to me before  
all others. And took me to him with

the love that now forever dares to speak its name.



James Kirkup