

# Socialist Challenge

## ENGINEERING

### ALL OUT ACTION CAN WIN THE CLAIM



### Are you thinking about our struggle Tony Benn?

By Ron Thompson, AUEW, Sheffield

THERE is little doubt what most of us think about Callaghan. We'd be happy to see the last of him. Our delegation to the Labour Party conference is going to support the proposals to make the Labour Party more democratic.

But a question which many militants are asking is why Tony Benn hasn't spoken up to defend the struggles currently being waged by engineering workers throughout the country.

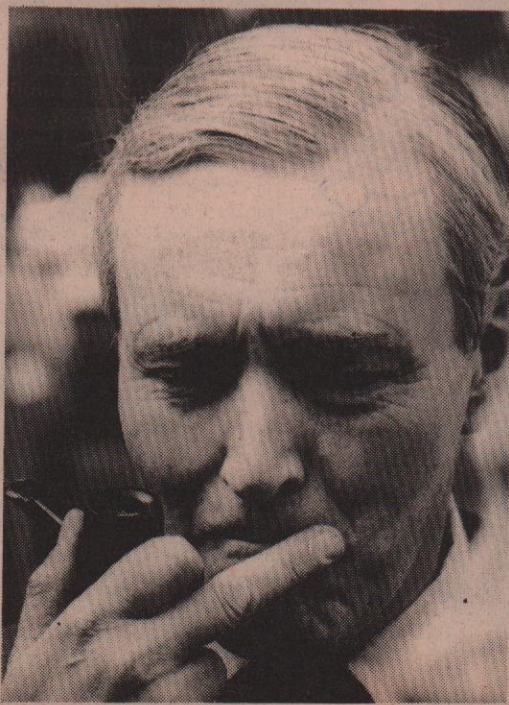
These struggles are not sufficient to win the full claim, but they have shown the mass support that exists for action. All the attempts by the Tory press to give prominence to a bunch

of scabs has backfired badly. The Rolls Royce case is the most recent example.

Our struggle is the first action against the Tory government by a major trade union. That is why we want to know what Benn thinks. We can't wait till there is another Labour Government. Not only because it is a long time ahead, but because there is no guarantee that it will carry out socialist policies.

So our message to Benn is simple: we're supporting you against Callaghan. When will you support our struggle against the Tory bosses?

(See pages 7, 8 & 9 for more on Engineering)



### They plot in secret to attack our health and lives

THE HATCHET team of Commissioners sent to replace the rebels on the Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Area Health Authority have wasted no time getting down to business. Their minutes of 30 August — headed in confidence — propose the following measures:

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Guys      | closure of at least 60 acute beds.  |
| Kings     | closure of at least 71 acute beds.  |
| Lewisham  | closure of 12 paediatric beds at Sydenham Childrens Hospital and closure of St Johns Hospital.                    |
| St Thomas | closure of Holmhurst Hospital 12 infectious disease beds at the South Western Hospital and 12 gynaecological beds |

The Commissioners are also setting a target of a 15 percent reduction in the Area's outpatient attendances.

The minutes confirm that the Commissioners have made their 'first and most important target' cuts of 5½ million.

Basing themselves on rising costs in the four months up to July they are talking about having to make further cuts of £2,903,000.

**OUR POLICIES**

Capitalism is in crisis. The leaders of the Labour Party and the trade 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 workers against the bosses with that of other oppressed layers of society - women, black people, gays - struggling for their liberation. This socialism can only be achieved by creating new organs of power and defeating with all necessary means the power of the capitalist state.

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

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

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

**4** The Communist parties in Europe are in crisis. Neither the 'Eurocommunist' 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.

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

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

Name.....  
Address.....  
.....

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

# Arguments for reformism

## For whom the Benn tolls

TONY BENN's new book (*Argument for Socialism*, Cape, £5.95) consists essentially of his and other people's old ideas. The fact that it is published just under ten days before the first Labour conference since Thatcher's victory means that these ideas will be the subject of much discussion both in the bourgeois media and at the conference itself.

What makes Benn a figure of some interest is not his ideas. For he goes out of his way to stress that what he is saying is not new, but part of the traditional aspirations of Labourism - including its addiction to Methodism and preachers and its division between politics and economic struggles.

The experience of the Wilson and Callaghan governments has convinced Benn that the reason they failed was their inability to carry through social, economic and political reforms. He accepts that these reforms would have created some tensions between Labour and the ruling class, but argues that with working class support Labour would have won. We shall return to some of these arguments later. Let us first consider why the fact that Benn is saying all these things is different from the parroting of similar slogans by other left social-democrats.

What is happening is that for the first time in nearly two decades a new current is emerging in the Labour Party and the unions. This is not the same as the politics of *Tribune*, which offers nothing to most activists and whose main supporters were fully integrated into the functioning of government. The Bennites have support in the constituency parties and in the unions. It's true that the defection of Scanlon and Jones left Benn somewhat naked, but it would be false to think

that all his support evaporated as a result. He remains the only leader of the Labour Party who still has some credibility with Labour's base.

This is a remarkable achievement. For Benn lay low while in office. There was not one major clash with Wilson or Callaghan. Benn refused to resign from the Cabinet despite the vicious, anti-working class policies pursued by the Labour government. He publicly defended Owen's support for the Shah of Iran, refused to disassociate himself from Labour's atrocious record in Northern Ireland, and spoke very infrequently on the cancer of racism at home and abroad. He lacks Bevan's ability to arouse or Powell's audacity. The latter is not meant as an insult. If Benn had done for the labour movement what Powell seeks to do for the ruling class, the Labour left would have had a much higher standing inside the factories.

Despite all this he remains a focus of opposition. It would be true, though somewhat trite, to point out that there is no-one else; that in the land of the blind the one-eyed person is the one who rules. The fact remains that for most constituency parties and a section of trade unionists (largely a secondary layer of full-time officials influenced by the Institute for Workers Control) Benn is the solution. The Labour Co-ordinating Committee (LCC) was set up last year in an attempt to organise support for Bennite politics. It has a membership of 350 (including people like Stuart Holland MP, Geoff Hodgson, Peter Hain etc.) and is organising a rank-and-file conference on 3-4 November in Manchester. The conference has obtained the backing of the TGWU and NUPE and clearly represents an important initiative which it would be foolish to ignore.

The Labour Party conference this year will be dominated by the democratisation measures proposed by the Bennites. Despite their limitations these should obviously be supported. The right wing of the party (including Callaghan!) have said that the whole debate is a diversion as the central task is to fight the Tories. While this is obviously a ploy to avoid discussion on the structures of the party, it does reveal a flaw in the Bennite offensive. Would it not have been more effective to fight on inner-party democracy as well as propose a plan of action to fight the Tories? Would it not have been more practical to organise a national conference of Labour councillors and the public sector unions to discuss a fightback on a national level against the cuts?

The bulk of Benn's book is a collection of his old essays and speeches, skilfully edited by Chris Mullin. All his ideas are in this book. In sum total they amount to a souped-up Fabianism, a radical reformism which seeks to shift the balance of class forces in favour of working people. And yet even this reformism claims as its patron saint not the young Bevan but the old Attlee. The point Benn makes is fair enough. The drift to the right has been so pronounced that the writings of Tony Crosland appear, within a Labourist framework, to be sharply reformist. In other words, the eagerness with which Wilson and Callaghan sought to make Labour governments into the most rational managing agencies for capitalism automatically excluded any serious reforms.

Benn argues that this has led to the growing isolation of Labour from ordinary working people. Labour has been seen to slash living standards and increase unemployment. Nor does he underestimate the importance of ideology. The Bennites are behind the campaign for a daily paper under the control of the labour movement, and for the setting up of a national printing corporation which would provide facilities to those groups not in the good books of the Tory millionaires who control Fleet Street. Benn's programme of inner-party democracy and accountability, industrial democracy (ie. workers' participation), more democratic rights and ending of secrecy in government (making the security services accountable) thus forms a coherent reformist whole.

Even within a reformist framework he misses out one important aspect of British political structures. The electoral system is undemocratic. Surely proportional representation would compel the Labour Party to politicise its base, apart from being more democratic. The only Benn supporter to defend such a proposition is Arthur Scargill. Where does Benn stand on this question? Similarly, Benn's affinity with the demands of the old Chartists does not appear to extend to their most radical democratic demand: the call for annual parliaments.

The problem for the Bennites is the following. The precarious conditions of British capital necessitate a restructuring at the expense of the workers movement. Thatcher is determined to carry it through to the end. The last thing that British capital needs is reforms of the sort that Benn proposes. It is not that they cannot be conceded within the boundaries of capitalism. But capital will only make concessions if it is threatened by a gigantic mass movement. It will be fear of mass radicalisation which will make most of these reforms possible. But then those agitating for them will realise that they do not go far enough. And if they want to go all the way, will Tony Benn play Cromwell to the Levellers of a mass movement in ascendancy?

The central question which confronts the Bennites today is the following: should British workers wait five years before they can expect to defeat the Tories? Is it not necessary to start fighting the Tories now? And under what banner? Lots of workers are beginning to realise instinctively that syndicalism is not enough. What they need are arguments for socialism. Our task is to provide these, while realising that the arguments will be understood best in the context of debates inside the mainstream of the labour movement. The Bennites have created the basis for such debates to take place. Shrill denunciations of our part will be treated with the contempt they deserve.

In the coming weeks and months this newspaper will be discussing in detail every single argument for reforms which has been put forward by Benn and his supporters. In any event, despite the disagreements that have and will continue to exist between us and the Bennites, we are absolutely clear about one thing: we are for unity of action in every sphere where a struggle is possible against the Thatcher government, against unemployment, the cuts, restrictions on abortion, racism, democratic rights, etc. For not only is such unity in action vital to take the workers movement forward. It creates the most healthy basis for a continuing debate.

Meanwhile at the Labour Party conference it now appears that the Engineering and Transport Union delegations will vote for Benn's proposals. Callaghan should ask not for whom the Benn tolls - it rings for him.

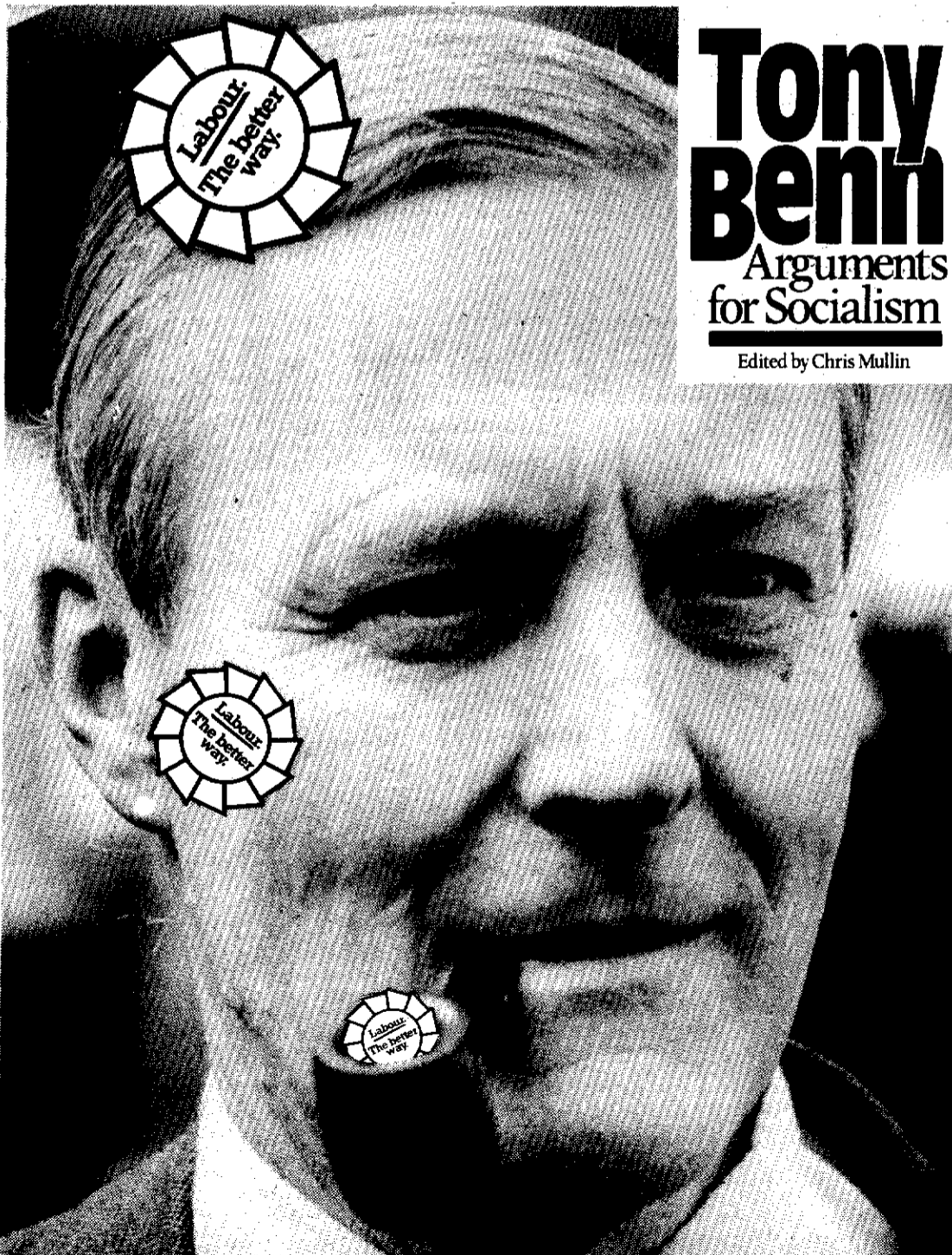


Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

# What the magistrate is saying to Southall defendants

## 'I find you guilty'

By Geoffrey Sheridan

BARNET magistrates' court number three, with its curtained plate glass windows at street level, could easily be mistaken for a shop. That impression is not entirely lost when you sit through the proceedings in the courtroom, where the 342 people arrested in Southall on 23 April are presently appearing.

For here justice is being dispensed with a merchant's eye to the tariff. Last week, with stipendiary magistrate Peter Badge presiding, the going rate for such matters as threatening behaviour and obstructing the police was a £75 fine plus £30 costs.

But it would be wrong to suggest that this is mere rubber-stamp justice or some Star Chamber brand, for here the full majesty of the law is at work.

Defendants are addressed as 'Mr—'. There is apparent consideration from the Bench for the difficulties of some Asian defendants in understanding English (although there are half-suppressed guffaws from police witnesses). And the magistrate gives a careful summary of each case before pronouncing judgement.

There are even a few acquittals — eight out of 77 cases up to last week; a conviction rate of almost 90 per cent, 20 per cent higher than that notched up by the same court when it dealt with the Grunwick defendants.

One acquittal came last Thursday afternoon, when Surbinder Chowdhury was found not guilty of obstruction.

At 6.30pm on 23 April — an hour before the NF meeting was due to start — a four-deep police cordon blocked the High Street close to Southall Town Hall where the meeting was to take place.

According to the police evidence, some five hundred people surged towards the cordon, pushed it back a couple of feet, and Surbinder Chowdhury, who was in the front line, did not promptly move when told to do so by a police constable.

Chowdhury's explanation was that he had been swept into the front line when the crowd moved off the pavement, and then was too tightly jammed in to get back. To the prosecutor's question 'You were just trying to make the police's job more difficult, weren't you?' (and wouldn't



**SOUTHALL IS INNOCENT STOP THE TRIALS**  
Southall Defence Committee

SOUTHALL defendants and witnesses at the magistrates' court last Thursday. Surbinder Chowdhury, found not guilty of obstruction, is third from the left. Rabinder Bolina, convicted of threatening behaviour, is on his left.

**SOUTHALL IS INNOCENT STOP THE TRIALS**  
Southall Defence Committee

that logic neatly fit Hitler's courts), Chowdhury answered No.

In his summing up, the magistrate thanked him and the police constable for the frank way in which they gave evidence, and then let Chowdhury off with a warning that he really had only himself to blame for being in court because, after all, he had been in the crowd.

It was that last remark which peeled away the veneer of civilised justice. And the case which followed, the prosecution of Rabinder Bolina

for alleged threatening behaviour, set the Southall trials firmly in their political context.

Bolina, a porter at Heathrow Airport, was said to have been involved in a 'melée' in North Road at 6.30pm on the 23rd, in which a crowd had run up to a police cordon and from which Bolina was seen running away. According to the arresting officer, Bolina was 'very excited' when he was restrained and said 'We must stop the meeting'.

And that was it, the sum total of

the police evidence against him. You could be forgiven for wondering what law had been broken. After the trial — verdict: guilty, fine £75 plus £30 costs — the defence solicitor explained that running can be threatening to other people.

As it happens, Bolina's plea of not guilty was backed with the evidence that he had been on his way home from work; that he had unwittingly got caught up with the crowd, and that the arresting officer, Sergeant Godsae, was among several cops who had forced him to run the gauntlet of

their batons. A statement from Bolina's doctor detailed bruises covering much of his body.

But all that was by the by. Magistrate Badge never even referred to this alleged brutality in his summing up.

The unspoken crime was only too plain. The police were on duty to ensure that a National Front meeting took place and anyone who had the temerity to protest was an Enemy of the People.

More than that. Virtually all the 342 defendants are black. If the police went into Southall with the object of giving one of the oldest established and most confident communities of Asians and West Indians in Britain a taste of that country's colonial rule, the job of the court is now to sanction that lesson.

The following interchange took place between the prosecuting counsel and Neville Hall, the Misty singer, who was fined £100 on Tuesday of last week.

NH: The police were looking for trouble.

PC: What do you mean by that? Did you expect the police to behave in the same way as in your opinion they did in Leicester?

NH: I think the police are themselves National Front. I saw that with my own eyes and I know that from my own experience. I am black. I know my mind. I have seen a lot...

The trials continue. They are almost certain to go on into next year. Fines and legal costs are likely to amount to £100,000. Two defendants have so far been jailed.

Suresh Grover has sat through all the cases, helping to co-ordinate the legal defence on behalf of the Southall Defence Campaign. He says: 'There has hardly been a murmur outside Southall about the trials.'

'To be frank about it, if 342 white workers were arrested we'd have the labour movement creating all kind of pandemonium about it. Because they're black, nothing has happened. I think it's shameful.'

\*Southall Defence has made an 'Open Door' programme to be screened on BBC-2 at 5.20pm, Saturday 22 September and late evening the following Thursday.

### POLLICE VERSO\* (OR THE IMPEACHMENT OF THE SPG)

That British brand of KGB [Which calls itself the SPG] Were summoned one by one in quest Of Truth by lie-detector test, And questioned then about Blair Peach With wires upon the head of each.

These thugs-in-blue fell silent when Each needle made a graph with pen; But then at last a man was found Who made the needles jump and bound Erratically upon the graph With every lie and frantic laugh.

And even then the bully lied When questioned how Blair Peach had died, Though still the lie-detector said: 'This man — with cosh — hit Blair Peach dead.' The man, at last, said it was he... And Thatcher made him OBE.

Such murder with impunity Puts Justice so in jeopardy, And Britain with uneasy heart Sees Truth and Liberty depart.

© N. Racine-Jaques, 1979

[\* With thumb turned down. This two-word Roman cry is based on the signal to the gladiators in the amphitheatre not to show mercy, which was when the spectators turned their thumbs towards their breast.]

# Remember Blair

From the Friends of Blair Peach Committee

ON 11 October, the inquest into Blair Peach's death will re-open at Hammersmith Coroner's Court.

Since Blair's death in Southall on 23 April, despite various gestures, the police have shown no sign that they intend to bring charges against Blair's SPG murderer.

Witnesses testify to the fact that Blair was hit over the head by a policeman as he walked away from the demonstration. The police have interviewed some members of the Special Patrol Group; they have admitted finding a rubber cosh, similar to the type of

implement the pathologist's report states killed Blair, in police lockers.

It took them more than three months to organise identity parades. They have interviewed hundreds of people. And yet this top police team cannot find the murderer. A public enquiry has been refused.

This cover-up will continue unless we can show that we are determined to pursue the matter as long as is necessary.

Obviously, when the inquest re-opens, those who want a cover-up will be equally anxious to get the inquest out of the way with minimum publicity. This is why the Friends of Blair Peach Committee is calling for nationwide

action around the date of the inquest.

We call on all anti-racists and trade unionists to work towards a public demonstration of our intention to go on fighting the cover-up in the following ways:

Please attend the picket of the Coroner's Court on 11 October at 9am.

Nationwide: We appeal to socialists, anti-racists, and trade unionists to help organise action in their own localities. We are organising demonstrations and pickets of police stations in major towns, preferably on the eve of the inquest, 10 October.

Possibilities: Picket your local police station.

Hold a march (torch light procession?) to the police station. Arrange a meeting to follow the demonstration.

Preparations for this



event: Leafleting and a street meeting in the area the previous Saturday. A public meeting — No cover-up: Disband the SPG.

The Friends of Blair Peach Committee can help you by supplying literature, including fact sheets, petitions, and collection sheets. Speakers can be provided anywhere in the country.

And we have 'Disband the SPG' badges. Bulk orders 10p small, 15p large badges; individual orders 22p incl. postage.

Please get in touch with the committee if you require help and to let us

know how far your plans have gone.

Southall — the trials of the 342 people arrested in Southall re-opened last week. This is as much a part of the cover-up as the stalling on bringing Blair's murderers to justice.

All anti-racists and trade unionists must demand that the trials are stopped. In the meantime, there is an urgent need for funds. Please make cheques payable to the Southall Defence Fund.

All correspondence and contributions to Friends of Blair Peach Committee, c/o ANL/BPMF, PO Box 151, London WC2.

# The trail of the Nazi gig-wreckers

By Jude Woodward

IF ANYONE thought that the Nazis went away after the general election, they had better think again. The British Movement has been a very obvious presence at a number of gigs in London recently, particularly when the bands involved are connected with Rock Against Racism.

On 8 September, Crass — an anarchist punk band — were doing a benefit gig at Conway Hall in Central London. Not for the first time their performance was broken up and the police arrived to put an end to the whole thing.

Rumours that the British Movement was planning to smash it up circulated in the early part of the gig and fighting broke out just as Crass came on to play. A couple of people were bottled before a group of skinheads — wearing British Movement and Red Hand of Ulster badges

— were chased out of the hall.

The British Movement intervention into gigs is not new. Thirty of them attacked a RAR gig held in Acklam Hall in Notting Hill on 29 June this year. They beat people up and smashed the band's equipment.

At about the same time, a gig held by the Young Communist League in Ealing, in aid of the Southall defence, was smashed up. A Young Socialist gig with the Ruts, one of the earliest RAR bands, met a similar fate in West London.

But the trouble wasn't confined to that area.

The first major gig that the fascists wrecked was Sham 69's 'farewell' appearance at the Rainbow in North London on 28 July. There were a large number of skinheads in the audience, together with some 40 members of the British Movement.

The BM started causing trouble early on. They'd been giving out

leaflets in the loos beforehand, then they started running round and pulling badges off Anti Nazi League supporters, and egging on other skins to give Nazi salutes.

During one number, a few of the fascists got on to the stage and goose-stepped across. Crowds of people chanted 'Sieg Heil' and the gig was brought to an end as fighting broke out.

A week or so later Stiff Little Fingers played at the Hammersmith Palais, where the same thing happened. Jake Burns of Stiff Little Fingers asked for the spotlight to be turned onto the trouble-makers and denounced them as Nazis. But this didn't stop the gig being closed down.

The Ruts, who'd faced such trouble before, had their gig at the Nashville in London broken up in just the same way.

By this time some identification was being carried out. A smallish group of less than a dozen BM members — wearing the badges, giving out leaflets, and recruiting — are seen at all the gigs trying to stir up trouble.

## Skinhead

They operate among the skinhead section of the audiences, often successfully. Apparently they are out to link being a skinhead with being racist and pro-Nazi.

The Angelic Upstarts have had a lot of trouble at their gigs. In early June a gig of theirs was smashed up by fascists in Wolverhampton, and a recent gig in London's Electric Ballroom was also broken up. The Upstarts have a large skinhead following.

The Brixton anti-racist carnival in Brockwell Park earlier this month ended in similar confusion. When Stiff Little Fingers began to play, punks in the audience broke down the barriers to get nearer the band and some invaded the stage. Two or three BM members went with them. One of them got to the microphone and announced: 'Mountbatten died for all of you — you should be playing for him'.

Fascist attacks on gigs have been mainly in London but other areas have not been immune. When Public Image, former Sex Pistol John Lydon's band, played in Leeds the gig was broken up by the National Front. The band had previously played with the black poet Linton Kwesi Johnson.

But the fascists are not satisfied with smashing up our gigs, they are trying to hold some of their own.

## White Boss

Joe Pearce, the Leeds NF organiser, is the brains behind Rock Against Communism, which in nine months of existence has organised one gig and two leaflets. The gig, held last month in Conway Hall, London, had an audience of 150, almost entirely male. Two bands played, the pleasantly named White Boss and the Dentists. The other two advertised bands did not show up.

It's vital that we don't allow the Nazis to stop our gigs taking place. RAR was vital in organising some of the biggest expressions of anti-Nazi feeling we've seen, so it would be a big boost for the Nazis if they thought they could stop RAR bands doing gigs.

Secondly, we have to point out that skins have played a part in the fight against racism. Some of the bands with big followings among skins, like Sham 69 and the Angelic Upstarts, should come out and say where they stand on the Nazis.

It doesn't automatically follow that all skins are racists and Nazis. That's just what the British Movement wants everyone to think. The way to stop it happening is through organised self-defence set up before the gigs. The ANL ought to give this urgent consideration.



# Battered women have served enough time

By Jane Mitchell

JUNE GREIG was found guilty of the culpable homicide of her husband, George. In May, an Edinburgh court sentenced her to six years in Cronton Vale women's prison 'to deter other women from killing their husbands'.

June Greig had endured nine years of violence. Her husband had kicked her in the stomach when she was pregnant, slashed her with a knife and burned her with cigarettes. Both she and her daughter had been beaten.

Expecting another beating from her drunken husband, June told her children: 'I'm going to kill your Daddy'. She then stabbed him twice, once through the heart.

## Violence

June pleaded self-defence. But the court rejected her plea. The police, who had often been summoned to her home to intervene, were not called as witnesses. The jury seem to have ignored the fact that her husband's previous marriage broke up because of violence. Her children and relatives testified that it was a premeditated act of violence.

How, then, was June Greig expected to defend herself against her husband?

Many women beaten in the home are afraid to go the police for fear of further beatings. They often suffer sexual humiliation along with physical beatings. Fighting back sometimes provokes an even more violent assault. In many cases, the violence is systematic. A recent three-year survey of cases in Edinburgh and Glasgow courts showed that a quarter of all violent crime is wife-assault.

## Refuges

Staying with relatives is no escape. A woman can easily be followed there by her husband. Women's Aid have nowhere near enough places to cater for the number of women who need help, and the cuts are threatening the refuges that do exist.

In Scotland, there is no Domestic Violence Act, which means that a woman like June cannot ask for police protection within the home. She is able to bring charges against her husband, but only if she has a witness, and neighbours are usually reluctant to get involved. Successful prosecutions normally end in nothing more than a fine. Fines would never deter a George Greig.

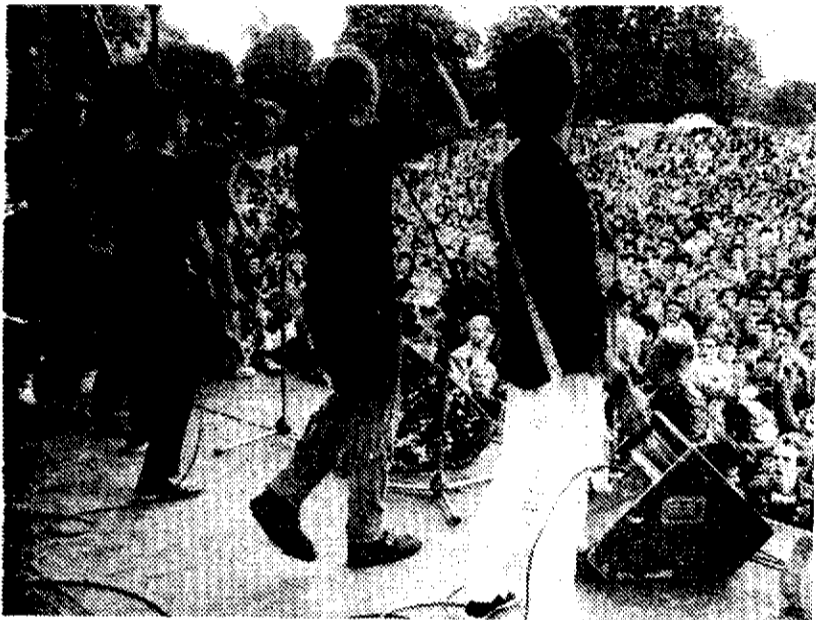
In effect, the law says that violence against women within marriage is a 'private' matter. Yet when June decided to protect herself from her violent husband in the only way she knew how, the law did not hesitate to intervene — against her!

June's appeal comes up on 27 September. There will be an all-woman vigil outside the court on the night before, and a mass assembly on the day to demand June's freedom.

Violence in the home concerns every woman. So long as society encourages men to see women as domestic slaves and objects to gratify male sexual desires, violent assaults on women will continue — inside and outside the home.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. Sponsor the Campaign to Free June Greig — Write to: Edinburgh and Lothian Women's Aid, 88a George Street, Edinburgh.
2. Write a letter of protest to: The Lord Advocate, Rt Hon Lord MacKay of Calshfern QC; and to the Solicitor General, Nicholas Fairbairn QC, MP, Fielden House, 10 Great College Street, Westminster, London.



CENTRE stage in this photograph of the Brixton anti-racist carnival is a British Movement member who grabbed the microphone to announce: 'Mountbatten died for all of you — you should be playing for him'

# ♀ Campaign against the Corrie Bill

WE CAN expect to see a large contingent of abortion rights supporters from Scotland on the 28 October demonstration, since the Scottish Trades Union Congress is financing a train to London.

But British Rail is using the fuel crisis as an excuse to refuse requests for trains that have been made by the regional TUCs in Bristol, Newcastle, Manchester and Birmingham.

Newcastle abortion campaigners are trying to persuade the local National Union of Railwaymen (sic) to demand that British Rail lays on a special train.

A £40 donation towards the campaign has come from Tyneside Trades Council and the National Union of Public Employees in the city has donated £50. Tower Hamlets NALGO and the Trades Council have given cash. Union members at Dillons bookshop in Central London are holding regular collections and Lambeth Trades Council has donated money.

New groups are mushrooming in Dundee, Stirling, Aberdeen, Tower Hamlets and Greenwich. Legal Workers Against Corrie and Journalists Against Corrie have been set up.

New groups are being started up

almost daily. If you would like to do this but are not sure how, write to: Campaign Against Corrie, 374 Grays Inn Rd, London WC1.

\*The TUC has produced 10,000 leaflets to mobilise support for the demo. These, along with a new CAC leaflet, are available from CAC.

\*Tower Hamlets Campaign Against Corrie is holding a fund raising social on Friday 21 September, 8pm to 11pm, Saxone Hall, Saxone Road, Mile End. £1 (70p unwaged) — disco, bar, food, plus live music.

\*Greenwich Campaign Against Corrie is organising a public meeting on Tuesday, 25 September at 7.30pm, Charlton House, Charlton Village, London SE7. Speakers include Jo Richardson MP and a local doctor.

## Speakers

\*Sheffield Trades Council is sponsoring a public meeting against the Corrie Bill at which the speakers will be Mel Reid (ASTMS) and a representative of Sheffield NAC. The meeting is at 7.30pm on Thursday 27 September at AUEW House, Furnival Gate.

\*Brent Against Corrie is holding a public meeting on Tuesday 25 September with speakers from NAC, BPAS and the local campaign, plus a film. The meeting is in Brent Trades Hall, 375 Willesden High Road, London NW10, and starts at 8pm.

ADVERTS like this present men with a vile image of women. They help to stimulate violent assaults.

# Whose consent?

By David Holland

JUST UNDER 100 years ago, in August 1885, 100,000 people took to the streets of London to demand the raising of the age of consent from 13 to 16. Nine processions wound their way from different parts of London to Hyde Park, accompanied by 34 brass bands. There was a large waggonette filled with little girls carrying the slogan 'Shall the Innocents Be Slaughtered?'

Legislation to protect 'the innocents' was rushed through parliament.

Many people see this successful campaign as a victory in the struggle against exploitation, comparable to the child labour laws and affording necessary protection to children from sexual exploitation.

Yet a humane, down to earth report from the National Council for One Parent Families, published last week, recommends the repeal of the age of consent law. It points out that the law does little to protect young people, but does a great deal to make their lives more difficult.

Fear of prosecution makes it less likely young people will have access to contraceptives, more likely they will have unwanted pregnancies and be fearful of admitting early pregnancy so that the problems raised can be dealt with. An immense area of police discretion exists to back parental sanctions against 'wayward' youth.

This report's recommendations are made in response to the real

pressure of young people asserting their rights to make their own sexual choices. 1 in 8 of the young women under 16 at the moment have sexual relations of some kind. Harassment and repression of young people expressing their own sexuality is what this 'protective' law brings.

The background to the age of consent law is the massive 19th century ideological assault on the working class, involving the imposition of the norms of the bourgeois family. This itself was part of the tremendous restructuring of society undertaken to make the country safe for capital.

## Labour

No longer could agricultural workers be sucked into the hungry cities. The problem was the disciplining and ideological integration of entirely new generations of docile workers. Children were taken out of the labour force and a mass schooling system developed. Women were driven out of the world of work to take responsibility for child care in the family.

Just as this redoubled oppression of women was linked to a massive puffing of the ideals of tender femininity and sacred motherhood, so as children were segregated, regulated and repressed, a glowing idealization of the golden faery world of the child was developed. Romantic ideas about childhood, still very



strong today, were first generated in the mid 19th Century.

But the 'little angels' did not live in a Lewis Carroll idyll. A savage attack on children's sexuality was launched to establish the childhood realm of purity and innocence.

At the same time as the nation wept over the death of Little Nell, Dr. Baker Brown, the President of the London Medical Association was carrying out countless clitorectomies on little girls.

## Peter Pan

As the nation thrilled to Peter Pan, devices were being widely marketed with sharp steel teeth or which set off loud alarms to be attached to little boys' penises to prevent them getting erections. Masturbation, unremarked by previous generations, was proclaimed to lead to insanity, epilepsy and death.

It is against this background that the campaign to raise the age of

consent should be seen. It did have an ambivalent character — the 1885 marchers also carried banners reading 'Equal Rights for Men and Women'. An attack on the double standard of sexual morality was begun by a mobilization of women.

But the other elements in the campaign — the Salvation Army, the Purity Leagues and their youth section the Snowdrop Band, the Quakers and the overwhelmingly religious idiom, were part of the massive effort to colonise the working class with bourgeois morality and the ideology of the bourgeois family: a fundamentally repressive process.

The law parliament passed in 1885 not only raised the age of consent, it also introduced beating as a penalty for sexual activity between minors, victimised prostitutes by introducing fresh penalties for soliciting and made homosexual acts between consenting adults in private illegal.

This was a moral crack-down not a victory against exploitation.

The present day situation in which threats of police and prosecution back up the arbitrary power of teachers and parents over young people is a result of this historic victory of bourgeois ideology. Readers will remember the recent amazing case of the nationwide hunt to run down a young couple who had quite rationally decided to stay away together.

## Paedophilia

Separate treatment is really needed of many of the ramifications of these questions. Gays for example for whom the age of consent is 21 face many other specific inequities. There is also the related question of paedophilia.

Those, however who see the spectre of the child molester and the brutally bugged toddler lurking behind any threat to the age of consent, should consider who originated these figures. My guess is it was the same firm as brought you the Black Rapist and the Union Wrecker.

It is worth remembering that all the sexual offences against young people under 13 that come to court go to 95 per cent do not involve penetration let alone demonstrable violence or coercion. A rather high proportion of evident violence and coercion exists in sexual offences against adults!

## Young

But cross generational sex is a serious issue for the 40,000 young women under 16 involved each year in sexual relationships with people in their own age range. It is they who bear the brunt of intimidation and harassment.

It is on their behalf, since they have barely the beginnings of a political voice themselves, that socialists should argue for the repeal of the age of consent law and for abortion and contraception facilities for youth.

# Was the Right to Work march worth it?

I MANAGED to survive the recent Right to Work march despite having my sleeping bag nicked. I was soaked to the skin when the marquee collapsed in the storm. But at least the hours I spent in a police cell for breaching the peace gave my sore feet a rest.

I managed to survive all this only to be confused by the final rally in Blackpool.

John Deason welcomed the speaker from the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, a CP member, and he spoke about the need for united fronts against the Tory attacks.

But on the march it seemed that the comrades of the SWP had a lot to learn about united fronts. The whole march seemed little more than a recruiting drive for the SWP.

One of the high spots was the march meeting on the eve of the TUC lobby. It was not so much a meeting as a variety show with numerous orange jacketed figures popping up in front of a mike to tell us to join the SWP.

A speech by John Deason told us about the need for a revolutionary party. But of course we were not told how to build it. There's no need — just add members and wait for the insurrection.

What a let down! No discussion about politics, not even about sexism and racism. Not even a real discussion about how to fight unemployment. A few meetings were organised one night after some *Revolution* members suggested it.

I could go on about the lack of democracy in the march council elections, about how the march bulletin was just an advert for the SWP and so on. Organising the unemployed is a massive task, that's why democracy is so essential.

The idea of the march — to show the anger of the unemployed, to make demands on the organised labour movement — is a good one. But it has to say a bit more than 'fight for the right to work' and 'burn Len Murray'.

The really sad thing was that lots of youth, open to revolutionary politics, who were on the march, really didn't learn anything from it. That was a big opportunity missed. MARK, Birmingham Revolution.

THE RIGHT to Work Campaign has been going for five years. Five years which saw unemployment rise to over 1.5 million.

There's no denying we need a way of fighting unemployment, but has the Right to Work Campaign got it right? If this year's march was anything to go by, then I think not.

The march seemed to be saying that fighting unemployment is the same as joining the SWP. Nobody is opposed to people joining the SWP but it is not the answer to all our problems.

The thing is, it's all very well recruiting people but when there is insufficient politics on the march to counter even the problem of stealing, then it's clear that simply 'joining the party' is inadequate.

Similarly problems of overt racism and sexism were hardly touched on. Token speeches could not make up for the absence of any explanation of what sexism actually is.

Fighting it needs more than women getting up and saying 'We're as good as any man'. Especially when the next speaker might easily be a man referring to 'the lads on the march'.

The march did not identify with women's political demands — such as for a woman's right to work — so it's not surprising that sexism was left unattacked.

But the main problem was that we were not offered a way of fighting unemployment. It was not clear how we get the organised labour movement to take up the question.

The march cannot have any impact on unemployment on its own, we have to get the labour movement to fight for us.

That's why the campaign should exist all the year round, fighting for support inside the labour movement, both locally and nationally.

The march would be a lot bigger then. More people would come if it was based on strong local campaigns.

It should fight for demands like for a reduced working week and work sharing with no loss of pay because these can provide people with a real perspective for making inroads against unemployment.

Then the Right to Work March to the TUC would really represent something and really mean something.

Richard Rozanski, NUSS.



RIGHT to Work marchers released from police custody after being arrested for distributing leaflets in a school.

## WOMEN IN ACTION

Working Conference to launch a new women's paper for the unions  
Saturday 13 October, Friends Meeting House, Bull Street, Birmingham  
(off Corporation St. opposite New St station) 12-5.30pm.

Sponsors include: Working Women's Charter Campaign, Women in the NUT, Lambeth Teachers Association, Civil Service Women's Rights Group, North Staffs Women's Rights Standing Committee, NATFHE.  
For copies of the pilot issue, literature write to Women in Action, Box 2, Sisterwrite books, 190 Upper St, London N1.

# It's time for the unions in BL to Wipe the smugness off Edwardes' face!

By Pat Hickey, TGWU Rover Solihull

MICHAEL EDWARDES is just too smug for words. Like some elderly headteacher at the end of term assembly, he chides those at the Park Royal bus plant who failed to pull their socks up and pats Speke 2 on the head for being good boys and girls.

But instead of handing out school prizes he's taking away tens of thousands of jobs.

## Winners

'Backing the winners' is Edwardes' new motto. Unfortunately there will be none among Leyland's 165,000 workers.

Those who still have their jobs will face speed-up and worsening conditions. Every fight for a wage increase will be used as an excuse for more sackings, as Edwardes has made clear over the national engineering claim.

So who are the winners? They are the shareholders who for years received profits that were never ploughed back into investment — the real reason for Leyland's problems now.

And they are the private financiers to whom the Tories want to return Leyland after Edwardes has 'got it back on its feet' at the expense of Leyland workers.

Edwardes can afford to be confident if the unions carry on as before. Grenville Hawley, national officer for the TGWU, has said that the union's policy 'has always been not to accept compulsory redundancy'.

## Speke

Yet that has not stopped 18,000 jobs being lost since January 1978, or the closure of the Speke and Southall plants. The union leaders showed no sign of giving a national lead then, and there is no sign of one today.

'It's only crackpot to discuss industrial action until we know what is going on,' says Grenville Hawley. So instead of that, the national joint negotiating committee has set up an emergency committee to 'find out the facts'.

## Combine

The national combine committee, which is best placed to give a lead when the national officers don't, has had a policy that no plant should accept work from another if the workers losing the work object.

On paper that policy could defeat the latest 'plan' of Edwardes. Rover workers could veto the movement of the TR7 from Cowley, as they previously vetoed the Dolomite. Cowley workers could refuse the new Honda.

But in the real world things are different. When Speke No 1 plant was closed the combines policy was never tested.

The workers at Speke — faced with having to mount an isolated struggle, without answers to Edwardes' charges of 'unprofitability' — never resisted. At Southall the lure of extra-large redundancy payments seemed an easier way out.

## Change

If there is finally to be a fightback in Leyland then the unions need to change their whole approach.

The TUC emergency resolution is just one more example of how they have accepted the logic of Edwardes' argument. Their answer is to insist on a minimum British consent to imported cars and put import controls on those cars without that minimum.

It's time the unions said that workers' jobs and livelihoods can no longer be dependent on the whims of 'market forces' and the needs of profit. It's time they said that the work available in Leyland nationally must be shared out without any loss in

pay, and that they oppose any job loss, voluntary or otherwise.

And it's time they drew up a national plan for immediate action to show they mean business.

It should include occupation of those plants and sections facing closure; national strike stoppages to back that up; and the boycotting of work transferred from other plants.

Mass membership meetings, plant stewards' conferences and a national stewards' conference can prepare the action.

## Lead

A clear and vigorous lead at this point can inspire confidence in the membership and wipe the smugness off Edwardes' face. Prevarication and delay are a recipe for confusion and demoralisation. The biggest fight facing BL workers is that of forcing the unions, and the combine committee, into giving that lead.

# On strike at Rover Solihull

By Rich Palser in Solihull

FOR THE second week running, workers at BL's SD1 plant in Solihull have been on strike over management's attempts to cut staffing levels.

As is typical of disputes in Leyland, the workers at SD1 are finding themselves fighting everyone's battle, but fighting it alone.

On 12 September they were called into work by the works committee, which covers all three BL plants on the Solihull site. The site convenor, Joe Harris, wanted the SD1 plant stewards to recommend a return to work.

## Agreements

Management had said they would honour the mutuality agreements — which specify that changes have to be agreed by both sides — but by first reducing staff and then increasing them again if this proved necessary after talks with the unions.

The SD1 stewards insisted that the status quo should remain until after agreement is reached with the union.

The works committee said they should 'test management's integrity'. The stewards decided otherwise, unanimously recommending that the strike should continue at the mass meeting that day.

But the harm had already been

done. The membership thought that having been called in a day early, a settlement was near, and since then they had been in a frame of mind to return to work.

## Return

Although they voted to stay out on 12 September, it was only two to one. The vote had previously been overwhelming. Management is now more confident to sit it out — a feeling no doubt reinforced by events last Thursday.

The mass meeting the day before had decided to picket the Range Rover and Land Rover plants, since the agreement which management was flouting covered them also, and stopping those plants would bring victory closer. So at 6.30am on Thursday the pickets arrived at the gates.

'Stopping lorries is a piece of piss', senior steward Bill Mullins told me as he stepped out into the road. After the first lorry turned back, spirits rose above the cold.

But then the lorries from Leyland in Oxford began to arrive. 'We've been told by our district secretary to only stop at official pickets', the driver said. So TGWU members cross the picket line set up by other members of their union.

## Worse

But worse was to come. The drivers based at Solihull also insisted on crossing — they had been told to by the works committee.

Faced with such a display of 'solidarity', it is hardly surprising that workers who have been in the front line of resisting Edwardes' cutbacks have lacked confidence that resistance is possible, although the strike continues.

More importantly, what is happening at Solihull shows just how BL management operates — they don't tear up agreements, they just 're-define' them.

The SD1 workers are determined to win so they are digging in. They are appealing to the rank and file membership in the other plants through leafleting and contacting sympathetic stewards. In the meantime the production line in the SD1 plant is silent.

Settling accounts with the works leadership will have to wait until they are back inside the gates.

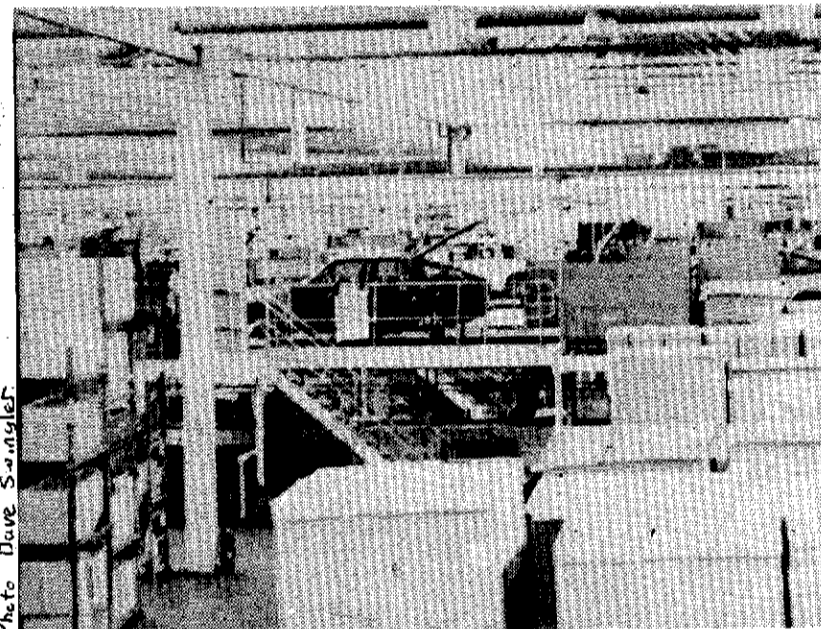


Photo: Dave Saunderson

# FIGHTING THE CUTS — ROUND-UP

## Lambeth

By Hilary Tarr, Lambeth Trades Council, personal capacity

THE controlling Labour group on Lambeth council, South London, has reversed its position on the cuts. By 29 votes to nine, councillors decided on Friday to restore £2m expenditure that the council had previously axed.

The reversal came after a local Labour Party conference had expressed its opposition to any cuts or rates increase. Council leader Ted Knight said he would change his position on the cuts.

Friday's Labour group meeting was lobbied by some two hundred anti-cuts demonstrators.

Announcing a march on Parliament on 7 November, Knight said: 'We have decided to take our stand now against the government's disastrous policies, rather than wait for the situation to deteriorate further.'

## Oxford

OXFORDSHIRE County

Council is planning to close all nursery schools in the area. Its provision of nursery places was not stupendous before — 12 nursery schools and 16 nursery classes in the whole county — but now there will be none at all.

The cuts will mean the loss of 100 jobs in addition to the suffering caused to both parents and children.

Annie Pile is an Oxford mother who will be affected by these cuts, she is also a Socialist Challenge supporter.

'I'm a single parent and I have been working full-time. Because of inadequate nursery provision in Oxford I have had to rely on a childminder.

'I have a low income, so it was hard to meet childminding expenses with no tax relief. But since September the older child has been able to attend nursery school all day and the younger child can go in the afternoons.

'Having my children at nursery school has relieved me of the feeling of guilt that working parents often have as I know they have the stimulation of playing with other children plus play facilities.

'The cuts in Oxford are

a familiar case of divide and rule. In July this year the Education Committee was going to cut school meals. Before that it had taken up the issue of 'rising fives'.

'Now all the nurseries are going to be cut, but rising fives will be allowed to start school a term early, and school meals will not be touched.

'We want all our services. Nursery schools are essential too.

'The fact is that the cuts in jobs will mainly affect women — and they are not strongly organised in trade unions, family responsibilities often mean they cannot make it to union meetings.

'As parents we are organising a fight-back against these cuts — the under fives themselves don't have a voice.'

A meeting was held in Oxford on Tuesday 11 September which was attended by over 100 parents, teachers and trade unionists who opposed the cuts. A lobby of the Education Committee and a demonstration are planned.



## Benn joins cuts demo

PLATFORM for Haringey's anti-cuts demo last Saturday. On the left Tony Benn, who managed to sit quietly through the Labour government's cuts and told the 300 demonstrators about the financial pressures that had been brought to bear by the IMF, the City, and the like. He didn't say what a Labour government could do about this.

Next to him were Labour MPs Norman Atkinson and Reg Race, and on the right, Ted Knight, Labour leader of Lambeth council.

The loudest applause was for Val Graham [inset], vice president of Haringey teachers' association. 'We teachers will not be making any distinction between those who wield the axe with enthusiasm and those who wield it reluctantly,' she said.

## Hackney

WIDESPREAD strikes boosted a day of mass action against health and education cuts in Hackney last Thursday. More than 1,000 people lobbied a meeting of the City and East London Area Health Authority after an earlier picket of Inner London Education Authority offices to protest at plans for school closures.

Among those who took strike action were workers in all the local hospitals, civil servants in the DHSS and Department of Employment, and the entire Hackney council manual department. Support from industrial workers was shown through strike action at British Oxygen and a delegation from Metal Box.

Despite this action the area health authority voted to implement £3.5m worth of cuts — including the closure of over 60 general, surgical and gynaecological beds at St Leonard's hospital. Direct action to prevent these cuts must now be the focus of resistance.

Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

## Duffy hints at a deal

# BEWARE OF A SELL-OUT

By Rich Palser

TERRY DUFFY is reported to be 'looking for a breakthrough'. That should be a warning sign to all engineering workers. It should warn them to BEWARE OF A SELL-OUT.

From the very beginning the right wing union leaders have been attempting to avoid a fight over the claim. They tried to water it down to £70 for skilled workers and drop the demand for shorter hours altogether. Now Duffy is again hinting that 'an hour off the week' and commitments to further reductions in hours can be traded for extra holidays.

Now is not the time to be conceding to the employers the principles behind the claim. The reduction in hours is a first step towards sharing work without any loss in pay — it's part of the fight against unemployment.

The employers are just starting to take the action seriously. The 'back

to work revolt' has gone from the sublime to the ridiculous. The latest episode at Rolls Royce saw no significant return to work even when the union failed to picket.

Now the employers are embarking on a new and more serious tactic to break the strikes. GEC has begun to lay-off workers claiming it to be the result of the two-day stoppages.

Workers at GEC in Sheffield have responded by occupying the factory. By firm and decisive action lock-outs can be prevented, and the employers attempts to split and demoralise engineering workers overcome.

But another lesson must be learned from these lay-offs. The unions have been prepared to go as far as two-day strikes, but now they have got to finish the job. The employers are calling Duffy's bluff: either go all the way or make concessions.

That's why engineering workers have to be on their guard and say: NO SELL OUT, MAKE IT ALL OUT ACTION.



Terry Duffy, AUEW President.

## 'All out action is needed to win'

Says PAT HANSON, AUEW Convener at the Brough British Aerospace plant on Humberside:

“AS FAR as I'm concerned we need an all-out strike to finish them off as cleanly as possible. What is clear is that it has to be a national fight for the full claim, none of this plants going it alone nonsense. I'm opposed to any plant-by-plant settlement of the strike because that will only increase the wage differences and strengthen the bosses' hand.

At a 1,500-strong mass meeting of shop stewards from all over Humberside a few weeks ago, I argued for all-out strike action as the only way to win. And we lost by only eight votes. I'm pretty confident that if we put it to the vote in my factory a majority would call for all-out strike action.

Unfortunately, union rules preclude us from calling a mass meeting and putting it to the vote. It's got to come from the National Executive first. Terry Duffy's in a peculiar position. He's a new boy, and knows he can't be seen by the membership avoiding a fight.

This is good for us because he can be put to the test and if found wanting he can be removed. The TUC and CBI have talked about the 'harmonisation' of relations but Terry won't be having harmonious relations with anyone, because the members will be pulling him into action.

Ken Gill is supposed to be left-wing, yet in this strike Terry Duffy is willing to take more action than he is.

We are being let down by the white collar unions. TASS are part of CSEU and are crossing the picket lines. What they don't seem to understand is that when the micro-chips are introduced — they'll be first for the chop. Then they will come knocking on our door for help.

A lot of workers voted Tory because of the argument about Thatcher supporting collective bargaining and allowing the unions to negotiate with the employers on the open market. But what's happened now that they are in power? They're backing the EEF to the hilt and have introduced proposals to cut down union rights.

The press are right behind this 'right to work' move to cross the picket-line. The local bosses' rag, the Hull Daily Mail, ran big articles about two guys who don't want to support the strike. Yet that is all they could find — two guys! We are fully supporting the Trades Council's new weekly newspaper, Hull News.



## 'People are not prepared to go anti-union'

THE press has done all it can to boost the 'back to workers'. But how much truth was there in the reports? We asked TINA MACKAY, a TGWU shop steward from Lucas Aerospace in Birmingham.

“The 'back to work' movement first appeared outside the union-organised rally in Digbeth Civic Hall on 20 August. Women from Lucas' King St. plant were handing round a petition, and some of them came into the meeting to heckle.

The core of them just wanted to go back to work — they were Tories who greeted Thatcher's election by decorating their machines with blue ribbons. But at the beginning — at that meeting, for instance — they won broader support because of problems about the way the strike was organised.

### Instructions

As one Lucas steward put it: 'We did not have adequate information, we weren't informed about the claim, and suddenly all we get is an instruction to tell our members to come out.'

When some of the women heard what it was all about they said they had no quarrel with the union — just the way the strike was called. I was very sympathetic to them. And the hard-liners gradually exposed themselves as being anti-union.

When the two-day strikes began,



Women from Lucas' King St. plant.

they tried to cross picket lines, and then marched to disrupt the AUEW shop stewards meeting. Although they used the slogan of 'we want the right to work', they meant their individual right and not a collective right in the way we use the slogan. It

was an 'I'm alright Jack' attitude!

So their support is dwindling and it's because people are not prepared to go anti-union. One useful offshoot, perhaps, is that some of my members are starting to ask when branch meetings are held — one member didn't realise that mass meetings in the plant are not the only way union policy is shaped. I think King St. should have had a mass meeting like we did.

The membership are coming behind the claim for the same reason. The claim does affect my members' shift allowance and overtime, though they were pissed off when I told them that the demand for 18 weeks maternity leave had been dropped.

But the main thing is that it's becoming a matter of them and us. The propaganda the EEF is sending out (in our place we each got a letter with a 10p stamp on it saying they were going best because of us) is all about being one big family. But when they are working on Monday and Tuesday and we're not, that starts to ring false.

Another thing is this. The demand for a cut in hours doesn't interest the older women, who think in terms of wages not hours; but when you start to explain it in terms of cutting overtime and saving jobs, that's different. When they say that the union is irresponsible, you can show how the union is being responsible not just for its own members but for those out of work as well.

## So what happened at Cowley?

THE ONLY real success scored by the engineering employers in their attempts to stimulate a 'rank and file revolt' against the strikes has been the decision by workers at BL's Cowley plants not to take part. But even here it only proved possible because a section of the stewards leadership led the 'revolt'.

It started in the body plant where they refused to support the first one day strike. But at a mass meeting where a section of the stewards recommended a one day 'counter-strike', they were voted down and instead the members voted for the next one day stoppage in support of the claim.

When the two day strikes began however the plant leadership decided to 'leave it to the members' to decide — in other words a green light to go in. Not surprisingly workers at the Assembly plant began to ask why they should strike when the others were going in.

2,000 workers marched to the convenors, who were forced to agree to a mass meeting. Whilst the plant leadership fought hard for the strike, an ex-steward put it to the vote and they lost.

With the right-wing stewards threatening to go in as well as the members, the stewards leadership in the Assembly plant was forced to accept defeat.

# THE ENGINEERING S

AT THE end of 1971 industrial conflicts in Britain had reached a peak not equalled for over forty years. The majority of these disputes differed from the Manchester sit-ins of 1972 in two major respects.

(1) Faced with growing unemployment the majority of disputes took on a defensive character. Work-ins at the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders (UCS) in Glasgow and the occupations of Fisher Bendix and Plessey were part of labour's defensive protest against capitalism's attempt to increase unemployment.

(2) All other large industrial

disputes were both nationally led and officially backed from the outset.

In marked contrast the Manchester sit-ins (March-August 1972) were offensive, locally led and, at the start of the dispute, unofficial. Many factors account for these differences but can be condensed into three broad categories.

(1) The failure of the three previous national agreements in 1964/71 to achieve only the absolute minimum concessions from the Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF) had placed a growing

responsibility onto plant bargaining.

(2) The practical experience of engineering workers during the periods of pay restraint (1965/68). Engineering, being an industry based on a payment by results wages system, provided a proven mechanism for beating pay norms, which was further enhanced by a continuous shortage of skilled personnel during a period of rising unemployment.

(3) A growing army of experienced plant negotiators who marshalled rank and file members to exploit management's weaknesses.

## Lessons for the present

**MIKE SMITH** was Chairperson of the Ferranti C 1972. He was thus in a unique position to evaluate weaknesses of the wave of factory occupations from March till August 1972.

The extract we publish below is the concluding longer study which will be published elsewhere. extremely important for the engineering struggles the present time.



But if their strength lay in their past experiences it was also responsible for the weaknesses during the duration of the dispute. Isolated in hundreds of different factories they failed to take account of the changing economic climate. During the 1960s a typical strike had lasted three days, had involved a few hundred people and had been settled at local or plant level.

**“...the employers entered into the dispute with a distinct advantage”**

But from 1970 onwards every major union had to reckon with the possibility, even the likelihood, that it would need to call out hundreds of thousands of people for three weeks or more. Coupled with this was the massive rise in unemployment. In the twelve months ending in October 1971 over four hundred and fifty thousand jobs in the manufacturing industry vanished. Employment fell over five per cent in the year in several industries: metal manufacture, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and textiles.

By 1972 1½ million fewer people were at work in Britain than in September 1966. The reality of the economic climate failed to influence Manchester engineering workers, who only related to past experience. This experience proved that short unofficial stoppages was an acceptable strategy for maintaining living standards.

Viewed from their position it was not surprising that the 1972 dispute was seen as an extension of normal practice. The only difference this time being a joint factory strategy instead of the usual sectional disputes. This therefore left unquestioned their new bargaining position in relation to a falling labour market and the consequent strengthening of the employers' resistance to new pay claims. In other words, they failed to realise the full implications of their actions.

Success in Manchester would have destroyed the effectiveness of the EEF and consequently would have challenged the legitimacy of national bargaining. Failure to realise this ensured that only the trade union and employers' bureaucracies stood to gain from a defeat of the Manchester sit-ins. But to understand the full implications that lay behind the disputes requires an examination of the differing strengths of both the employers' and workers' organisations. This then brings into question the role of the national trade union leaders, who failed to mobilise any effective resistance in combating the employers' offensive.

Collectively the employers entered into the dispute with a distinct advantage, their organisation being

far superior to both local and national levels of the trade union movement. During the period of the dispute (over five months) the workers' representatives only met as a collective three times, once to plan the action, once to listen to Hugh Scanlon defend the leadership and lastly to admit defeat.

This was in marked contrast to the employers. *The Times* pointed out on 21 May 1972 that: ‘considerable organisation has gone into dealing with the present crisis. The local employers association which has the strong backing of the national EEF has formed into sixteen manageable groups of about twenty companies, each of which have been meeting to plan tactics.’

While the employers planned their tactics the workers sat in their factories without any guidance or plan of how to combat this offensive. Isolated from one another they failed to prevent the consistent flow of settlements on a cash only basis, which even the local trade union leaders were powerless to prevent. Without leadership from national level workers felt obliged to follow normal practice, that being accepting offers that satisfied their own sectional interests.

As Lane correctly points out, ‘sectionalism could only have been held in check if unions had been capable of generating a programme of a sufficiently broad sweep as to make the differences between workers seem petty and trivial.’ (*The Union Makes Us Strong*: Tony Lane, 1974, p. 268)

But as sectionalism is the dominant characteristic of engineering, an unofficial district dispute was incapable of raising the level of workers' consciousness. Mass action needed at least one identifiable common cause. The four point claim failed to realise this objective. Skilled workers failed to relate to a claim that called for uniform increases. Men on the whole objected to equal pay for women, and the thirty five hour week was seen as utopian.

Even the sit-ins proved no real problem to the employers. They realised that while workers sat in their factory they were separated from one another. Heating and lighting costs may have increased, but they were amply compensated out of national funds.

**“...only defence was the newsheet produced by the International Socialists”**

It soon became clear that only the well organised factories were taking the struggle seriously. This further enhanced management's determination to win the dispute. Defeat over the well organised factories promised a massive shift back to managerial control.



# SIT-INS OF 1972

Director's Committee in  
state the strengths and  
which shook Manchester

passage from a much  
any of its lessons are  
which are taking place at

To achieve this end, management used every opportunity in their attempts to isolate workers. One of their main weapons was a continuous flow of company letters to the homes of every individual worker. In a letter to all Hawker Siddeley workers they emphasised the weakness of the workers' position.

The letter below is a perfect example of the continuous flow of management propaganda, sent to all employees engaged in the Manchester engineering dispute.

*'You may find it interesting to know the latest position in the district. Of the 250 Federated firms in our Association, 193 are now working normally, 11 are working virtually normally, 13 are suffering meaningful sanctions, 4 have some form of strike, 8 have laid off their workers who have gone home, and 21 have sit-ins.'*

*'Of these working normally, 37 had reached settlements by last Friday; of these, 31 are on money only and 6 include some small change in conditions as well, but in no case a reduction in working hours.'*

*'It has been claimed that Faireys have agreed to reduce the working week in 1973. All I can say is that their Chairman and their Managing Director have assured the Federation that they have not agreed to this.....'*

*'With the rest of the country making reasonable progress in settling the claim, it seems crazy for Manchester in general and Stockport in particular to throw common sense and good wages to the wind in the face of fair offers from employers. This can only do serious damage to the long term future of the district and its companies, discourage potential employers from setting up in business here, and encourage unemployment. This cannot be what the average man wants — when will they say so?'*

Hawker Siddeley Aviation Limited, Manchester — letter to all their employees, 25 April 1972)

Even though these letters misrepresented the workers' position, they played a major part in the ideological warfare for breaking down workers' resistance. The only defence against this type of propaganda was the newsheet produced by the International Socialists (forerunner of the SWP).

This newsheet attempted a co-ordination of the larger factories, but with a circulation of only ten thousand, it failed to reach a major proportion of the workers.

While workers faced this uneven struggle one has to ask what prevented national trade union leaders from mobilising maximum resistance. Two major reasons stand out.

(1) At no time had they contemplated an all-out national dispute. Events, however, overtook them. The Manchester action was initiated by rank and file members dissatisfied by the inactivity at national level. The Manchester action was therefore outside of their control.



(2) Once Manchester accepted the burden of leadership, it allowed national leaders the opportunity of sitting back to watch developments. If the workers appeared to be winning the struggle, they could force the EEF back round the table in a weakened position, and so take credit for the Manchester success.

On the other hand if Manchester failed they could step in and agree to a new national settlement, while blaming the Manchester workers for the weakness of their position at the bargaining table. In either case they would be able to come out of it at the end in control.

This position taken by the national leadership was an obvious disadvantage to the Manchester sit-ins. It played a major part in the massive defeat that the employers inflicted on workers. The lessons workers have learned from these defeats will become evident in future working class struggles.

**“...not able to develop any real alternative political force”**

The 1972 sit-ins belong to the history of struggle between labour and capital. Much of what occurred during that five months was unexceptional. It would have happened in any strike. But there were also aspects of that struggle which represented the end of one historical period, while others signified the beginning of a new chapter.

The sit-ins were a massive blow to the post-war shop stewards movement. The post-war boom enabled workers to gain economic concessions

by exerting pressure at the point of production. Particularly in industries such as engineering, where there was a continuous shortage of skilled labour, workers could to a certain extent play off one employer against another.

In engineering the struggle by workers took place on a plant by plant basis. Because in the main gains were achievable at this level, workers neglected to co-ordinate on an industrial or national level. Plant bargaining enabled shop stewards to become the natural leaders of engineering workers.

As evidence to the Donovan Commission (1965/68) noted;

*“... power has moved away in trade unions from the top, from the permanent officials, particularly from the national officials, and in fact power is now concentrated on the shop floor, and it is concentrated in the shop steward.”*

This shift of power from the established union leaders to shop stewards that took place in the 1950s and early 1960s increased the militancy of engineering workers and was responsible in part for the reputation that British industry had of being ‘strike-prone’.

This type of militancy only tended to disguise their overall weakness and lack of organisation. Shop stewards were the spearhead of dispersed troops, but not of an army. Even so, whatever the limitations of their political ideology — and on the whole it was reformist — if the organisation and practice to unite the working class had existed, their ideology, too, would have gone beyond simple economic trade unionism.

The plant by plant, industry by industry divisions of the working class, as well as divisions between skilled and unskilled, men and

women, black and white workers are the effects of the way capitalism organises the working class in its attempts to dominate it.

This domination is reflected in the labour movement, where sectionalism is incorporated in the organisational structure of all trade unions. The 1972 sit-ins attempted to overcome the restrictions of sectionalism. Engineering shop stewards in Manchester made attempts at co-ordination between factories. But they were not able to develop any real alternative political force to challenge the trade union hierarchy. Reliance on local union bureaucrats meant that many stewards only felt loyalty to workers within their own factory, which destroyed any real co-ordination between factories.

The failure of shop stewards to move away from traditional practice was a significant point in the final defeat of the Manchester sit-ins. It also removed any illusion that some socialists held about shop stewards being the future revolutionary vanguard of the working class.

The Manchester sit-ins showed that this hope was utopian. What was revealed was the reformist attitude of the trade union movement, which was part of its historical foundations.

While the working class struggled to overcome the weakness of reformism, the bourgeoisie was carefully examining its own weakness. In 1965/68 the Royal Commission on Trade Unions, chaired by Lord Donovan, reported; ‘The central defect in British industrial relations is the disorder in factory and workshop relations and pay structures promoted by the conflict between the formal and the informal systems.... Certain features of trade union structure and government have helped to inflate the power of work-groups and shop-stewards.’

The message of this report was loud and clear. Capitalism needed to regain control of the labour process at the point of production. This problem became even more pressing as British capitalism moved into economic recession. Unemployment, speed-ups and the removal of restrictive working practices were deemed necessary to discipline the working class. The main organised opposition to this attack came through unofficial strikes, led by shop stewards. So defeat or regulation of rank and file leaders became the main ingredient for reforming collective bargaining.

Since 1968 government legislation on industry has been aimed at reducing unofficial strikes, and through that the power of shop-stewards. This was first attempted by a Labour government in 1968, and again by a Tory government in 1971.

The Labour government (1964/70) was the first to attempt legislation against unofficial strikes. Their White Paper (*In Place of Strife*, 1968) created massive opposition from rank and file activists, who rightly appreciated that they were the main target of any legislation. This ensured that resistance was more forthright than many trade union leaders probably intended. Faced with this reaction from the working class, the Labour government agreed to drop legislation.

Even so, this did not prevent the new Conservative government (1970/74) from introducing the Industrial Relations Act (1971). The strategic intention of this legislation was to compel the unions themselves to discipline their members, to decrease the volatility of factory-based industrial relations, and thus to minimise the effective bargaining power of the rank and file shop stewards organisation.

The defeat of the Conservative government at the hands of the miners (1974) ensured that the new Labour government based its industrial strategy on collaboration instead of confrontation. Though even this attempt failed because of the refusal of militant workers to accept responsibility for the crisis.

Defeat of this type of legislation forced the bourgeoisie to rethink their overall strategy. They opted for strengthening the trade union leadership's control over the shop-floor. This has been a necessary precondition for the collaboration of the trade unions and the state in its attempts to restructure British capitalism.

The 1972 sit-ins in Manchester demonstrated the weakness of the trade union movement, given their existing forms of organisation, but these lessons were not missed by the more politically conscious stewards.

As one engineering steward called John Deason pointed out at the end of the sit-ins:

*‘Every engineer in Manchester must be aware by now that they were left in the lurch first by the national officials and later by the local ones. And unless we do something about this it could happen again. The only solution to these problems is to have the control of the unions and the dispute in the hands of the rank and file.’*

*‘The so-called left-wing leaders of the AUEW have made such a cock-up that they have opened the door to the return of the right wing and that is what we have to guard against at all costs by making sure we have real democracy in the union.’*

*‘There is no doubt that the result of the Manchester dispute has been to increase the unevenness between the factories rather than uniting them. This is going to make the struggle next year even harder because now we all have agreements that run out at different times. The only answer is to start preparations now and mount a strong campaign for a national fight.’*

Events since the sit-ins have justified the fears of many militant stewards. A Labour government returned to power in 1974 adopted the strategy of collaborating with the trade union leadership to control the working class. The working class has still to draw its lessons from struggles such as the Manchester sit-ins. Reformism still dominates the labour movement, the unions' leaders still have no strategy to go forward, and capitalism is getting more and more desperate.

# 'Where were you, Britain, since 1965?'

JOSEPH MSIKA, secretary general of ZAPU

THE liberation armed struggle in Zimbabwe has reached a very advanced stage indeed. The Patriotic Front forces are waging a relentless war with courage and determination. We have demonstrated this by defeating first the UDI.

We have defeated Ian Smith. Ian Smith was forced by the Patriotic Front to change his tactics, but we realise that he did not change his intentions.

He has tried to use manoeuvres by wooing some of our unprincipled brothers in Zimbabwe to accept being used as political instruments in the fight against their own people. To this I say shame, shame on Bishop Muzorewa — a naive bishop, a person who hasn't the foggiest idea of what it is to fight and liberate your country. (Voice from audience: Put him under heavy manners!)

Comrades, we know that you will ask me what is it that the Patriotic Front is about. The Patriotic Front has made it abundantly clear that the only true and sure method of liberating our country is by revolutionary armed struggle.

You will say: what are you doing here, then? The answer is, realising that the revolutionary armed struggle is the only surest and true method of liberating our country, and having been invited to talks as the result of the successes of war, we have responded, we have come here, because we realise such talks are complementary to the revolutionary armed struggle and not an alternative...

The Patriotic Front, an alliance of ZAPU and ZANU, as the only true vanguard of the liberation struggle for the people of Zimbabwe, realises that unity is a national necessity...

Comrades, we have formed many committees, embracing the political leaderships and the commands of ZANU and ZAPU. We have now

developed that into a co-ordinating council of both ZAPU and ZANU with the right to make decisions and answerable to joint executive committees of both movements.

We have also organised a defence council made up of the command of both ZAPU and ZANU and they are in the process of making the necessary relations in order for us to fight the war as one Patriotic Front, because we realise this is an essential element in the revolutionary armed struggle.

The British government has for many years, since 1890, equivocated, prevaricated and taken a spineless stand when it came to taking their role as a colonising power in Zimbabwe, right through the history of the liberation armed struggle.

We called upon them to take a stand to end UDI. The answer was negative. We called upon them to remove Smith and decolonise. The answer was negative...

There is no question today of Britain coming up and telling us that she wants to take her right to decolonise Zimbabwe. Where were you, Britain, since 1965?

We say to Britain: because the Patriotic Front forces have redressed the balance of power by their sweat and blood sacrifices, the Patriotic Front has therefore become an effective and decisive factor in the decolonising process. Britain can never therefore claim the sole right to decolonise...

There is a war situation in Zimbabwe and if Britain wants to decolonise she must accept that she comes as an equal to the Patriotic Front. We will decolonise Zimbabwe together...

Britain has to realise that means nothing short of complete and total transfer of power. When I say power I mean true power, with the instruments of power — that is, the armed forces, the police, the administrative structure, the judiciary and all the forces that make up the instruments of power...



# WHO WILL DECOLONISE ZIMBABWE?

## 'Our initiative is on the battlefield'

EDGAR TEKERE, secretary general of ZANU

WE FEEL very much indebted to you, and particularly to the public of Great Britain, for such an overwhelming demonstration of support for the people of Zimbabwe. We make a very clear distinction between the British government and the British people...

We have come to London because we have been invited. The British government thinks that perhaps on this occasion it can resolve the problem of Zimbabwe by negotiation. Many years ago we gave it up because we didn't think it worked. We took up the gun and this is what we are doing... and with it we are going to acquire power.

That is our initiative. We have no other initiative for the people of Zimbabwe. But we have come to London at the invitation of the British government because they think that they have better ideas. That's their initiative, not ours.

And while we are attending here in London to other people's initiative we will make sure that our own initiative is on the move back home, on the battlefield.

Margaret Thatcher is saying she has called a constitutional conference. Lord Carrington is saying he has been asked to chair a constitutional conference. We have come here to solve a conflict. We understand that we have been invited here to solve an armed conflict. Matters constitutional may be covered but they are going to be incidental...



ZANU president Robert Mugabe

The presidents have been asked here: who controls the army? In fact we go much further: What army? What orientation has that army? This is a very crucial question.

In Zimbabwe today we have two armies. One of those armies, commanded by General Walls, has been a vicious instrument of resistance against the people of Zimbabwe. The patriotic forces have been built as an instrument dedicated to do battle and achieve liberation for all the people of Zimbabwe. Which one of the two armies survives? This is the question.

Are we as a body of leadership going to come to London and say that the security of the people of Zimbabwe, the rights of the people of Zimbabwe, can be secured by an army

which has fought many battles for so long to resist such aims? Are we going to do that?

Or are we going to say that the patriotic forces, which have fought, sacrificed life, limb and blood for so many years to deliver the people of Zimbabwe their freedom, that such a force is the one that should survive?

That to me sounds like common sense. But knowledge of the English has taught me that common sense is not so often very common!

There were years when we used to scream for Britain to send in its troops. They said No. And may I here refer to a meeting we had in October 1965 with Harold Wilson in Salisbury, one month before UDI.

We said: this man Ian Smith is going to declare UDI very soon. Will you send in British troops to stop him? Harold Wilson said: it is unthinkable that British troops could be brought here to fight their kith and kin. We said, okay, we are going to build up our forces to fight this man. He said, oh well, they are just talking. I wish you well.

And now Britain comes in and says it wants to assume our responsibilities for decolonisation. Have we not been doing that? Would it be rational for us to give it all to Britain and say, okay you can decolonise it, you are the master?

So, as comrade Msika has said, we have become the masters of the process of decolonisation in Zimbabwe. If Britain would like some advice on how to fight Smith, here we are at Lancaster House...

## More detained

ON 28 OCTOBER 1976, delegates assembled in the council chamber of the Palais des Nations, Geneva, for the opening session of talks aimed at achieving a constitutional settlement in Rhodesia. Bishop Abel Muzorewa was leading a delegation of the United African National Council (UANC).

Before taking his place in the centre of his colleagues, under the eyes of more than 170 journalists and cameramen, he placed a placard on each of the two empty seats flanking his own. One bore the name of Mr. Enos Nkala, the acting deputy secretary of the UANC arrested by the Rhodesian police in April 1976 and still detained without charge; the other that of Dr. Edson Sithole, the UANC publicity secretary.

Dr. Sithole and his secretary Ms. Miriam Mhlanga had disappeared in October 1975 after being seen being hustled into a van by men presumed to be members of the Rhodesian Special Branch. They were widely believed in nationalist circles to be still held by the Smith regime in some secret place of detention, or alternatively, to have been murdered.

### Oppressive

In a strongly-worded indictment of white minority rule, Bishop Muzorewa declared that: 'We object to a system that allows detention and restriction without trial. There are thousands of people who have been deprived of their liberty unjustly because of oppressive actions...'

The Bishop went on to describe the various repressive methods by which the Smith regime maintained 'law and order', including the removal of Africans into protected villages, the confiscation of livestock in the war zones, the indiscriminate killing of civilians during curfew hours, the massacre of refugees in neighbouring Mozambique and the torture of detainees for interrogation purposes. He concluded:

'We now demand at this conference that a favourable climate be immediately created by:

\*the immediate release, without conditions, of all political prisoners — detainees and restrictees, including people in the concentration villages;

\*the revocation of all death sentences on political prisoners of war and their immediate release;

\*the granting of a general amnesty to all those considered to have committed political crimes, including those outside the country;

\*the creation of conditions conducive to free political activities and freedom of expression in the country (this includes freedom of the press);

\*the halting of all political trials;

\*the lifting of the State of Emergency together with all restrictive regulations at present in force;

\*In short, we demand the immediate suspension of the present racist and oppressive constitution.'

More than two and a half years later, however, when on 1 June 1979 Bishop Muzorewa assumed the post of prime minister and a new



# Angolan president dies

By Roy Alexander

AGOSTINHO NETO, president of Angola, died in Moscow last week at the age of 56.

One of the first leaders of the struggle to oust Portuguese colonialism from its dominions, Neto was among the tiny handful of young Africans able to overcome the hurdles erected by the colonial system and receive higher education. However, rather than sit back and enjoy the privileges membership of such an elite could bring, or take the easy route of emigration to Europe, Neto was stirred by the oppression of his people into political action.

After years of study in Portugal, where he made contact with the Communist Party and early Angolan nationalist circles, Neto qualified as a doctor and returned to practise medicine in his home village. Two years later he was arrested for alleged political offences, publicly flogged, and imprisoned.

When the inhabitants of this and the adjoining village demonstrated peacefully in protest, the Portuguese army opened fire on them, killing 30 and wounding 200. A further retaliatory raid wiped these two villages off the map. The wave of indignation that followed, and the continuing campaign for Neto's release, were among the formative events of the Angolan anti-imperialist movement.

In 1962, assisted by the CP, Neto escaped from his Portuguese prison and took up a leading position within the MPLA, the nationalist group to which he had been closest.

Neto and the MPLA represented that current of Angolan nationalism, led by a tiny but influential group of intellectuals, which saw that the struggle to free the Angolan people from the Portuguese yoke required the forging of a new Angolan nation out of the wide range of tribal and ethnic groups in the country. They also grasped the need to take up the social questions which affected the daily lives of the workers and peasants.

## Legacy

It was these two strengths which gave the MPLA its central role in the modern history of Angola. However Neto remained encased in the political outlook of his youth, trapped by Stalinism and a limited nationalism that failed to see that the struggle for national emancipation is doomed to frustration unless it is based upon the revolutionary mobilisation of the oppressed masses for a total break with the imperialist world system.

As a result, the Angola which Neto leaves as his legacy is marked by deep uncertainties. It remains balanced between political and military dependence on Cuba and the Soviet Union, and economic dependence on imperialist capital.

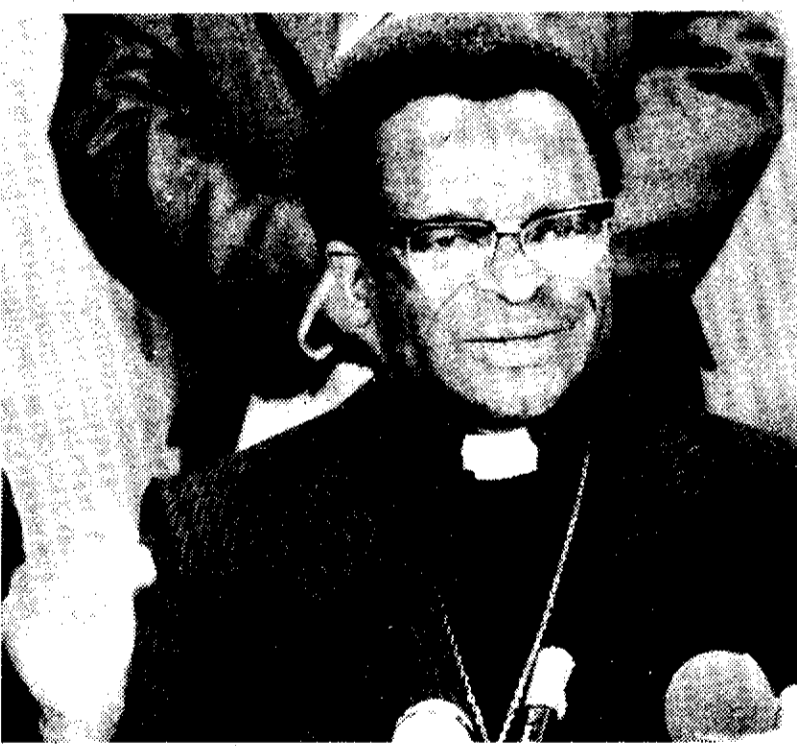
Methods of repression and bureaucratic dictate have increasingly come to supplant those of revolutionary mobilisation. Political power in Angola is monopolised by the ruling party, and that party had become increasingly dominated by the personal influence of its leader.

Neto's death thus poses big problems for Angola's future. Regrettably the Angolan masses, for whose sake Neto originally took up the banner of struggle, have no means by which to influence — much less decide — the outcome. That is the tragedy of the Angolan revolution, and the tragedy of Agostinho Neto.

THESE photos show the legacy of the Rhodesian raid into Mozambique just before the start of the constitutional conference in London. Above left is the wreck of a bridge in Gaza province; on the right Mozambican civilians, their homes destroyed by Rhodesian forces, leave the zone under attack.

The raid was faithfully presented by the media as an attack on ZANU military targets. In fact its purpose was altogether different: to cripple food supply in Mozambique as part of a consistent effort to undermine the country's economy.

The region where the attack took place, the Limpopo valley, produces not just rice, the staple crop, but also yams and tomatoes. Main targets for the Rhodesians were the large warehouses where the rice crop is being stored, and bridges on the main supply outlet, the Chokwe-Maputo road.



BISHOP ABEL MUZOREWA

expense of the civilian governmental machinery, and add new and harsh measures to the regime's existing arsenal of security laws.

Under martial law, the army, police and other security forces have been granted unprecedented powers to arrest and detain suspects without charge, to search, confiscate and destroy property and livestock without warrant, and to conduct political trials before military courts authorised to impose the death penalty.

In August 1979 Commonwealth heads of state meeting in Lusaka agreed that a new constitutional conference on Rhodesia would be convened, this time in London. It appeared that as far as the illegal regime's political prisoners were concerned, history was about to repeat itself.

Political trials under the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act have continued since the 1976 Geneva talks despite claims by the regime that an amnesty programme has been im-

plemented. While a small number of convicted political prisoners have been freed before the expiry of their terms under a programme of selected releases initiated since March 1978, the total number of those known to be serving sentences on political grounds has almost doubled over the last three years.

Similarly, while over 1,000 people detained on an indefinite basis under ministerial orders have been released by the regime since the signing of the internal settlement agreement in March 1978, a legal source inside Rhodesia has recently stated that, once those persons detained under the martial law regulations have been taken into account, 'it is highly probable that there are many more persons who are indefinitely detained today than at any time in the past'.

\*Further details of the report can be obtained from International Defence and Aid Fund, 2 Amen Court, London EC4M 7BX (tel. 01-606 6123).

THE LONDON conference on Zimbabwe is into its second week with little settled beyond the agenda. What kind of regime is it that Bishop Muzorewa presides over? And what is the attitude of the Patriotic Front leaders?

Below we print a section from a new report produced by the International Defence and Aid Fund on 'Political Prisoners in Rhodesia in 1979' which details how Muzorewa has maintained intact the repressive regime which he so bitterly denounced at the Geneva conference in 1976.

We also print extracts from speeches by JOSEPH MSIKA, secretary general of ZAPU, and EDGAR TEKERE, secretary general of ZANU, at a solidarity meeting organised by the Zimbabwe Emergency Campaign Committee on the opening day of the conference.

Finally, we mark the death of the leader of another African liberation movement — Agostinho Neto of the Angolan MPLA.

# Never before

constitution came into force, the obstacles to freedom which he had listed at the Geneva conference remained.

To quote one example, on that very day, 1 June 1979, two brothers aged 16 and 19 were arrested at their home by 12 white members of the regime's security forces. Mr. Leavit and Mr. Benhard Katumba were later sentenced to death at an *in camera* trial by a special court martial, or military court. They were convicted of carrying arms of war, a charge which both denied.

## Hangings

Some months previously, in February 1979, it had been confirmed that secret hangings of political prisoners under sentence of death were continuing despite specific assurances to the contrary by Bishop Muzorewa and his colleagues.

The government headed by Bishop Muzorewa and dominated numerically by members of the United African National Council (UANC) has in fact inherited, virtually intact, the entire machinery of political repression built up and enforced over the years by the Rhodesian Front.

While attempts have been made by the regime under its internal settlement agreement to remove aspects of racial discrimination such as segregated hotels and other public facilities, the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act, the most important legal weapon used over the

years since its introduction in 1960 to crush African political activity at the grass-roots level, remains on the statute book.

Bishop Muzorewa's government has on numerous occasions indicated that it has every intention of continuing to make use of this and other legislation. At the beginning of July 1979, parliament unanimously approved the extension of the national State of Emergency (in force since shortly before UDI in 1965) for a further six months.

This is the first time in the illegal regime's history that this has occurred without any opposition from African members of parliament.

The newly appointed president of the regime, Mr. Josiah Gumede, stated at the opening of parliament on 26 June 1979 that his government would give the highest priority to the re-establishment and maintenance of law and order and the elimination of 'terrorism'. The government, he said, had 'no alternative but to resort to the exceptional powers permitted under the State of Emergency and all other means available to it to safeguard the integrity and security of the state'.

## Powers

On 1 June 1979, furthermore, the country remained under — and continued to be overshadowed by — a state of almost total martial law. The martial law regulations amount to a further drastic extension of the powers of the security forces at the

Worldwide  
Outcry  
Against  
Threat of  
Execution



## SAVE THE LIVES OF IRANIAN SOCIALISTS!

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## WHAT'S LEFT

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PAPERS

Theoretical journal of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency

No 5 The battle for Africa

The recession is forcing the imperialist powers to compete ever more fiercely for control of raw material sources, markets and areas for investment. Frank Richards' analysis of the material forces underlying the new scramble for Africa is complemented by articles on imperialist rivalry in Zaire and the struggle for national liberation in Zimbabwe. Also, reviews of recent books on African mineworkers in Central Africa and on the history of the fight against apartheid in South Africa.

Available from BCM JPLTD, London WC1Y 6XX. 60p + 15p postage (air mail 55p). Make cheques, postal orders and international money orders payable to Junius Publications. For overseas payment, please use international money orders.

**LOOKING for a challenge?** Thanks to an Arts Council writers' grant, Broadside Mobile Workers' Theatre needs another versatile socialist actress (singing an advantage). We perform shows on women, racism, workers' control for trade unionists, women's groups, schools. Long term commitment desirable. Write with full details of theatrical-political experience or ring 01-470 2581 or 730 5396. Address: 58 Holbein House, Holbein Place, London SW1.

**NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION!** POW status for Irish Republican prisoners; Brits out of Ireland. Oxford, Sat 20 Oct — assemble 2pm Chapel St, off Cowley Road. Creche available. Evening 'social'. Organised by Sinn Fein.

**TEN YEARS** of the Irish war; five years of the Prevention of Terrorism Act — troops out now, smash the PTA. Planning meeting to mobilise for a national demonstration on 24 November commemorating the fifth anniversary of the introduction of the PTA. Monday 24 Sept 7.30pm, Club Room, Conway Hall, London WC1 — Holborn Tube. Called by the Revolutionary Communist Tendency.

**CELEBRATE** with SWAPO — Namibia Day 79 marks 13 years of armed struggle by SWAPO — with Tour de Force, Shalack, SWAPO and ZANU(PF) Singers, Freddie's Hotline Disco. Bar. Tickets £1.50, £1.00. All proceeds to SWAPO Women's Council. Fri 21 Sept 7.30pm at Caxton House, 129 St John's Way, London N19.

**RIGHT TO WORK** slide show of the march — tapes and slides from: 224 High Street Digheth, Brum 5. Tel. 021-784 8869.

**SCARLET WOMAN SUPPLEMENT:** Comments and papers on the Socialist Feminist conference 1979. Available now on request to: 5, Washington Terrace, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, enclosing four 5p stamps.

**GAY RIGHTS AT WORK:** TU day schools organised by Scottish Homosexual Rights Group for men and women active in trade union work. Glasgow Trades Union Centre, Sat 27 Oct; Edinburgh TU Centre, Sun 28 Oct. For full details and registration contact Ian Dunn on 031-225 2424 ext 6298 (day), or Bob Deacon — Livingston 38394 (day).

**HULL UNIVERSITY** FI Society and Socialist Challenge supporters present 'The Patriot Game' (first time in Hull) — Fri 19 Oct, 7.45pm in Middleton Hall, Hull University, Cottingham Rd, Hull. Tickets (75p) from any SC seller, Socialist Books, or ring Angie 441922.

**LIVERPOOL** Socialist Challenge group has recently obtained premises for SC centre on Merseyside. Donations towards cost of rent, rates, security, etc., gratefully received — send to Socialist Challenge (Box 64), PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

**BOOKS** for Southern Africa comrades — money is desperately needed for this vital field of international activity. Or send any books you can spare. Books for Southern Africa, Box 102, Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1.

**POLITICAL PRINTSHOP,** London, needs person for design work. Printshop experience would be useful asset. Applicants must have had some experience in design, although training would be given. Applications to: Socialist Challenge (Print), PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

**'FREE ABORTION on Demand'** and 'No means No' badges are again available from The Week, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Singly 25p each, bulk 12p each. Make cheques or POs out to 'The Week'.

**IMG TRADE UNION** fraction meetings: 23 September — ASTMS; 30 September — NALGO, CPSA. For details write to Centre or phone 01-359-8371.



Mahsa Hashemi and Fatima Fallahi, two Iranian women Trotskyists who received 'special' treatment from Khomeini's courts — life imprisonment!

# Iran: open letter from jailed Trotskyists

*THE FATE of the 12 Trotskyists of the HKS [Socialist Workers Party] previously sentenced to death in Iran remains in the balance. It is vital to continue the worldwide campaign to secure their release — in Britain, a picket is being held at 1pm on Saturday outside the Iranian Embassy [16 Princes Gate, London SW7].*

*The campaign is also demanding the release of two women members of the HKS, Mahsa Hashemi and Fatima Fallahi, who were sentenced to life imprisonment in late August. The following is the bulk of an open letter from them which was sent from Dezful Prison in northern Khuzestan on 30 August.*

LIFE SENTENCES will not silence us.

After ninety days of illegal detention by Mr. Satarian, the prosecutor of the Islamic Revolutionary Court, we, two women members of the HKS, were tried in absentia by the successors of Mr. Satarian.

This court — whose very existence we question — did not even allow us to read the prosecutor's brief or allow us to defend ourselves. The elementary right to have a lawyer and consult with him was denied us. This court — the identity of whose members is unknown to us — ruled behind closed doors and decided our fate in our absence.

After all the struggles and the martyrs who died fighting against the criminal courts of the Pahlavi regime, this unjust ruling will forever remain in the history of the struggle between the rulers and the oppressed people of Iran.

## Torture

The consistent, repressive and inhuman conduct of the prosecutor's office did not end with our 'trial'.

After the 'trial', armed guards transferred us blindfolded to an unknown spot, which we later found out was the Dezful Prison. In response to our questions as to where they were taking us, we heard nothing but silence or 'I don't know'. In response to our protests that such unjust methods had been rejected by the great rebellion of the people, we heard the answer that 'We will do much more than this'.

Armed guards took us out of the car in the middle of the night and left us in the desert. Then they said: 'Don't resist'. We were blindfolded and told: 'You only need two bullets. When you hear the guns go off you

will die on the spot.'

In this way they began our psychological torture.

In Dezful Prison they threw us into solitary confinement, into cells roughly four paces by three paces. Then they began to physically torture us, beating us up. We were told: 'You were brought here to be killed by us'.

We protested that we have no security here and that we want to see the prison officials. Their response was: 'This prison has no officials'. They even refused to give us a doctor to take care of our wounds...

The meaning of our conviction by the prosecutor is clear. After a year

as their mental abilities are concerned.

But women — through their great demonstrations — have shown thus far that they are not willing to be driven out of social and political life. The central government has implemented anti-woman policies in the family, society, employment, etc. Our conviction is another effort to sow the seeds of fear in the hearts of our sisters, the women of Iran who are fighting for freedom.

If the prosecutor and the government have arrested, jailed, and sentenced us to life imprisonment to prevent us from telling the truth or to drive us out of political and social life by means of terror, they should know that they will not succeed.

## Proud

You cannot forever imprison the call of the heroic women and people of Iran for freedom. Neither unfounded charges, nor falsifications, nor slanders will be able to hide our true faces for long.

The record of our struggle against the Pahlavi regime exists and we're proud of it. We will not stop struggling for a society which replaces prisons with child-care centres. Freedom of opinion, of association, and of political parties is one of the basic gains of our revolution. A lot of blood has been shed for this.

We demand to be tried in public court — not behind closed doors. We demand the right to be present at our trial, in front of the eyes of the people, not behind their backs.

We ask all organisations, all people fighting for freedom, all defenders of the Iranian revolution throughout the world to help us win our freedom.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

TELEGRAMS protesting the death sentences handed out to the 12 HKS prisoners in Ahwaz and demanding the immediate release of all 14 socialists should be sent to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Qom, Iran; Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, Tehran, Iran; and Hassan Nazih, Director, National Iranian Oil Company, Takht Jamshid Avenue, Tehran, Iran.

Copies should be sent to the Tehran daily Baamdad, Hafez Avenue, 24 Zartoshtian Alley, Tehran, Iran; to Ettela'at, Khayam Avenue, Tehran, Iran; Kayhan, Ferdowsi Avenue, Tehran, Iran; and to Socialist Challenge.



and a half of struggle, the millions of Iranian people in the victorious insurrection of 9-10 February opened the Shah's jails and overthrew the tyrannical regime of Pahlavi. In this struggle women, who constitute half the population of Iran, played a major role.

This victory brought about the possibility of establishing a society of freedom, abundance, social justice and peace. Workers and toilers showed through their heroic actions that they can run this society. We have been sentenced because we have not abandoned this realistic and realisable perspective.

We have also been convicted because we are women. The first attack by the central government after the insurrection was directed against women. Women are supposed to be driven back into their homes. They are only supposed to be means of production and to remain slaves as far

## S African tour

PLANS for a trade union boycott of the South African Barbarians rugby tour are being worked out this week by the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

Chris Easterling, of AA's trade union committee, announced on Sunday that 'we will be calling on all unions to picket the matches and to give no assistance whatsoever to players and organisers from the moment they arrive'. He predicted that the team could face immediate problems with airport workers and those handling their baggage, as well as from workers in hotels, transport and the media.

The inclusion in the Barbarians team of black and Coloured players is being used to try to legitimise the tour. In fact this has nothing to do with multi-racial sport or selection on merit.

The Barbarians players have been selected from the all-white South African Rugby Board and its two minor 'Uncle Tom' affiliates for blacks and Coloureds. All the best black and Coloured players, however, belong to the 50,000-strong non-racial South African Rugby Union — which has no official status, because for all the Tory propaganda there are no officially recognised multi-racial rugby clubs or integrated leagues at either club or provincial level under apartheid.

The tour dates are as follows: 3 October, Exeter; 6 October, Camborne (Cornwall); 10 October, Edinburgh; 13 October, Borders; 17 October, Coventry; 20 October, unknown venue in Northern Ireland or Wales; 24 October, Llanelli; 27 October, Newport.

## Nicaragua

THE Nicaraguan Coordinating Committee is organising an evening of 'homage to Nicaraguan children' this Saturday, 22 September, at 7pm in Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. There will be a folk concert and a talk about recent developments in Nicaragua.

## Socialist International

A FURTHER stage in the consolidation of the Socialist International as an organised pro-imperialist block seems likely at its forthcoming congress in Lisbon.

At the congress the Israeli Labour Party will be proposing the admission of the Egyptian state party led by president Sadat. The move is obviously intended as a symbolic ratification of the US-sponsored Camp David agreement between Israel and Egypt — an agreement rejected by the Palestinians and the vast majority of the Arab world.

The question is: will the British Labour Party delegates go along with this? And if so, what do party activists intend to do about it?

## Cuba

'THERE are foreign troops on Cuban soil against the will of the government and the people of that country. They are the 2,800 United States troops stationed at the Guantanamo naval base. They should be withdrawn immediately.' This was the response of Andrew Pulley, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president of the United States, to the Carter administration's campaign against the presence of Soviet troops in Cuba.

As Pulley pointed out: 'Cuba has never invaded the United States. Cuba has never bombed the United States. Cuba has never blockaded the United States. Cuba has never tried to assassinate US leaders. It is the US government that has committed all these crimes against revolutionary Cuba.'

Apart from military personnel, about 1,800 'civil servants' — as Washington delicately calls them — are also stationed at Guantanamo. But you'd never guess the base existed from reading the British press. We say: US troops out of Cuba — now!

## Our images ourselves

# Feminism and film

By Jane Clarke

AN EXPLOSIVE but productive week-long encounter between feminist film-makers, distributors, exhibitors, spectators, critics and theorists took place last month as part of the Edinburgh Film Festival.

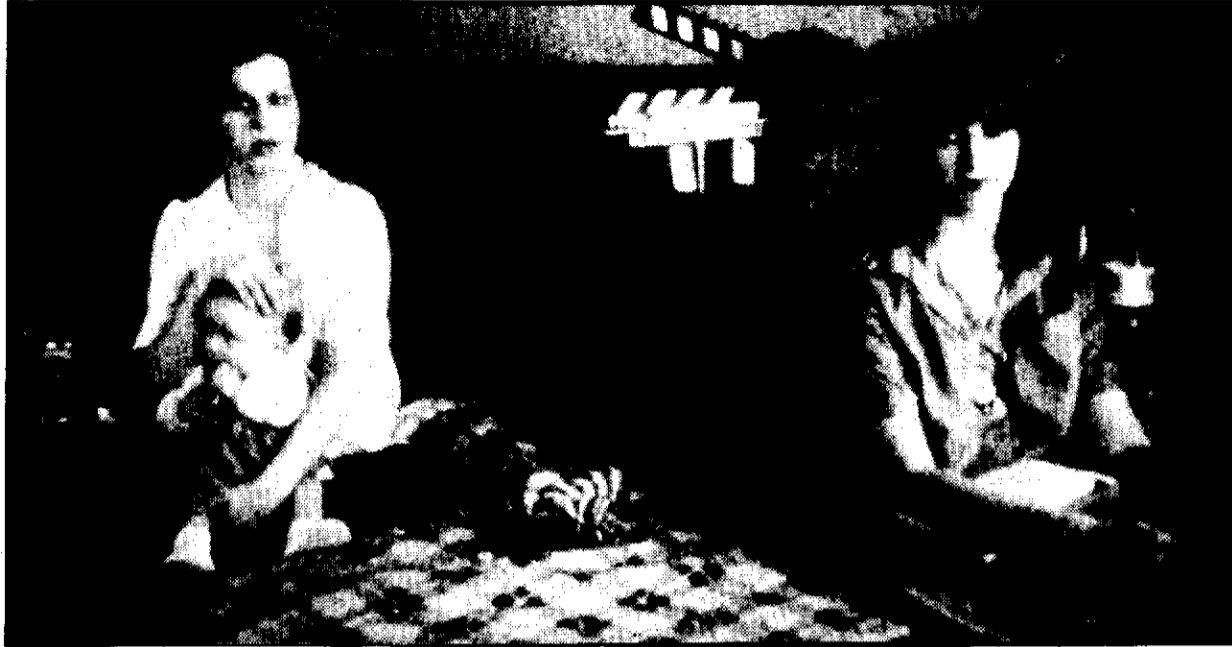
Perhaps the main question posed was: what is a feminist film practice? It's this I want to try to shed some light on by looking at a few of the more than forty films that were screened.

Does a film's feminism come out of the manner in which it's made (collective practice versus individual work, for example); or from the chosen form of the film; or from the context in which it's shown? I don't think there is one true-for-all-time answer. Certainly, though, how you use the people in your film is a political choice.

One of the films screened was Jan Worth's *Taking A Part* (UK), which deals with prostitution. It also, crucially, deals with the politics of documentary film-making.

The documentary ideal — the 'getting inside a situation to show how it really is' — often involves an exploitation of the people filmed. The subjects may be playing it straight, but their image becomes part of another argument. *Taking A Part* insistently makes the spectator aware of this process.

In this film two women, in medium close-up and facing into camera, read out experiences of prostitution from a journal. Throughout the film they are



A scene from *Taking a Part* — real prostitutes or actors?

consciously placed in different locations and 'poses', and this makes one question their status. Are they actresses performing a script, or the real women referred to in the journal?

The hesitation between these two options makes for a strong sense of performance — of sex as performance and of documentary subjects as performers. This emphasis is neatly caught in the title, *Taking A Part*: taking a part as prostitutes, or performers taking their parts, or taking apart the familiar document-

ary methods of dealing with prostitution in film.

No such distancing strategies are used in Cristina Perrincioli's *The Power of Men is the Patience of Women* (West Germany). This is a drama/documentary about battered wives which provokes close identification in the audience. It is co-scripted and acted by the battered wives themselves — a rigorous depiction which would be very useful in certain contexts.

Michelle Citron's *Daughter Rite*

(USA) defines itself against the notion of cinema vérité as the uncontradictory and transparent capturing of truth through the neutral eye of the camera.

Two actresses improvise scenes about typical experiences as sisters and daughters. The scenes are filmed as if they are documentary slices-of-life. Only gradually does it dawn on the viewer that perhaps these scenes are acted after all.

Interspersed with these acted/real scenes are sequences of 'actual' home-movie footage of a mother and

two daughters. This footage is slowed down and re-filmed so that the 'innocent' images of family life begin to break down; while on the soundtrack a woman speaks of the sense of loss and betrayal which has characterised her relationship with her mother.

One question that generated a lot of heat was the idea of femininity. Is it something inherent and unchanging, or is it socially determined — and therefore open to alteration?

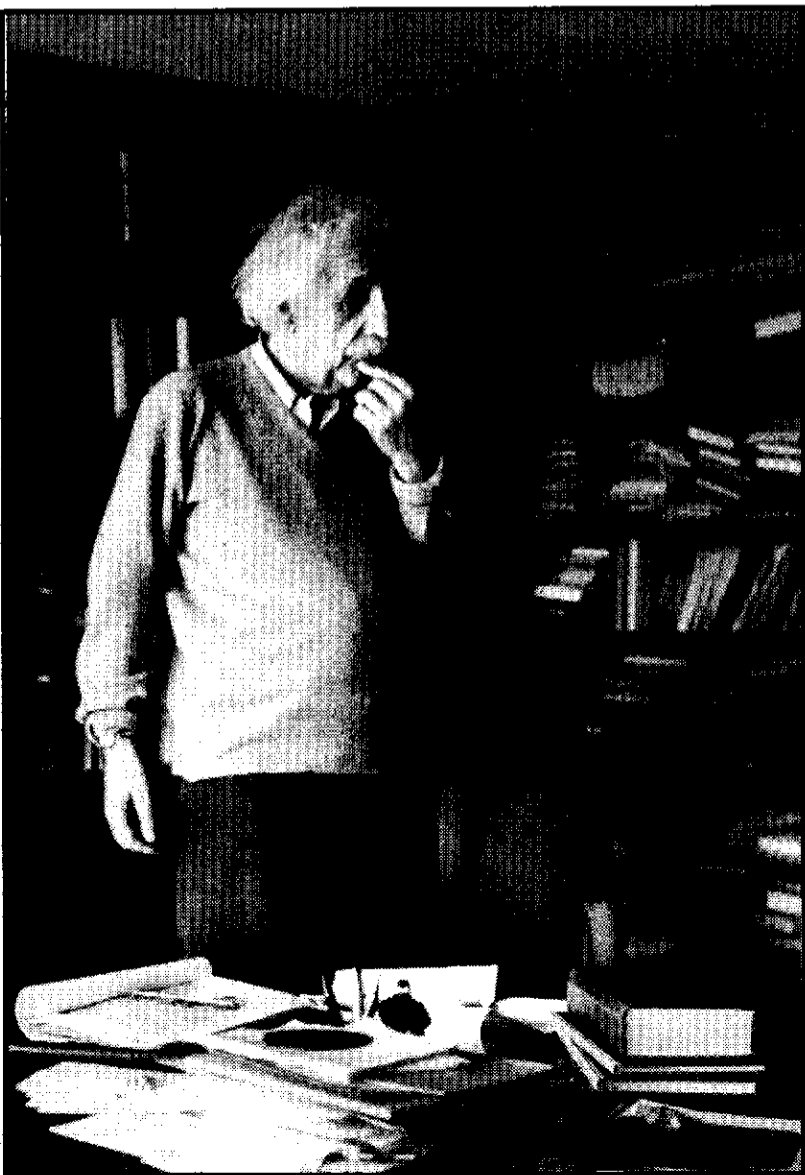
This question is at the heart of *The Song of the Shirt* (Sue Clayton/Jonathan Curling, UK), a film about women who moved to London to work in the new sweated clothes trade of the 1840s. Here any notion of womanhood as something natural or universal is rejected. Instead the film examines the legal, philanthropic and religious ideas and institutions which surrounded these women.

By placing them side by side via stills, graphics and acted reconstructions, the apparently objective stances of the Church or the law courts are made to look increasingly partial and contradictory. Amid the establishment's conflicting definitions, *The Song of the Shirt* begins to construct the women's own position. It's a film which is very exciting and also very demanding.

I left the conference with a strong sense of belonging to a cultural and political movement that is going places. I'm very grateful for that.

\* For details about hiring the films mentioned above, please contact The Other Cinema, 12 Little Newport Street, London WC2 (tel 734 8508).

## Albert - the other Einstein



By Joe Schwarz

THE MEDIA blitz on Einstein's centenary was completely predictable. Socialists with an interest in science will look in vain for a clue to what it is all about, as even comrades on *Socialist Challenge* succumbed by printing a piece that would have comfortably graced the pages of the *Observer Magazine* — it didn't even mention the fact that Einstein was a socialist himself. What you get is the Einstein myth — the isolated, solitary genius, coming out of nowhere to place his stamp on the course of science history.

Einstein had very well developed socialist politics. Here is part of an article, called 'Why Socialism', which he wrote in the US in 1949 at the age of 70 for the revolutionary socialist magazine *Monthly Review*:

'Private capital tends to become concentrated in few hands, partly because of competition among the capitalists and partly because technological development and the increasing division of labour encourage formation of larger units of production at the expense of the smaller ones. The result of these developments is an oligarchy of private capital the enormous power of which cannot be checked even by a democratically organised political society.

'This is true since members of legislative bodies are selected by political parties largely financed or otherwise influenced by private capitalists who, for all practical purposes, separate the electorate from the legislature. The consequence is that representatives of the people do not in fact sufficiently protect the underprivileged section of the population.

'Moreover under existing conditions private capitalists inevitably control, directly or indirectly, the main sources of information (press, radio, education). It is extremely difficult, and indeed in most cases impossible, for the individual citizen to come to objective conclusions and to make intelligent use of his political rights.'

The solution? 'I am convinced that there is only one way to eliminate these grave evils, namely through the establishment of a socialist economy,

accompanied by an educational system that would be oriented towards social goals.'

There was not one other scientist in Einstein's generation who was capable of making this argument at any point in their career. In the world of pure research Einstein was the first socialist scientist. You could never tell it from reading today's papers.

The way Einstein got his politics ties into the second piece of the myth: Einstein the isolated genius. Einstein was not at all isolated. He was part of a lively political counter culture that existed in Zurich and Berne at the turn of the century.

### Social conscience

During the period of the great world depression from 1873 to 1890, Bismarck's government in Germany introduced many of the repressive measures of the modern state. Political anti-semitism was encouraged and anti-socialist laws were passed in 1878.

Einstein hated it. He left Germany in 1894 without his diploma and a year later renounced his German citizenship to become a stateless person. In 1895 he went to university in Zurich. Not only German revolutionaries but also famous Russian exiled revolutionaries were there or passed through. Alexandra Kollontai, Trotsky, Bakunin and later Lenin all spent time in Zurich.

Einstein was a student bohemian. He rarely went to class except, surprisingly, for the laboratories. He lived in the cafes of Zurich and he had a number of close friends with whom he discussed physics, philosophy and politics.

Not part of his inner circle but a friend for twenty years was Felix Adler, a junior lecturer in physics in Zurich when Einstein was a student there. Adler, the son of Victor Adler, a leader of the Austrian Social Democrats, had been sent by his father to Zurich to forge politics but he stayed close to the revolutionary movement and wrote a number of articles, some of which were criticised by Lenin. In 1918 (this is almost unbelievable) Adler assassinated the Austrian Prime Minister and got off with serving only one year in jail.

Einstein submitted testimony on his behalf.

In 1909 the Einsteins and the Adlers lived in the same building in Zurich. Adler wrote to his parents: 'We are on extremely good terms with the Einsteins, who live above us, and as things turned out I have become closer to him than to any of the other academics. The Einsteins live the same Bohemian life as ourselves.'

So, far from being isolated, Einstein was an integral part of a cultural scene that included revolutionary politics. The Austrian and German Social Democratic parties were huge mass parties with strong revolutionary wings in the pre-war period. The German SPD in 1924 owned 90 daily newspapers, its own weeklies and monthlies, and operated its own press service.

This is where Einstein learned about socialism. He knew, understood and sympathised with the working class movement. Here is Einstein on Lenin: 'I know Lenin as a man who completely sacrificed himself and devoted all his energy to the realisation of social justice. I do not consider his methods practical, but one thing is certain: men of his type are the guardians and restorers of the conscience of humanity.'

Judging from Einstein's *Monthly Review* article written 40 years later, he never gave up his social conscience and, more important, he never gave up the understanding that the source of social injustice was to be found in capitalist class society, the solution to which was socialism.

No wonder the media continues to mystify Einstein. There's too much to swallow. Einstein remains an enigma to the middle class because he never joined the middle class. The first 'commie, Jew, beatnik' to confound media description.

\* This article is extracted from a much longer contribution in the Summer 1979 issue of *Science for People*.

Science for People is the quarterly magazine of the British Council for Social Reconstruction and the Science (BSSRS) & Politics Study Group. W1V 3DG (tel. 01-457 2119). The annual subscription rate for individuals is £2 [overseas £3].

# Out of the gutter — the press

By Geoff Bell

OF ALL the diseases common in British capitalist society, two have stood out in the last couple of weeks — its treatment of the 'Irish problem', and its media. They have stood out because they have combined to present one of the most rancid brews imaginable. The coverage of the assassination of Mountbatten made the human worthlessness of the British ruling class obvious to anyone who had eyes to discern it.

That was not the intention. Right from the start Fleet Street insisted on its morality and the high standards of the cause for which it was the mouthpiece. The word 'bastards' appeared on the front page of three of the 'populars' to describe Mountbatten's killers; typical was the *Daily Express*, which defines itself as 'The Voice of Britain'.

The *Express* front page 'opinion' of 28 August contrasted 'These Evil Bastards', the 'cowardly psychopaths' of the IRA, with 'the British' who 'have never yielded to terror'. And best of all the British, according to the *Express*, was Mountbatten, whom 'everyone loved'.

Obviously 'everyone' didn't 'love' Mountbatten, and obviously Britain has 'yielded to terror' on numerous occasions. Indeed, probably no other ruling class in the world has negotiated with more of what it defines as 'terrorists'. Even the glorious Mountbatten must have dealt with a few during his sojourn in India.

## Propaganda

But truth was the last thing the *Express* was interested in; it was time for good old fashioned war propaganda. Which meant that 'our side', the British, were good; while the enemy were 'evil bastards'.

This theme was repeated in the *Daily Mirror* the same day. On one side was 'Lord Louis', on the other were 'the enemies of man'. The *Mirror* went on to explain what motivated the latter. It was 'Irish nationalism', which 'has blinded a lot of Irishmen to the savagery of deeds done in their name in the last ten years'.

It was not nationalism as an ideology which was considered reprehensible, just the Irish variety. 'Patriotism' — in other words, British nationalism — was portrayed as the noblest of sentiments. The chief praise bestowed on Mountbatten by the *Daily Mail* was that he was 'A British Patriot'.

The Irish nationalists, said the *Mirror*, were opposed by the entire 'civilised world'. But if so, you have to explain why the Irish nationalists seem to be so successful.

The British media chose two targets. First were the American politicians who had called upon Britain to come up with a political solution for Ireland. 'Let's call them the gang of three', said the *Sun* on 30 August, and it went on to name them as Teddy Kennedy, New York Governor Hugh Carey, and 'Mr Tip O'Neill', the Speaker in the US House of Representatives.

## Re-assurance

No punches were pulled here: 'Teddy Kennedy, best remembered for cheating at university, leaving a girl to drown in his car and driving his wife to drink.' All of which may be true, but the aim in this piece of character assassination was to suggest that anyone who dared to criticise what Britain was doing in Ireland, however mildly, was some sort of moral degenerate. That the *Sun* can attempt to give lectures in morality is, if nothing else, somewhat cheeky.

Rather exceptionally, this same *Sun* article did attempt to analyse the Irish situation for its readers and say why the 'gang of three' acted as they did. There was even a degree of honesty in the explanation that 'their ancestors fled not just from poverty and famine in Ireland but from religious discrimination, exploitation

This cartoon by Cormac is taken from An Phoblacht/Republican News.



and atrocity'.

Then came the re-assurance. 'These crimes did happen, but long, long ago.' And further, 'Britain has spent much of the present century seeking to atone with one concession after another'. An intriguing analysis which poses an interesting question: were Bloody Sunday, internment, and the Castlebegh torturers things which happened 'long, long ago', or are they examples of 'one concession after

another'?

Again, the insistence was that Britain had nothing whatsoever to reproach itself for. The *Sun* went on to argue that in their heart of hearts the US politicians knew this to be the case. So how did the *Sun* explain the actions of Kennedy, Carey and O'Neill? That was easy: 'They are grubbing after popularity by way of Ireland. They are fawning after votes out of tragedy and bloodshed.'

It could be observed that apart from sexual titillation one of the *Sun's* main selling points is 'tragedy and bloodshed'. But leaving that aside, the propaganda is saying that any sane, intelligent person could feel nothing but admiration for what Britain is doing in Ireland, and if they don't feel that there must be an ulterior motive — in this case vote-catching.

A minute's thought will show the

banality of this interpretation. Carey was re-elected at the start of this year, so he doesn't need votes at the moment. Kennedy will get all the Irish votes he needs just by being a Kennedy. As for Tip O'Neill, the Irish lobby is very small beer for such a powerful figure.

One or two other newspapers also condemned the role of 'the gang of three' but the greatest wrath was reserved for Irish premier Jack

# and Mountbatten

Lynch. One of the milder comments was an editorial in the *Daily Express* of 29 August:

*'It is about time the Irish Prime Minister Mr Jack Lynch — whose response to terror has always been muffled by his Anglophobia — faces up to reality and started to make a proper contribution to the fight against these psychopathic thugs. The real remedy lies in the hands of Mr Lynch — but does he have the guts to do something?'*

The implied answer was that just as those who blew up Mountbatten were 'cowards', so too Lynch didn't have 'the guts' to do anything about them. The fact that there are more repressive laws in the South than in Britain wasn't deemed worthy of mention.

This role was allocated not only to Lynch, but at times it was stretched to the entire Irish race. *'The miserable truth'*, said the 29 August *Daily Mail*, is *'that Ireland's mediocre politicians are bedevilled by craven fears of offending traditional Irish sentiment.'*

mention, of course, that British 'nationals' are allowed to 'move freely' into the South of Ireland; such an observation would hardly fit the image of the benign British Empire.

But whenever an imperial mentality is being projected, an essential ingredient is an Uncle Tom — in this case an Uncle Paddy publicly prepared to salute the Empire. And there he was in the *Daily Telegraph* of 29 August, the editor-in-chief of the *Observer*, Conor Cruise O'Brien. He demanded: *'Speak for Ireland, Mr Lynch.'*

Inevitably, speaking for Ireland meant that Lynch should follow the example of Britain's new Churchill! *'Emulate... Mrs Thatcher'*, advised O'Brien. He went on to tell Lynch that he should also emulate former Irish premier Liam Cosgrave, in whose government O'Brien served until it was thrown out of office by the Irish electorate — mainly because of its repressive policies.

What made matters worse for

any of the ruling class's view of British society. The papers read by the working class ranted and raved in the most hysterical, nonsensical and racist manner. But the *Guardian*, the *Financial Times*, even to an extent the *Daily Telegraph* presented no such gibberish. Vulgarity was all very well for the lower classes, but the influential in society had serious business to discuss.

## Vacuum

As the *Guardian* somewhat blithely pointed out on 8 September: *'The British Army in Northern Ireland is still quite convinced that it can defeat the IRA. The only fly in the optimistic ointment is that after nearly ten years it still doesn't know how.'*

Or as the *Financial Times* put it on 29 August: *'However loudly people in Britain might clamour for greater military effort or closer co-operation from the Irish government, there are few security loopholes that the Dublin government can close.'*

Even the *Sunday Telegraph* downplayed its usual jingoism and admitted there were political problems which had to be faced. Rather surprisingly its 2 September edition asked: *'Will the Conservatives grasp the Loyalist nettle which stung Labour's Mr Merlyn Rees... into helpless inertia? Britain, after all, is pledged to support the Protestant majority — but that does not mean only on the terms the majority wants.'*

And the conclusion? *'Whether Mrs Thatcher finally sides with the Irish or Unionist arguments, the political vacuum will have to be filled or the IRA cannot be beaten.'*

Which is exactly what those interfering US politicians have been saying for the past year; that a dangerous political vacuum is being created in the North of Ireland and Britain should do something about it quickly.

But this thoughtful analysis was reserved for the 'quality' press. Not because the journalists of the 'popular' press do not possess the intellectual capabilities of their colleagues at the higher end of the market. They wrote a different way because they are generally in the business of simplification and sensationalism, and specifically in business to hide the truth from their working class readership — about Ireland and most other subjects.

## Justice

And if the editorials and crocodile tears of the usual overpaid Fleet Street hacks do not serve that purpose, it is always possible to call upon some fake lefty who will give the propaganda a respectable cover. Playwright Colin Welland has written well of the struggles of working people in the North of England. But where Ireland is concerned, Welland, like so many trendy letties, crawls back to the bosom of the ruling class.

*'The rats who call themselves Irishmen'*, he wrote in the *Voice* on 5 September, speaking of Mountbatten's assassins. Repeating the line of the *Sun*, Welland wrote that the fight for Irish freedom was historically noble but now redundant:

*'Make no mistake. "A nation once again" is a fine ideal. They buried an old patriot near Mullagh recently, one of the old brigade. At the graveyard the rats appeared from the hedgerow's holes in black berets and masks and toting guns. The mourners fled as the Provos formed their guard of dishonour. Any similarity between them and true patriots living or dead is coincidental.'*

Sorry, Mr Welland, the cause of the 'rats' and the 'old patriot' is the same. It is a simple cause — all it asks is that Britain leaves Ireland in peace so that its people can sort out their differences between themselves. And the more you, Mr Welland, and the rest of the British propaganda machine write, the more just and the more sensible that cause becomes.

# The 26 counties— where Durex is still banned

TEN YEARS AGO some Irish feminists got on a train to Belfast, bought a load of contraceptives and travelled back to the South. At the border they were stopped by customs officials, who confiscated the packets of pills and condoms but found it too embarrassing to take the intra-uterine devices off the women.

The point has been made, however. Contraception was effectively banned in the 26 Counties.

Since then the debate on contraception has exploded in the South of Ireland. Voluntary groups have set up clinics to give advice and aid. In the urban areas this has meant limited access to fertility control for a significant cross-section of the female population.

In August of this year Charles Haughey, health minister in the Fianna Fail government, introduced family planning legislation which he claimed would provide a 'comprehensive family planning service'. In fact his eyes were fixed firmly on the Catholic Church, and it will mean nothing of the kind. If fully implemented it would actually restrict the voluntary service already available.

## Privilege

Advertising of contraception would be confined to medical journals. Artificial contraceptives would be made available by doctors on prescription only — and both individual doctors and chemists would be able to 'conscientiously object' to providing such advice and opt out of the legislation.

The effect of all this would be to close down voluntary clinics and allow doctors and chemists to refuse contraceptives to anyone they considered unfit for family planning advice — particularly young and single women. Contraceptives would be expensive, and worst of all Medical Card holders — about 13,000 women who are entitled to free medical care — would be denied access to the 'privilege' of any form of reliable birth control.

Anne Speed of the Contraception Action Programme in Dublin points out the implications: 'This law will give people a stigma about sex. It gives no protection to a woman's right to contraception. Rather than give the state funding to ensure a fully comprehensive family planning service, it hands the service over to private enterprise. It gives doctors the right to control female sexuality.'

CAP intends to challenge the law head-on by running a caravan service in Dublin, Limerick, Cork and Galway to show women the kind of non-medical service the state should be providing. In braving the law these women face fines of up to £5,000 or one year in prison.

They also face extremely vocal opponents in the Knights of Saint Columbanus. This secret all-male organisation does not want women to have any access to fertility control. They will be campaigning for maximum penalties for all those who dare to challenge the law's restrictions.

## Natural

Catholic nationalism will enjoy a massive revival when the Pope visits Ireland next month. He is scheduled to speak on contraception and abortion. CAP will be holding a press conference at the same time. Says Anne: 'We intend to launch an international campaign to explain the real problems that Irish women face. The establishment and the Church have been forced to accept natural methods of contraception — clinics that give this type of advice have been given state funds.'

'But these methods of contraception — withdrawal, temperature testing, billings — are the most ineffective. They expose the hypocrisy of the Irish government and



Anne Speed — of the Contraception Action Programme and member of Peoples Democracy.

the Church — everyone knows that thermometers grow on trees!

The moralists of the Southern government realise that behind the debate on contraception lies the issue of abortion. Already rumblings are to be heard in the Dail (Parliament) about the referral of women to Britain for abortions.

The Pope's visit will not create a climate for women's needs to be considered rationally. Pious hysteria is already being whipped up by the Irish press: 'It has already been suggested that drink should be given up for the weekend — the next thing we'll hear is that the same should apply to sex!'

It will take mass pressure from Irish women themselves to ensure that their needs, their bodies and their sexuality are considered at all. In Ireland as in Britain we have to build a movement that can make a reality of the slogan: 'Not the Church, not the state — women must decide their fate.'

## UDR training

By George Kerevan

WHERE do they train the Ulster Defence Regiment? The answer is not Belfast or Derry, but Dundee in Scotland! Throughout September and October, hundreds of UDR personnel will train at an army camp just six miles from Dundee.

A joint meeting of representatives from UDR branches in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Stirling and Aberdeen met on 4 September to discuss coordinated activity, including a protest campaign aimed at the UDR presence in Scotland. The meeting decided on mass leafleting in Dundee to alert the local population to an organisation which has included among its former members the infamous Shankhill Butchers. A public demo may also be held.

Scottish UDR are also organising a national tour by Mary Nellis, the founder of the Derry Relatives Action Committee, and have launched a campaign to get 'troops out now' debated at the 1980 Scottish TUC. There is to be a national UDR demonstration in Glasgow next year, probably at Easter.

## Ex-soldiers group formed

A COMMITTEE of ex-soldiers against the war in Ireland was formed in London last week. This follows the success of the ex-soldiers contingent on the 12 August demonstration.

Immediate plans for the group include a travelling exhibition organised in cooperation with the National Union of School Students and radical teachers, as well as a series of public meetings.

The group is especially interested in contacting other ex-soldiers and the relatives of serving soldiers. They also desperately need funds. They can be contacted at Box ES, 27 Caversham Close, London EC1.



If Lynch was supposedly afraid of becoming unpopular if he stepped up repression, it was rather contradictory for the *Mail* to go on to advise him that *'firm action against them (the IRA) at a time when popular revulsion is great could be rewarding even in electoral terms'*. In fact you have the *Sun* attacking US politicians for vote-catching by criticising repression and the *Mail* urging Lynch to catch votes by stepping up repression!

## Jingoism

The *Daily Star* went furthest of all with an editorial on 30 August calling for a boycott of everything Irish. There was even a note of regret in the call: *'Many decent, peaceful Irish families stand to suffer dearly from such sanctions, but they have the political power to cut short the effects. If their elected government will not face up to its responsibilities they must give their votes to one that will.'*

What galled the hacks most of all was the initial independence shown by Lynch. The comparison between him and Thatcher was another common theme. Take the *Sun* on 30 August: *'Margaret Thatcher was in Belfast yesterday visiting troops injured in the Bloody Monday outrages. Where was the Prime Minister of the Irish Republic, jolly Jack Lynch? Still on his hols in Portugal. It is an astonishing contrast.'*

Here was the voice of the old British Empire demanding that its far off native allies do as they were told. The *Express* of 31 August ordered: *'The Irish premier must meet the British shopping list.'*

But if the Empire could show determination it could also be generous — even to the ungrateful Irish. The *Sun* pointed out on 30 August that Britain allowed the Irish Republic's 'nationals' to 'move freely not just into Ulster, but across the Irish Sea into the mainland.' No

those carrying the white man's burden in Ireland was that the Irish didn't have the appearance of ordinary natives. As the *Financial Times* pointed out on 1 September, Britain's presence in Ireland *'is not like being in Malaya or Aden where the enemy is at least partially identified because he is of a different colour'*. Yes, the Irish conspiracy knows no bounds — they're even white.

Of course some distinctions do have to be made. Some Irish are all right — those who support the British cause in Ireland. Even if they are like the Unionist Euro MP John Taylor, who called upon Loyalists to bomb the South of Ireland. The *Express* of 31 August explained that *'although Mr Taylor's advice is irresponsible, at least his reasoning is understandable'*.

## Vulgar

As hysteria was piled upon hysteria a number of changes started appearing. The blunt message seemed to be evoking the wrong response. For although the *Express* of 29 August continued its anti-Irish racism by saying the entire country was *'cursed by the God they worship so assiduously'*, it went on to complain:

*'It is obvious from the scores of calls flooding into the Express offices that the British are all for "sending in the Army to sort them out". Or alternatively: "Bring the troops back home and let them tear each other to pieces — that's all they deserve".'*

*'Neither solution bears thinking about if we are to maintain some kind of civilised behaviour. Rivers of blood might be the Irish way, but we have long given up that kind of gunboat philosophy.'*

That last sentence was the most ridiculous humbug of all; nevertheless the point the *Express* was making — that cursing the Irish was not sufficient — was an observation repeated in the 'quality' press.

Here was as good an example as

# Socialist Challenge

## COME TO THE SYMPOSIUM

### DAY ONE

10.30-1.30pm  
CURRENT ISSUES OF MARXISM  
Perry Anderson

2.30-5.00pm  
Workshops  
The Debate on English History, Alternative Economic Strategy, Bahro's Marxism  
Speakers include: Perry Anderson, John Ross, Alan Freeman, Gunther Minnerup

7.30-10.00pm  
RALLY  
100th ANNIVERSARY OF TROTSKY'S BIRTH  
Speakers include: Pierre Frank, Tariq Ali, the Voice of Leon Trotsky and Hojabr Khosravi (political committee HKS Iran).

### DAY TWO

10.00-1.00pm  
IS LENINISM OBSOLETE?  
Dodie Weppler and two of the authors of Beyond the Fragments

Workshops  
Class Analysis and Political Strategy, Kautsky and Eurocommunism, The Communist International  
Speakers include: Robin Blackburn, Pierre Frank

2.00-5.00pm  
CULTURE AND POLITICS  
Francis Mulhern  
THE TRADE UNIONS TODAY  
Richard Hyman, Steve Jefferys SWP, Pat Hickey (deputy senior steward, Rover Solihull — in personal capacity)  
Workshops include youth and revolution

### DAY THREE

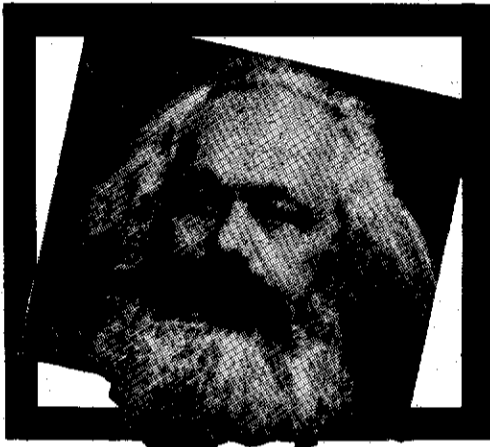
10.00-1.00pm  
TWO TRADITIONS OF MARXISM IN BRITAIN  
John Ross

Workshops  
Workers Plans and Workers Control, Women in Eastern Europe.  
Speakers include: Hilary Wainwright, Dave Bailey

2.00-5.00pm  
THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT IN EUROPE  
Chris Harman [SWP], Tariq Ali [IMG]

21-23 September 1979

## MARXIST SYMPOSIUM



Creche facilities  
Refreshments available

£1 a session.  
£5.50 six sessions excluding the rally  
£1 for rally.  
£5 for all the sessions except the rally (£6 including the rally) if paid before 20 September.

VENUE: Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London

Make cheques and Postal Orders out to 'Socialist Challenge'.  
Fill in form below and send to:

Symposium, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP.

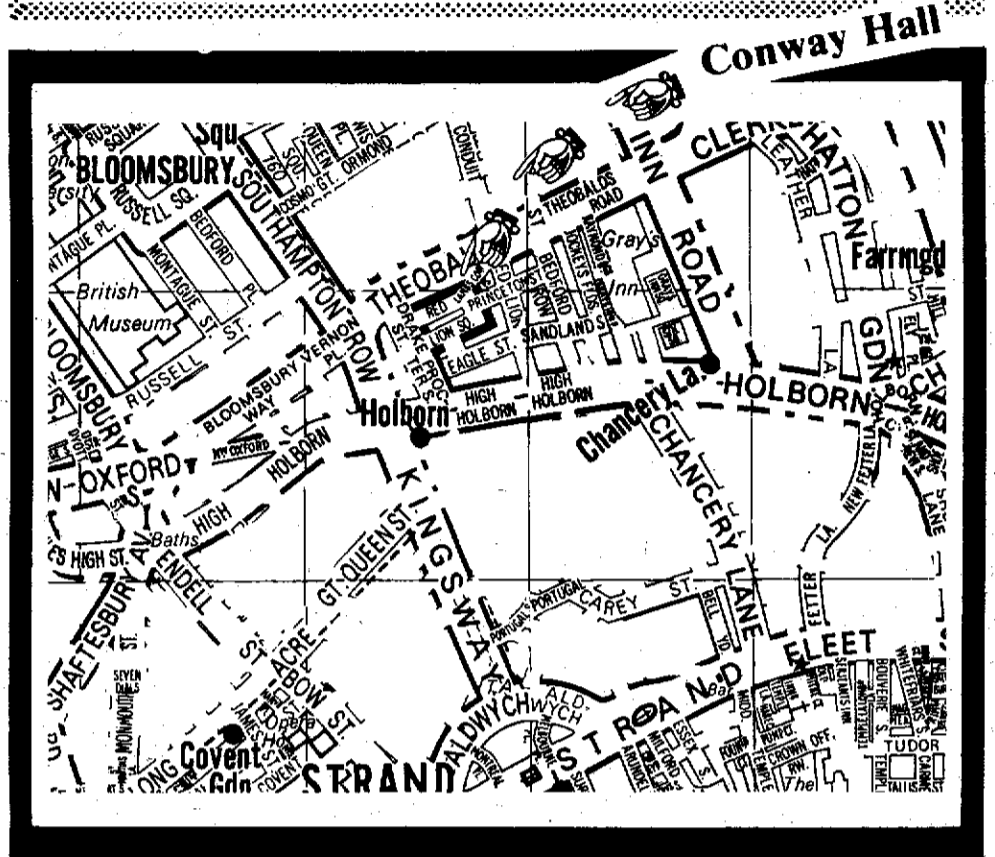
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Tickets for.....Session/s.

### HOW TO GET TO THE MARXIST SYMPOSIUM

CONWAY HALL IS IN RED LION SQUARE, LONDON, WC1.  
The easiest way to get to Conway Hall is to travel to Holborn Underground Station (Piccadilly Line and Central Line).



## Celebrate Trotsky's Centenary

THIS YEAR marks the centenary of Trotsky's birth. Alone among the leaders of the Russian revolution who survived Lenin he consistently fought for socialist democracy against the Stalinist bureaucracy.

Forty one years ago Trotsky founded the Fourth International. In doing so he ensured the continuity of revolutionary Marxism.

Today the Fourth International has members in 60 countries. It stands as the only worldwide representative of international socialism. The speakers at the rally represent the historical continuity of Trotskyism:

PIERRE FRANK became involved in revolutionary politics 54 years ago at the age of 19. Expelled from the French Communist Party in 1929 for supporting the left opposition he founded the first, French Trotskyist paper, La Verité.

From 1932 to 1933 he was Trotsky's secretary in Turkey. During the war he was interned in Britain for three years. Today he is a leading member of the Fourth International and he has just completed a major two volume

study of the history of the Third International.

HOJABR KHOSRAVI is a member of the Political Committee of the HKS, Iranian sympathising section of the Fourth International. Along with other Iranian comrades he was imprisoned by Khomeini for actively supporting the Kurdish and Arab people and for daring to fight for socialist ideas in Iran.

BARBARA GREEN is 17 years old and a newcomer to the Trotskyist movement. A supporter of the youth paper Revolution and a member of the CPSA she will explain that the revolutionary movement not only has a past but a future — the youth!

Tariq Ali, editor of Socialist Challenge, will also be speaking at the rally.

STOP PRESS: BBC Television is producing a special programme on Trotsky's Centenary. They have decided to film the rally on Friday night. Make sure that the cameras find no empty seats to film.

## Feel the pain

By Ray Duckworth, Preston Boilermakers.

PLASTIC BAGS and dirty crumpled papers are out. The era of professionalism and slick politics is here to stay!

Fantasy or reality? That's up to all of us who sell *Socialist Challenge*. Without expanding sales and without a readership who feel the pain from the Tories' boot, the debate in the paper won't mean very much. You can't make a paper live the struggle against the Tories unless those involved in the fightback add their ideas and experience of arguing for revolutionary socialist answers.

Fortunately we found in Preston that the debate is not confined to smoky, beery meetings in back street pubs. It's taking place right now in the Campaign Against Corrie meetings, in trades councils, union branches and on the picket lines outside the engineering factories. We feel we've got something to say and we need to be there too — with *Socialist Challenge*.

A few technical points. A hefty wad of papers implies that it's worth buying and that we're confident we'll sell them. Sellers who open their mouths and harangue passers-by often get guilt sales but some of it goes in. We don't have to justify why we're selling the paper. If you read it and don't sell it you're the one who should feel guilty and start selling. We're proud to be in the front of the fight to get shut of the Tories, let's get a few others in on it too. Regularity doesn't breed contempt — just regular readers.

Have you got any tips about how to boost our sales? Write in and tell us if you have.

HOLBORN COMMUNITY CENTRE  
BEDFORD HOUSE,  
LAMBS CONDUIT ST.,  
[5 min from Red Lion Square]  
Bar opens 5.30pm,  
food and music from 8.00pm

Saturday 22nd September 80p



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