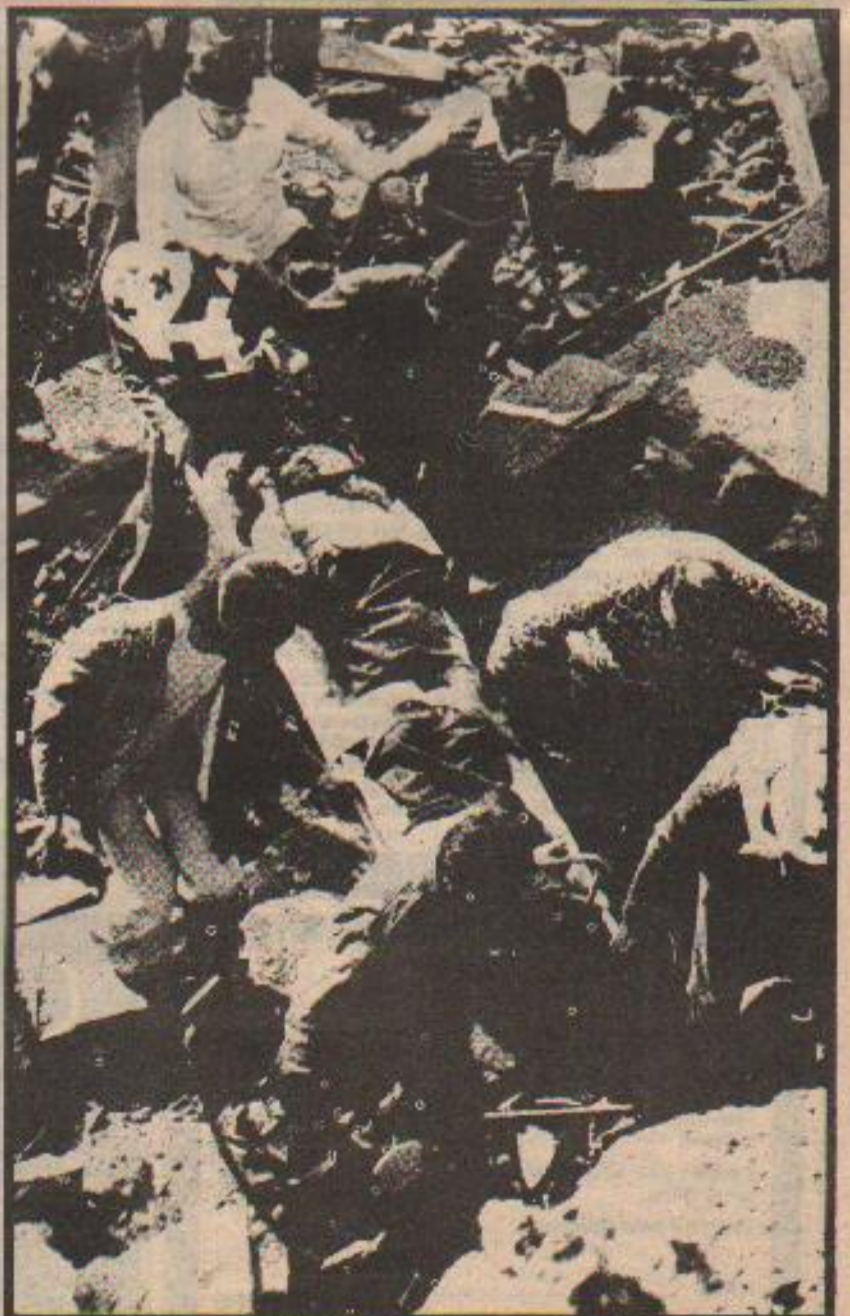


Socialist Challenge

ZIONIST TERROR CONTINUES



SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

Editorial

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Polluted France

IT WAS somewhat symbolic that just as the French right-wing parties won the parliamentary elections, the shores of Brittany were struck by a massive slick from a leaking oil tanker. Pollution reigned supreme in Paris as well. Hundreds of young ruling class bloods demonstrated for Giscard and Chirac by chanting a slogan in the name of their democracy: 'We've won. Let's string up Marchais.'

The election result was a defeat for the left. The gerrymandered structures of the French Fifth Republic however, gave the appearance of a big victory for the Right. This is clearly not the case. The numerical majority was only 300,000 votes. The popular vote of the left was 49.5 per cent, which is more than the votes ever gained by the Labour Party in Britain.

A post-mortem will clearly reveal that the main reason for the defeat was the sectarianism of the French Communist Party towards the Socialist Party. For the last six months the leaders of the PCF put their own narrow party interests before those of building working class unity against the Right. They concentrated their fire on the Socialist Party and flirted with the 'left Gaullists'. The net result of this was two-fold: first it antagonised many Socialist voters, who might have otherwise voted for the CP. Secondly it prevented the emergence of a serious governmental alternative. The CP should not be allowed to get away with this display of unbridled party chauvinism.

Giscard will probably grant some reforms and try to construct a centre alternative. In the process he will try and split the Socialist Party by pressurising its right-wing to join the government over the next few months. In return, he could offer some important reforms (such as proportional representation). There will be shifts in French politics in the coming period. There will also be both political and economic struggles. The revolutionary left must avoid the twin temptations of retreating into militant syndicalism or of tail-ending either of the mass parties.

The Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) made a number of correct points during their campaign. They stressed the importance of a workers government; they also challenged the undemocratic structures of the Fifth Republic and they argued for workers unity. These demands will have now to be concretised into new campaigns. This must involve continuing discussions and debates with militants at the base of both the SP and the CP. There will be temptations towards an anti-parliamentarist cretinism. We are confident that these will be resisted.

Of bans and their consequences

WHAT IS our position on the state banning fascist and extreme right-wing activities? The lessons of Hyde and Ilford stare us in the face and necessitate some answers. We shall summarise these briefly.

We must not, in any way, imply that the fascists should be fought through state bans. Everyone appears to be convinced of this. The dangers are obvious (banning of all political marches). But to substitute in its place the demand for 'selective bans' is to continue to rely on the same method. We have to fight for continued mobilisations. If as a response to these state bans the fascists, well and good, provided that we do not allow it to demobilise our offensive.

We remain in favour of local councils preventing fascists from using council halls and the like, but we must not let that hinder the organisation of local anti-fascist or anti-racist activity at the same time to demonstrate what we are fighting against and why.

Our main thrust must be to build a mass movement against racism and fascism in this country. Reformists tend to oppose such a development because of their whole approach to politics. They would prefer the State to do their job for them. But the State is more concerned by those who threaten capitalism in the long run than racists or fascists. If it does, on occasion, ban the fascists (and them alone) we are naturally not going to oppose such a ban. But we will continue to argue for an independent mobilisation. This point cannot be stressed enough at this period.

Glasgow by election

Abortion? Forget it, say Labour and the nationalists

DRUMCHAPEL LOOMS, in a literal sense, over the Garscadden constituency in Glasgow. It is a product of slum clearance — when the slums were simply moved eight miles out of the city centre. Drumchapel sums up the record Labour is defending in the Parliamentary by-election on 13 April.

by CHRIS BAMBERY

It has no facilities, no jobs, no future. When the housing scheme was completed, it was discovered that the schools had been forgotten. They were later inserted in the backcourts of the tenements.

On a blustery Saturday morning, shoppers hurry along, looking bemused at the leaflets proffered them by election campaigners. Looking out of place is Donald Dewar, a Labour candidate, and a cluster of Labour's remaining local councillors.

STAUNCH

Dewar is an identi-kit Labour candidate. A 40-year-old lawyer and ex-MP, well known on TV and radio (he hosts a Radio Clyde chat show), Dewar combines staunch support for Callaghan with 'concern' over social issues.

Labour is campaigning under a shadow. They know the Scottish National Party will end Labour's fief in Garscadden. The SNP has all the energy. Its candidate is Keith Bovey — a lawyer well known for his defence of civil liberties, including a few Socialist Challenge supporters in the past.

VACUOUS

Bovey is out to capture the seat. Like the rest of his party, he is in favour of any vacuous slogan — the mixed economy, social justice, progress. But above all he is in favour of more votes for the SNP.

As soon as the election was called, he announced his sudden epousal for restrictive abortion legislation to the surprise of all. The reason? Garscadden's large Catholic vote.

Indeed Bovey is not the only sudden convert in this campaign. Garscadden constituency Labour Party is in the tight control of a Catholic group. William Small, whose death caused the election, never opened his mouth, like so many other Glasgow Labour MPs. But he was sure to turn out to vote against



abortion rights.

Making sure that this tradition won't change is George Crozier, vice chairperson of the Scottish Catholic Apostolate Council and a prominent member of the Labour Party in Dumbarton near Glasgow. His first target is to reverse last year's conference decision supporting free abortion on demand. And behind his growing anti-abortion campaign are the familiar themes of right-wing populism — for family life, against permissiveness, the need for 'firmness' on crime and the rest.

It remains to be seen how long Crozier and his cronies will remain inside the Labour Party. Their present inclination — especially that of urging a vote against any pro-abortion Labour candidates, are likely to take them out of the party towards the right wing populism of Tories like Teddy Taylor.

CRONIES

Crozier just failed in getting one of his cronies selected. Donald Dewar triumphed but

only once he made it clear he would vote for restrictive legislation. He gave this guarantee even though when Dewar was MP for Aberdeen South he voted for the 1967 Abortion Act.

PETITIONING

The National Abortion Campaign is determined to show that the working folk of Garscadden will stand up for women's rights. They are out petitioning for an out-patient abortion clinic in Glasgow, an abortion 'no-go' area.

At least one of every two who stop to sign are in favour of a woman's right to choose. One woman signs defiantly under occupation 'houseworker', another 'housewife, unpaid'.

NAC is trying to ensure that the anti-abortion stance of the Labour, SNP, Tory and even the SLP candidates does not go unchallenged. On 5 April, campaigners will be holding a public rally. All candidates will be invited. On the same night at the Catholic secondary school, the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child plans to hold a rival meeting.

Mass leafleting by pro-choice campaigners is being planned and Women's Voice has agreed to back NAC's activities. The Socialist Workers Party candidate, Peter Porteous, a shop steward in the nearby Yarrow shipyards, will speak at NAC's rally.

DREAD

Standing on the need for socialist policies are both the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Party. Sammy Barr is the CP candidate — a leader of the UCS work-in and the boiler-makers' union.

Alone of all the candidates, Barr is dreading the campaign. There is every likelihood that one of the leaders of UCS, standing in the heart of proletarian Clydeside, will win less support than the supposed 'middle class fringe group' candidate of the SWP.

Socialist Unity supporters, who stand for full women's rights and are ready to fight Labour's austerity measures, have only one choice if the people of Drumchapel are to have any future — to vote Porteous, Socialist Workers Party.

OUR POLICIES

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

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

1. 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.

2. To begin to fight for the creation of a united and democratic revolutionary socialist organisation which can, through an application of united front tactics, begin to be seen as an alternative by thousands of workers engaged in struggles.

Such an organisation should be based on the understanding that:

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

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

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

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

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

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.

Restaurant workers battle for unions



Photo: ANDREW WARD (Report)

Steak-out in Central London

'BITTE, nicht essen hier.' In make-shift German, a supporter of the strike by Garners Steak House workers politely suggests to a tourist that he should eat in another restaurant.

The visitor glances at the picket, nods, and continues along London's Oxford Street. Now in its eighth week, the strike is being billed as another Grunwick. GEOFFREY SHERIDAN reports.

The placards held by the Garners' strikers carry slogans in the main European languages in order to convey the message to the restaurants' would-be customers. Ironically, Spanish and Portuguese immigrant workers are virtually the only Europeans among the hundred strikers from the 16 restaurants in the Garners group. Mainly work-permit holders, who make up a large proportion of catering and hotel workers in Central London, Garners' staff has been gathered from a host of Third World countries.

GROTESQUE

Wages and conditions, needless to say, have been tailored to suit, and it is this grotesque exploitation that lies behind the present strike for union recognition, officially supported by the Transport and General Workers Union. The parallel with Grunwick has been lauded by Garners' managing director, Cyril Margolis, with the declaration that his ambition is to become the George Ward of catering. His credentials are impeccable. Wages for a 40-hour week at the steak house range from £26 for a waiter to £37 for a qualified chef. A 55-hour week is compulsory, 70 hours quite common, on top of which there is no sickness benefit and precious little job security.

EXALTED

Just in case the staff should get any exalted ideas from the food they prepare and serve, their own meals are strictly rationed: a daily diet of chips and frozen pie or chicken

wings, with a frozen hamburger special as a treat on Saturdays.

LETTUCE LEAF

One restaurant manager received a final warning when he was discovered eating an unscheduled lettuce leaf and tomato. Another was sacked for eating a jacket potato. At one time, says a member of the strike committee, ten of the 16 managers were sacked for failing to attend a wine tasting. It was in November 1976 that the Garners workers began to join the T&GWU, and a few months later Cyril Margolis dreamt up a staff association. It delivered nothing. Union recognition became the crucial issue. Margolis' response was straightforward: 'Over my dead body' is what he is said to have told the staff. When, at the end of last year, the union sought the intervention of the conciliation body, ACAS, Margolis declared it to be 'biased'. He would resolve matters internally.

The determination on the picket lines is unmistakable. 'We have only one way,' says Sayed Attia, who for eight years was a manager of the Garners restaurant in Old

CONFETTI

A three-hour mass meeting at the beginning of January decided otherwise, and on 26 January a hundred of the steak house workers held a demonstration outside the company's head office. Sacking notices were handed out like confetti, and the following day the strike began.

The determination on the picket lines is unmistakable. 'We have only one way,' says Sayed Attia, who for eight years was a manager of the Garners restaurant in Old

Compton Street, Soho — 'we must win. There are only two options for the bosses,' he adds. 'Recognise the union or close down. We want to show them we have real power.'

The strikers have succeeded in forcing most of the 16 steak houses to open only intermittently, and are concentrating their picketing on four sites. They say that two thirds of the workers are out, and more would join them only there is a fear among union members who have remained at work that their work-permit status leaves them vulnerable to deportation.

The permits are held by management, and it is on their say so that the Home Office grants renewal — a system which produces the notorious conditions of migrant labour in Europe. This year, the Government cut the number of new work permits issued for the catering industry from 10,000 to 1,500 — and was warmly praised by the T&GWU.

ENTHUSIASM

While the union uses the Thatcher-like argument that 'fewer is better for those who are here', it has shown little enthusiasm in the past for

organising the million or so catering workers or the similar number in hotels — both notoriously low-paid sectors.

'The people of the world have a right to work anywhere,' says Zahir Haq, a strike committee member, although he stresses that this is a personal opinion. 'Otherwise we will be playing into the hands of Powell.'

CONFERENCE

Grunwick holds lessons for the Garners workers, as well as Cyril Margolis. To broaden support for the strike, the strike committee is trying to persuade the SE Regional TUC and the Greater London Association of Trades Councils to organise a conference.

Support on the pickets is vital. The main ones are at 399 Oxford Street (opposite Selfridges), 243 Oxford Street (Oxford Circus), 40-41 Haymarket, and 56 Whitcombe Street (Leicester Square). Everyday from noon to 3pm and 6.30pm to 11pm.

For daily details, ring the strike committee on 01-240 1056. They need funds, too. Full-colour posters are available from Garners Strike Committee, c/o T&GWU, Room 84, 12/13 Henrietta Street, London WC2.



Photo: MARK RUSHER (Bell)

Garners workers on the 100-strong demo in January

News from nowhere

Blind Eysenck

WE NOTE with interest Professor Hans Eysenck's protestations in last Thursday's *Times* against the National Front and all things Nazi. His conclusion that, on average, black people are genetically inferior to white — far from giving encouragement to racists — refutes their arguments, Eysenck claims.

After all, his research shows an overlap between the races while racists need to show that all blacks are inferior. Tortuous logic? Certainly. But further questions are in order.

If the professor abhors racism why doesn't he resign his post on *Mankind Quarterly*, a rather nasty semi-academic journal which has published warm reviews of propaganda pamphlets by the racist Racial Preservation Society?

And why does Eysenck welcome people like Dr John Ray to spend their sabbatical year in his department at the Institute of Psychiatry? Ray, who a few years ago was a paid up member of the Australian Nazi Party, argues in his book *Conservatism as Heresy* that it is 'moralistic nonsense' to denounce racism.

And in an article in the academic journal *Human Relations* in 1976 he refers to the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* — a standard work on the psychology of fascism — as 'these Jewish authors'. Readers interested in these links will find details in the current issue of the anti-fascist journal *Searchlight*.

Sorry, I'll murder that again

EARLIER THIS month Paul Duffy was murdered and Martin McGuckin injured by the SAS at Arboe, in the North of Ireland.

And before our libel lawyers reach for the phone, we hasten to add that the description of 'murder' came from a news-reader on Ulster Television! The SAS, the British Army and the British media preferred to talk of Duffy being 'killed while attempting to escape' from an SAS ambush.

But then on UTV's 6 o'clock News on Friday 3 March, while announcing that McGuckin had been charged that day in hospital, news reader Brian Baird calmly reminded viewers that Duffy 'was murdered by the SAS in the same incident'.

It was then the propaganda crew at the Northern Ireland office and the Army headquarters must have pressed panic buttons. Half an hour later came the correction. Duffy, TV viewers were informed, had merely been 'shot dead', and Baird apologised for the earlier 'inadvertent phraseology'.

Protocols re-visited

'IT REMAINS vividly true that the Jewish communities internationally drew up a Master Strategy to which all Jews the world over have contributed and upon which all can rely.'

One could be forgiven for thinking that this is a quote from an anti-semitic journal. It is, in fact, taken from a recent book on race relations by well-known black lawyer,

Rudy Narayan. What is even more disturbing is that the book purports to be a reply to Enoch Powell.

Black England (Dorland Books, £2) is a collection of Narayan's speeches and writings. As such it is hardly surprising that they are disjointed, exaggerated and somewhat superficial.

But quotes like the one above are unjustifiable on any basis. And if Narayan thinks that discrimination against blacks can be done away with by hysterical invective and foolish utterances, he should think again. For it certainly does not help the struggle of black people for equality, not to mention socialism.

Berlin Wall game

THE BERLIN wall was constructed to prevent the citizens of the German Democratic Republic (sic) from fleeing to the West. It remains a gruesome monument — a symbolic indictment of the bureaucratic regime which discriminates against all its citizens by denying them political rights.

However the bureaucrats are now faced with another problem. The growth of a Marxist opposition is beginning to pose severe problems. So the solution is one which would have appealed to Brecht's sense of irony. The Marxists are forced out of the country. Those who wish to leave are not allowed to do so, but those who wish to stay are forcibly expelled.

The best-known socialist dissident to be expelled was the poet and singer, Wolf Biermann. But others have been subjected to a similar fate. Last autumn a group of eight young dissidents were also expelled. They published their experiences in a West German socialist paper. The only reason they were expelled was because they had begun to study Marx and Lenin and use their ideas against the bureaucratic monstrosity which governs their country.

They explain: 'The reading group met once a week, each time in a different house. Its members were nearly all young workers and apprentices, and so we all discussed highly practical problems connected with their work and their studies; disagreements and conflicts with higher directors and functionaries; and questions of socialist democracy...'

Detailed extracts from their writings are published in the latest issue of *Labour Focus* on Eastern Europe, available from left bookshops.

Rights off

'WATCH FOR: The possession of 'These are your rights cards' or pamphlets by loiterers generally... Obviously they will be carried by persons who consider it at least possible that they will break the law and be interrogated by police. Thus they are carried by male homosexuals, by industrial and other agitators, by 'Angry Brigade' inadequates and similar amateur criminals... possession of such written matter often means subsequent false complaint against you...'

The suggestion for aspiring constables comes from Deputy Assistant Commissioner David Powis's *The Signs of Crime*. The cards are from Release.



School students more militant than teachers

TENS OF THOUSANDS of school students were involved in protests and against lock-outs and the denial of school meals over the past week. **REDMOND O'NEILL** reports on the biggest wave of action by youth in the schools since the days of the Schools Action Union in the early '70s.

The right-wing press reacted predictably: 'Pupil anarchy sweeps schools' wrote the *Daily Telegraph*. 'Police dogs move in on young rioters' said the *Sun*.

The breadth of the movement is unprecedented. School students have taken to the streets in virtually every part of the country.

In **Birmingham**, as many as 5,000 students from 30 schools have been involved in strike action. A thousand pupils marched to the local education offices demanding a resumption of school meals. Two schools were occupied overnight by students demanding at the minimum a room to eat their sandwiches in.

STRIKE

In **Manchester**, pupils at ten schools took strike action. Hundreds of school students from Peel Mount and Reddish Vale schools in **Stockport** marched on County Hall chanting: 'We want our meals'.

Seven schools in **Leicestershire** were affected by strikes and demonstrations. In **Portsmouth**, hundreds of women school students marched on the local education authority, while in **Bradford** the town hall was besieged.

STONED

The *Daily Telegraph* was quick to grasp the significance of these events. Last Thursday's editorial stated: 'The reason why the pupil's industrial action is depressing is that it suggests that the young are learning trade union ways and all that they signify.'

The movement had no clear political direction. Some demonstrators stoned local teachers, others came out in their support. At the Golden Hillock school in Sparkhill — a mixed black and Irish area of Birmingham — initial hostility towards teachers bled to support after the whole school debated the issue with union representatives in morning assembly.

Many school students made it

clear that they were not against teacher militancy but against sanctions which hit hardest at them. Terry, age 15, from East London put it like this to his teachers:

'If you went on strike, we'd all back you up for more money. If you had a march and needed supporters, we'd come out with you 'cos you need more money. But now we're getting into trouble with the Old Bill just 'cos you're having poxy little strikes for half an hour at lunchtime.'

The attitude of the leadership of the main teachers unions has been a barrier to the development of any firm alliance between teachers and pupils. Their denunciations of 'anarchy' and 'outside extremists' have played straight into the hands of the right-wing press who want to use the 'chaos' caused by the teachers' action as a stick to drive them back to work.

STERLING

The leaders of the National Union of Teachers have gone as far as to argue that the pupils' action illustrates the sterling unpaid work that

teachers perform in 'maintaining discipline' during meal times and after-school activities.

For the left-wing opposition inside the teachers unions, the lesson is clear. It must not limit itself to issues of wages, conditions, and ideology. It must vigorously defend the right of school students to organise in the face of police harassment and media provocation.

FACILITIES

More than that, it must give full support for school students' right to use school facilities outside school hours. And it must insist that in disputes like the present one, it is the responsibility of local education authorities to provide facilities for meals at lunchtime.

By taking up and encouraging students to organise themselves in the schools, the left in the NUT can win many school students to an effective alliance against the education authorities.

REDMOND O'NEILL is the national student organiser of the International Marxist Group.

Wider horizons for Women's TUC

THE WOMEN'S TUC discussed issues that ranged far beyond its traditional concern with equal pay, taking up the questions of abortion, nurseries and taxation. **JUDE WOODWARD** reports.

There has been criticism in the past of the Women's TUC on the grounds that its separate existence has allowed male trade unionists to ignore women's issues.

Certainly, the specific problems of women at work and in the trade unions are general problems that are of concern to all working people, and not simply to women. But, this said, this year's Women's TUC on 9 and 10 March did show its usefulness.

A pro-abortion motion calling on the TUC General Council to support the campaign for a woman's right to choose was carried unanimously. It pointed out that the fear of restrictive legislation in Parliament had not disappeared, and demanded that the TUC call a demonstration later in the year.

There are suggestions that the Women's TUC should be extended to three days, and that one of these should be allocated to workshop discussions on how the issues raised by the conference can be taken up.

SHARE

This would enable women to share their experience of working in the unions and build support for campaigning activity, including placing greater pressure on the TUC to mount actions around women's demands.

As it is, many women leave the conference feeling that despite wide ranging discus-

sions and a general atmosphere of militancy, they have been left with little idea of what they can actually do.

This year's conference also discussed the importance of childcare for mothers wanting to work, and supported the proposals put forward in the recent TUC report on under-fives.

RESENTMENT

There was discussion on whether the married man's tax allowance should be abolished. Delegates were united in their resentment of this discriminatory system of taxation, but they were concerned as to whether it would be right to vote for a measure that would decrease the size of many men's pay packets.

There was debate about a possible change in the Equal Pay Act to change the sense of 'equal work' to 'work of equal value'. Although the conference was in no doubt that the present Act did not solve all problems, a change of this nature would probably leave the determination of 'equal work' in the hands of tribunals rather than unions fighting for equal pay.

In general, women felt that whatever the criticisms of the Women's TUC its annual conferences provide women with a great opportunity to learn from each other and to thrash out the areas where they need to apply pressure on the trade union movement.

Trade union abortion conference

THE NATIONAL Abortion Campaign announced at the Women's TUC its intention of holding a trade union conference on abortion in the

autumn, writes **ANN FIAN-DER**.

NAC hopes that this will provide an opportunity for delegates from unions to discuss ways of bringing the struggle for a woman's right to choose into the mainstream of the activities of their union.

The Labour Abortion Rights Campaign has also endorsed NAC's call for a trade union conference. At their annual conference, held on 11 March, they also decided to campaign for more day care facilities for abortion on the NHS and committed themselves to securing more trade union involvement in the campaign.

SPONSORSHIP

Although the conference is not until November, work should start now to ensure that it is a success. This can be done by campaigning in union branches for sponsorship and financial support; by inviting NAC speakers to attend branch meetings; and through adverts and articles in union journals.

As many trade unions as possible need to endorse the Women's TUC's call for a demonstration of the whole of the labour movement against restrictive legislation on abortion.

Trade union branches are invited to send delegates to the planning meeting for the NAC conference at 7.30pm on 4 April at 30 Camden Road, London NW1. Tel: 01-485 4303.

School keepers take action

WITH THEIR wage increase now five months overdue, school caretakers and ancillary workers in the Inner London area decided to take industrial action last week, reports **RAY VARNES**.

Selective strike action at schools in North London resulted in several being closed. The only school which attempted to stay open was Highbury Grove in Islington, the former domain of Rhodes Boyson.

The striking workers mounted a picket of the school and members of the National Union of Teachers refused to cross it. They joined the strikers in leafleting members of the other teaching unions.

Over two hundred school students also refused to cross the picket line and demanded that they were given full

information about the strike, which the headmaster of the school had failed to provide. They encouraged the strikers by joining the picket line and singing songs.

The school keepers and ancillary workers — mainly women cleaners and school meals attendants — are the most militant section of school workers. The women have all refused to cross picket lines, even though they lose pay — and they are not highly paid to begin with.

Although the strike is primarily over pay, it has also been sparked off by attempts to impose a new job description which would result in redundancies and increased work loads — all part of the cuts planned for Inner London schools.

RAY VARNES is a school caretaker member of NUPE and a shop steward.



THE 'MASS PICKET' of Grunwick, which APEX called on Tuesday 14 March, was neither as militant nor as large as the picket in this scene from last summer. The picket called by apex divisional council was attended by about sixty people. However the low turnout was not surprising considering the absence of any advance publicity for the event. The local trades council did not know that the picket had been called until a few days before despite the fact that APEX had decided about it at least a month ago. The lack of any effective response from the union has left the strike committee at rather a loss as to the next step in the struggle. Hopefully the conference called for 14 May, by the strike committee, will produce a solution.

NUT Conference

Class size is top of agenda

For Fred Jarvis and his fellow executive members, the priority at the National Union Teachers' conference this week is to ratify a settlement of the teachers' pay claim.

The present ban on voluntary duties is the first national action that teachers have taken for years, writes BETTY HUNTER.

The problem for the leadership of the National Union of Teachers is the question this is already raising in many members' minds.

If the executive can institute action to win a mere 3½ per cent on top of the employers' offer, why can't they do it over class size, the £16000m cuts and the 40,000 unemployed teachers?

The left in the union can use the annual conference in Blackpool to build an alternative strategy out of this frustration.

FULL CLAIM

The Socialist Teachers Alliance will be fighting to defend the full claim. It will be arguing for a special salaries conference next autumn so that the membership can determine the wage claim it needs and how to win it.

The Blackpool agenda shows the preoccupations of teachers. Motions on class size, salaries, cuts, racism, women's oppression and the content of education are likely to be debated. Five of the top 11 motions put forward proposals supported by the STA.

The executive will certainly attempt to lessen the impact of these resolutions with their own memoranda — which take precedence over motions on the same topic — and their amendments.

Guest speaker Shirley Williams, the Secretary of State for Education, will be seeking

to sweep the 40,000 unemployed teachers under the carpet and line teachers up behind yet another round of wage restraint.

The right-wing leadership of the union can be counted on to acquiesce in this, under the guise of 'leave it to us and the TUC to do our best for you'.

The Socialist Teachers Alliance delegates will argue that teachers must organise themselves to campaign actively against wage restraint, education cuts, racism and attacks on the curriculum. And they will draw lessons from the recent wave of school student unrest to explain the need to involve pupils, parents and the labour movement in discussion of what is happening in education and win their active support.

CLASS SIZE

The Labour Party conference and the Trades Union Congress have called for smaller classes. There are enough teachers available to achieve this. But the NUT leadership has done nothing. Top of the agenda is a call for a campaign on class size.

The union's Westminster Association has tabled a motion for a union campaign to eradicate racism from the schools. This takes up both the content of lessons and the structure of schools. It also calls for links with local and national anti-racist and anti-fascist campaigns, arguing for

an end to immigration controls and a ban on the National Front's use of schools.

Delegates will also be discussing the TUC Women's Charter and amendments on abortion and contraception. The STA seeks to commit the union to setting up a delegate advisory committee elected from areas to develop consistent activities and policies.

The debate on the control of the curriculum could prove to

be one of the most decisive this Easter. The NUT executive including Communist Party members, wants to defend education through a 'partnership' between teachers and the government.

The STA will be proposing a radical alternative based on taking this crucial debate into the labour movement to determine an educational programme based on working class needs and interests.

In the face of the NUT leaders' attempts to tie teachers to closer collaboration with the Labour Government and TUC policies of curbing the living standards of working people, unity of the left is essential.

The Socialist Teachers Alliance has called for united meetings with Rank and File to build a coherent left intervention at the conference. The joint pre-conference meeting

and the meeting on fighting racism co-sponsored by the STA and the Anti-Nazi League represent a positive step.

While the conference will not mark a decisive turn to working class policies, the strengthening of left unity can be regretted only by the right wing leadership.

BETTY HUNTER is a Wandsworth delegate to the NUT conference.

NUT Conference

Why schools are a class battleground

In reality there are two crises in education: theirs and ours. Their crisis is that schools are not 'delivering the goods'.

The right number of the correct sort of workers eager to fit into their slots in the factories and offices are not being produced, writes RICK HATCHER.

Their crisis isn't really a crisis of education as such. It's a crisis of capitalism.

But if you think capitalism is a good thing, then changing the schools — or at least blaming them — is the medicine you reach for when things go wrong.

That's why 'education must respond to the needs of industry' is the common refrain from Callaghan and Shirley Williams through to Rhodes Boyson and the Confederation of British Industry.

Our crisis is more serious. In the classrooms of today is the

working class of tomorrow. What they learn there plays a part in determining the fate of the British revolution. Unfortunately, at the moment, this is understood better by the bosses and their government than by the working class.

The schools teach reading and other basic skills. But working class pupils are often taught badly. Their class sizes are anyhow far too large to overcome the built-in advantage of middle class pupils who tread the path to success and a place at university, while working class children fail by comparison and drop out at 16.

They are taught to read, which is good. But they are taught to read Ladybird readers which are sexist and racist and history books which extol nationalism and class collaboration.

The days of 'all pulling together' to abolish the 11 plus and set up comprehensive schools are over. It didn't solve their problems and it didn't solve ours. Education is now as much a battleground of

opposed class interests as is the workplace.

The cuts are not shared out equally: they hit working class pupils hardest. When they talk about reforms in the curriculum they mean anti-working class measures.

When they talk of higher standards are more testing, they mean concentrating on the so-called academic minority and giving the rest enough of the three R's to work out their time sheets and follow the bosses' orders.

In other words, despite the

barage from politicians and the press to the contrary, there is no more a classless 'national interest' in education than anywhere else.

The task of socialist teachers and the broader labour movement is to identify and develop working class interests in the schools: what is taught, how it's taught, who teaches it, how the school is organised and equipped, its relation to the world outside.

Socialist Challenge will be examining these questions in future issues.

Conference meetings

EVE OF conference joint STA/Rank and File meeting: Chair Brian Honeyball (Westminster NUT). Speakers: Dick North (Rank and File), Bernard Rojan (STA). 24 March, 7.30pm, Blackpool Trades Club. JOINT STA/Anti-Nazi League meeting: The Fight against Racism. Speakers include: Tariq Ali, Martin Flannery MP, Kamlesh Ghadi (Greenwich strike steel), Ernie Roberts, Paul Holborow. 25 March, 7.30pm, Blackpool Trades Club.

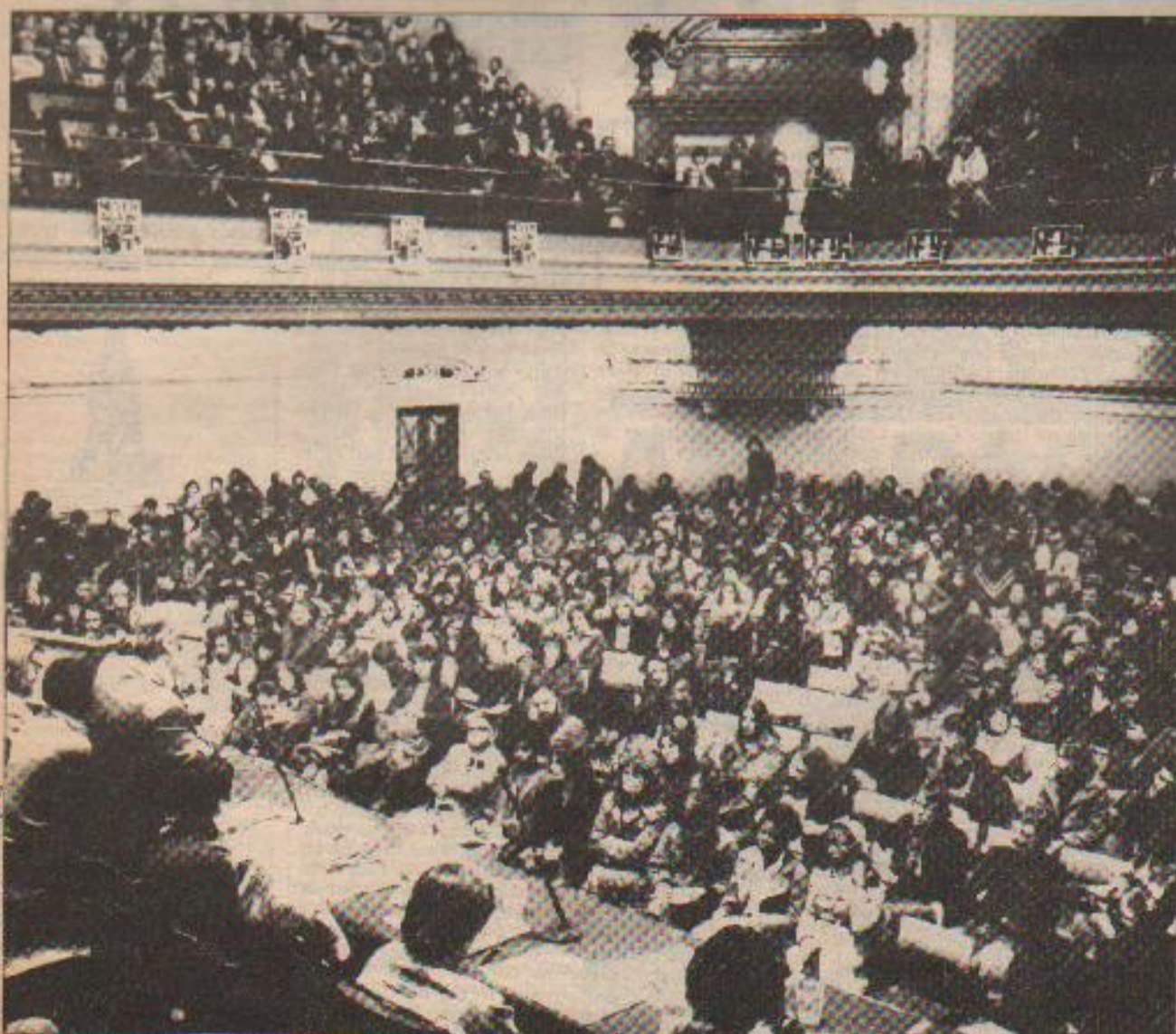
LAMBETH NUT meeting on Women's rights. Chair: Tina Pappin (Nocting-

ham NUT). Speakers: Vanessa Wiseman (Lambeth NUT), Terry Marsden (Tobacco Workers Union). 27 March, 7.30pm, Blackpool Trades Club.

STA BUSINESS meeting, 28 March, 7.30pm, Holmleigh Hotel.

COMMITTEE for Homosexual Equality meeting, 28 March, 8pm, Holmleigh Hotel.

STA MEETING: After conference what next? Speakers include: John Bangs (Convener STA), 29 March, 7.30pm, Holmleigh Hotel.



2,500 teachers attended a rally against racism and fascism in Central Hall, Westminster on 16 March. The meeting was organised by ALTARF (All London Teachers Against Racism and Fascism) and represented the most powerful response to

date against the racist offensive in schools.

The organisers of the rally decided to call a conference on 20 May to discuss ways in which the fight against racism in education could be continued.

Wrong lesson on pay

IN PREPARATION for its 1978 pay claim, the NUT leadership drew up a document last autumn which concluded that teachers needed increases of between 28 and 50 per cent to regain their 1975 pay levels. Yet the NUT — like the other teachers' organisations — has now demanded only 12½ per cent. And they are likely to accept even less, writes KEN JONES.

The employers have treated the teachers' claim with contempt. They offered a mere 9 per cent plus extra support for those on high salaries. When the teachers objected they at once referred the matter to compulsory arbitration.

The NUT was caught somewhat off guard. It had done nothing to prepare the membership for action, and was propelled into taking it partly because of inter-bureaucratic rivalry with the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, which tries to cultivate a more 'militant' reputation.

The action which was hastily decided on was geared to the mildness of the claim and the executive's assumption that they couldn't possibly win more than 10 per cent, which is what they will undoubtedly settle for. Lunchtime and voluntary activities are supposed to stop — measures which fall short of refusal to take over the classes of absent

teachers, and lead away from an alliance with students and parents.

The bureaucracy is afraid of launching a struggle which would bring teachers up against the Government and give a boost to their militancy and grass roots organisation. Its fear is understandable. Union meetings have been very large and several associations have called for strike action for the full claim.

KEN JONES is a delegate from Barking to the NUT conference.

SOCIALIST TEACHERS

A JOURNAL OF THE SOCIALIST TEACHERS' ALLIANCE

Spring 1978
No. 4

SAVE JOBS
IN
SCHOOLS
CUT
CLASS SIZE 30p

Subscription prices: Single copy 30p, 12 issues £3.00, 24 issues £5.50. Overseas add 50p per copy. All prices include postage.

New issue of Socialist Teacher (No. 4) now out. 30p plus postage from the Other Bookshop, 328 Upper Street, London N1. Bulk orders from Top Flat, 13 Bloomfield Road, London N1.

12pc unemployment on Merseyside

Labour lefts fail to build action against closures



JOHN STOREY, Time Out

THE BIG topic of conversation in Liverpool pubs last night was not how the team would play at Wembley, but which factory would next announce it was closing and shifting production to the Midlands. In the past month, more than 7,500 workers have been told they will lose their jobs. They will have a long wait in the dole queues, writes MARK TURNBULL.

Twelve per cent of Merseyside's workforce, a staggering 85,000 people, are now unemployed.

The sackings and closures have not been in small isolated factories. They have hit branches of major national and international firms like Triumph (3250 redundancies), Lucas (1410), Courtaulds (1700), GEC-English Electric (560), Dunlop (400) and Cammell Laird (110).

STARTLING

A startling pattern has emerged of management provoking strikes which have then been used to justify closure. Documents in the possession of the Runcorn Guardian show

that Leyland bosses deliberately caused the 17-week strike at the Speke plant for this purpose.

OMINOUS

Birds Eye workers have been given the same treatment. A strike by 110 maintenance engineers led to the lay off of all the production workers. Just before they settled the engineers' claim, management insisted that 456 women production workers would have to accept redundancies as a condition of the return to work.

Ominously for future trade union organisation, the 456 include five of the plant's seven stewards, together with

the convenor. The entire workforce of 12,000 rallied to fight the redundancies. In the face of management threats to close the plant, however, shop stewards backed down and agreed to accept the original redundancies.

ERIC HEFFER

When the Triumph plant closure was announced, Liverpool Trades Council agreed to call a conference to discuss the issue. As the list of sackings has steadily grown, the conference has been extended to cover the local unemployment situation as a whole.

The invited speakers can hardly be relied upon to give any lead. Top of the bill will be Liverpool's Labour lefts: Eric Heffer and Eddie Loyden. To date, their contribution to the fight against closures has been restricted to meetings with Callaghan, Varley and Michael Edwardes, and an adjournment debate at Westminster. Heffer considers the situation so serious that he calls

for a Minister for Merseyside.

These 'lefts' haven't visited Merseyside factories to win trade unionists to mass action against the closures. They haven't organised in the Labour Party.

The Trades Council conference will not stop the rot through cosy chats in the corridors of power. Only united action on the ground against all redundancies would do that. Action which needs to centre on such policies as the reduction of the working week without loss of pay to share available work. Above all, everyone concerned should insist the bosses bear the brunt of their own crisis.

TRADES COUNCIL

Liverpool Trades Council conference against unemployment: Sunday, 9 April, 10.30am, Everyman Theatre, Hope Street, Liverpool. Delegate applications to: Liverpool Trades Council, Victoria Street, Liverpool 1.

THE LUCAS Aerospace Combine Shop Stewards Committee condemned as 'socially irresponsible', management plans to sack 2000 of their 12000 workforce over the next two years.

In addition to the Victor works in Liverpool where some 1400 jobs are threatened, Lucas plan to close their number two factory at Hemel Hempstead and the foundry in Coventry.

The stewards point out that Lucas made £72m in profits last year and had £56m of tax

deferred. Management have consistently refused to discuss the stewards' 'alternative corporate plan' which proposes new socially useful products to compensate for the decline in defence orders.

'With the present level of unemployment in Liverpool area', says a Combine Committee spokesperson, 'the company's decision is nothing short of industrial sabotage. The Combine Committee will support the sites involved in whatever action they feel is necessary'.

Defend Cowley militants

Union democracy at risk in Leyland

THE CAMPAIGN to defend the 11 Cowley militants under attack by the Transport Union bureaucracy has begun to gather momentum in the union.

The conference called to discuss the vicimisation has received widespread support from shop stewards, senior stewards and branch officials, writes PAT HICKEY.

More than ninety holders of elected offices have signed a statement supporting the conference, to be held in Oxford on 8 April. They are calling for 'maximum pressure to be put on the relevant regional and national bodies' to stop disciplinary measures.

At Rover Solihull, the 5/909 branch and the T&G shop stewards have voted to send delegates.

DETERMINED

The union officials appear determined to pursue their present course of putting the eleven on trial for 'bringing the union into disrepute'. They are not attempting to justify the charges, but are trying to get motions of support ruled out of order—on the grounds that the matter is sub judice and to discuss it undermines the properly constituted bodies of the union.

In any case, they point out, the Cowley members have the right of appeal to the appeals committee. In effect, they are saying that the membership should not be involved in the

issue. The union structures can deal with it.

In this way, the officials effectively hope to get away with laying the charges, conducting the inquiry, hearing the case, passing the sentence and rejecting the appeals. The membership will then be expected to accept the result in silent reverence.

But the membership is not prepared to accept this attempt to curb the power of the shop floor.

The union policy at Leyland is one of complete support for management, which is threatened by independent activity from the shop floor. The union leadership knows that it cannot continue indefinitely to cut living standards, accept redundancies, and impose speed ups. So the independence of the shop stewards organisations and the branches has to be reduced.

DEMOCRACY

Because the shop stewards organisations are a strong element of direct democracy, the officials want them to have

as little power as possible. Even the weak and ineffectual Leyland Combine Committee is not given official recognition.

Defence of the Cowley members must be a first priority for all T&G members. But wider issues are raised by this attack. The bodies of the union have for too long been able to ignore the wishes of the members.

The full-time officials should be subject to election and recall and made account-

table to the membership. Policy making must cease to be the sole property of the executive, and conference decisions carried out by the officials — not flouted as at present.

Any defence committee emerging from the Oxford conference should, as part of its task, consider how to organise the fight on such questions. But the first job is to defend the Cowley members. The fight has just begun.

'Democracy under threat in the TGWU'
Conference open to all T&G members
Cowley Community Centre, Oxford
Saturday, 8 April, 1pm, at Cowley Community Centre, Oxford.
Conference details from: P. Cullen, 23 Overmead Green, Blackbird Leys, Oxford.



DUNDEE: 5000 workers responded to the call for a 2 hour strike against unemployment which is currently running at over 9 per cent. The protest was organised by Dundee Trades Council and backed by the Scottish Trade Union Congress.

Oil rig strikers disrupt flights to rigs

THE MATHER AND PLATT oil rig electricians, who have been on strike for two months, stepped up their action last week when they gathered to picket their employers' headquarters in Manchester, report DICK DAY and PAT KANE.

Support in the Mather and Platt works had dwindled due to the lack of backing from the union leadership in the plant and strike-breaking action from the bosses. The strikers followed the picket with a token occupation of part of the factory, but despite these efforts there was little response from the workers in the plant.

TEMPTATIONS

The oil companies have been able to prevent the development of shop steward organisation on the rigs in the past by the simple expedient of shipping troublesome workers back to shore and bringing in a new team of workers. The temptation of high salaries and the problem of high unemployment has made it easy for the contractors to recruit scabs.

But by refusing to go away, the Mather and Platt electricians have become a test case for the future of trade unionism in the North Sea. Their action in picketing Aberdeen Airport, the normal transit point for flights to the rigs, has forced the oil companies to find alternative arrangements.

So far only 12 scabs have been taken out to the Brent and Dunlin rigs, where the electricians were working. And they had to be flown out from



Glasgow via Bergen in Norway. Strike support committees that exist in Norway are being contacted to build solidarity action.

SUPPORT

The absence of real support from the EETPU (as the strike goes into its eighth week it is still unofficially) leaves it up to the rank and file trade unionist to make the strike a success. Trade unionists in the oil industry, refining and distribution have to throw their weight behind the strike.

Support committees have been set up in Manchester and Aberdeen. They can be contacted at: 12 Moorland, Jarrow, Tyne and Wear. Tel: Boldon 4417. And c/o Boomtown Bookshop, 186 King Street, Aberdeen.

Letters to and from the SWP

4
March
1978

10
March
1978

Dear Comrades of the Socialist Workers Party,

The South West London IMG has discussed the Lambeth Central by-election and the matter of standing a united socialist candidate.

The resurgence of racism, the defeats suffered by the firemen and the miners, the betrayal by the TUC of the Grunwick strikers, continuing unemployment, increasing cuts and the renewed attacks on the rights of women show the serious situation facing the working class and its allies.

This by-election does, however, provide an opportunity to show that there is a socialist alternative to the Labour government's reactionary policies and also gives the left a real chance to build local struggles against racism, cuts, unemployment etc.

A joint candidate, enjoying the support of all those militants and organisations that want to organise a united fight back, could be a real step forward in this area.

The IMG therefore proposes that the SWP organises with Socialist Unity, other organisations and as many independent militants as possible a meeting in Lambeth Central to discuss the adoption of such a candidate. At this meeting, the people nominated could put forward their programme and after a democratic discussion, the people there could vote for a candidate of their choice. The meeting could also elect a steering committee to organise the campaign. Such a committee, like the candidate, would be responsible to all those militants who support the campaign.

The IMG assures the comrades of the SWP that it would abide by the majority vote at this meeting and if the comrade elected was from the SWP, or any other revolutionary organisation, or an independent militant, it would put its full resources, both politically and organisationally, behind the campaign. Nor would we insist on that candidate running on a Socialist Unity ticket. We would suggest that the candidate adopted should stand as a socialist, but he or she would of course be able in the manifesto, to state what if any organisation they were members of.

Next Thursday 9 March at 7.30pm, Socialist Unity supporters in this area are holding a public meeting in the Tate Central Library, Brixton Oval, to discuss standing a candidate in the election. If the comrades of the SWP support the idea of having a candidate backed by all the left in the area, then we will propose to the meeting that a speaker from the SWP be given equal time with the advertised speaker, who is Bob Pennington, a member of the IMG. Comrade Pennington assures us that he will be prepared to give half the time allotted to him to speak, to a comrade from the SWP. Please contact us at the above address to let us know your attitude to this letter.

With revolutionary regards,
Lambeth Area IMG.

LAST WEEK'S Socialist Worker announced that we would be standing Tony Bogues (editor of Flame), as a Flame/Socialist Worker Party candidate in the forthcoming Lambeth Central by-election. As there will almost certainly be two other black anti-fascist candidates standing (W. Indian Block and a Maoist) we would like to explain why we are standing, and our attitude to Socialist Unity. In fact we sent a delegation from the Brixton Flame group and the Lambeth SWP to the SU meeting in Brixton on Thursday to do just that, but thanks to police intervention the meeting was a shambles. So we would like to use this opportunity to make our position clear.

The SWP has a stronger base in the Lambeth area (two geographic and two workplace branches) than any other revolutionary organisation, and we have been prominent in struggles over racism, police harassment, unemployment, and in industrial disputes. But we also share the concern of Socialist Unity supporters and of thousands of uncommitted socialists that we should avoid splitting the forces of the left in electoral interventions wherever possible. We have therefore been disturbed by the way SU has approached this by-election. Take Bob Pennington's letter in last week's Socialist Challenge as an example. He invites the SWP to discuss the question of a joint candidate, yet nearly a week before this was printed we had already agreed to meet the IMG to discuss just this.

Nor is this the first time we have had such discussions. In the GLC elections of last year we met the SU and agreed to support their candidate Piers Corbyn in Lambeth Central. At that time we also pointed out that we intended to contest the constituency ourselves at the next Parliamentary election and we hoped that we would be able to avoid running against each other.

So when we agreed to meet the IMG we expected a serious discussion on who should stand, instead we were faced with a virtual fait accompli. We were informed that the IMG had already been conducting negotiations with the West Indian Block (an organisation which describes itself as a 'social movement' and which has no record of political activity in Brixton), and that their candidate had agreed with the SU. The IMG left us in no doubt that they would be supporting the WIB, and therefore there seemed no point in taking the discussions any further. Anyone who attended the SU meeting in Brixton, and heard the WIB candidate speak could also be in no doubt that he had been promised SU backing.

We find this a little difficult to understand, for it was also quite clear from the WIB candidate's speech, and from their announcement in the South London Press, that the WIB's politics are reformist and confused. On the crucial issue of black self-defence they have nothing to say, and on Ireland which was one of the three points of agreement with SU that the IMG stressed to us, the WIB comrade equated the IRA with the Unionists. If SU backs this organisation against the clear revolutionary position represented by Tony

Bogues, a candidate well respected by black revolutionaries, then we must interpret this as a sectarian manoeuvre which will make the building of real socialist unity that much more difficult.

We were also astonished at the procedure adopted for the 'selection' of SU candidates. No attempt was made to find out who was at the meeting, what they represented, whether they had any connection with the area, or had any serious intention of working for the candidate selected. We noticed that nearly half of the people who signed the contact sheet were from outside of Lambeth, and that there were several Labour Party members present, including a councillor from Lambeth Central. How can they decide who should stand against their own party? The whole procedure is a travesty of democracy.

Our position is that we are not prepared to stand joint candidates with SU, or enter SU and its unique 'democratic' procedures. But we are prepared to enter into serious discussions with SU and other socialist organisations to avoid standing against each other. The logic of this is that we are prepared to withdraw or not to stand in circumstances where we are convinced that there is another socialist candidate with a better base in the area and whose politics we can support.

It is on this basis that our Central Committee will be approaching Socialist Unity and other socialist organisations to discuss arrangements for the general election, and in the same light we call upon the supporters of Socialist Challenge in Lambeth to take a principled position and support Tony Bogues in the current by-election.

LINDA QUINN
DANNY PHILLIPS
[Lambeth SWP]

An open letter to the Morning Star

From Peter Porteous to the editor of the Morning Star.

Dear Comrades,
It appears from last Thursday's edition of the Morning Star that the Communist Party will be standing a candidate in the coming Garscadden by-election —

Sammy Barr, convenor of shop stewards at Scotstoun Marine.

Just over three weeks ago, when we in the Socialist Workers Party decided to stand a candidate in the by-election, we wrote to the Scottish secretary of the Communist Party urging a joint meeting of our respective national executives or Scottish committees, to discuss whether it was possible, should the Communist Party decide to stand a candidate, to work out an agreement aimed at avoiding any unnecessary display of disunity on the left.

It seemed to us, then and now, that in view of the level of unemployment, increasing attacks on shopfloor organisation and on women's rights, the growth of the Nazi National Front, coupled with the failure of the present right-wing leadership of the trade union movement to mount a serious fightback on any of these issues, that a united left was and is essential if further defeats are to be avoided.

Unfortunately no reply was received. Now, according to Communist Party Scottish secretary Jack Ashton (in last Monday's Glasgow Herald) 'there will be no division of the left vote at Garscadden because there is only one candidate of the left with a long-term strategy — ours.' Like Sammy Barr, I am a

shipyard worker — an electricians' shop steward in Yarrow's and a member of the Glasgow Central EETPU branch committee.

Like Sammy, I feel that neither the SNP candidate Keith Bovey — a lawyer — or right-wing Labour candidate Donald Dewar — also a lawyer — have anything to say to the people of Garscadden on the real issues that affect their lives — unemployment, bad housing, a woman's right to choose and so on.

Abortion
For this reason, I would appeal to all Communist Party members to consider once again the possibility of an urgent meeting of the executives of our two organisations to discuss united action during the campaign.

Issues to be discussed could include: abortion and a woman's right to choose — as Bovey has already made it clear that he will be standing on an anti-abortion platform, the rise in Glasgow bus fares during the campaign, already the highest in Europe, and a campaign to fight youth unemployment.

Left unity is more than just a slogan, it is essential if the working class is not to suffer further defeats.

Yours fraternally,
Peter Porteous, SWP parliamentary candidate, Garscadden.



ANTI-RACIST IN BRIEF

Preston pickets

PRESTON Trades Council is supporting a picket of the Waterloo pub in the town on 30 March. The Waterloo, which many local trade unions are already boycotting, is a meeting place and activity centre for the National Front.

Middlesbrough

AS ANTICIPATED, the Middlesbrough by-election ended in victory for the Labour candidate with a massively increased majority over the Tory runner-up. Socialist Unity and the Communist Party received 1.5

Deportation threats

THE BLACK People's Information Centre in West London is circulating an open letter demanding that Home Secretary Merlyn Rees revoke his deportation order against Sarah Lindu Kusah. She has lived in Britain since her childhood and has two children aged 14 and 12, both born in this country.

Under Britain's racist immigration laws, her husband's decision to leave Britain in 1974 after some 23 years' residence strips her of any right to remain here. Further information from BPIC, 301 Portobello Road, London W10.

Preston pickets

ACTIVISTS in Scott's union branch have responded to his recent unsuccessful attempt to get elected to the trades council by launching a campaign for his expulsion from the union. Picket assemblies at 6.30pm on 30 March outside the Waterloo pub, Friargate, Preston.

ALSO UNDER threat from Britain's race laws in Verghese Varkii, a Labour candidate in London's forthcoming local council elections. Varkii, who

is standing in the Belsize Ward in Camden, is a writer and voluntary community worker.

Verghese Varkii and his wife Meena were served with a deportation order last August — two days before they would have been resident for five years and immune from deportation. The Varkii's British-born son Sonu was hospitalised for 6 months on a visit to India in 1976 with a mysterious fever. This only disappeared on his return to England.

Appearing before a home office appeal adjudicator last week, Mr Varkii argued that deportation to India could have further disastrous effects on his son's health. The appeal was adjourned for independent medical evidence.



PLO raid on Israel A desperate move

LAST week's events have overshadowed the 11 March Palestinian commando operation which served as their pretext. But the raid on Tel Aviv is important because it reveals the depth of the crisis in the Palestinian resistance movement, argues M. JAFAR.

Presumably the PLO leadership saw the raid as a way of asserting its existence and forcing the Israelis to retaliate thereby undermining Sadat's diplomatic initiative.

The PLO was coming into hard times. With the raid it must have sought to reverse the disillusionment in its own ranks at its political marginalisation after the defeat in the Lebanese civil war.

At the same time it needed to prove

itself militarily to its new found allies in the 'Front of Steadfastness and Rejection' (an alliance of Libya, Iraq, Syria, Algeria and the Palestinian organizations) established in the wake of the Sadat initiative.

The problem was that the peace talks between Egypt and Israel had already broken down because of Israeli intransigence. The onus for the breakdown was clearly on Begin who was on the defensive not only internationally, but also inside Israel.

The Israeli cabinet was seriously split on the question of the Sinai settlements and an underswell of popular irritation at Begin's positions was developing even inside Israeli society.

The PLO's raid changed all this in one fell swoop. It gave Begin the opportunity he so desperately needed.

1000 casualties, southern Lebanon

occupied, destruction of all PLO bases in the south, and hundreds of thousands of new Palestinian and Lebanese refugees. This is just the beginning of the price the Arab masses are having to pay.

The question is bound to be asked: was it worth it? The answer is categorically: no.

The 11 March operation was crudely conceived as part of an 'armed peoples struggle' for the liberation of Palestine.

But hopeless and desperate suicide missions are a long way from the mobilisation of the masses in their hundreds of thousands to struggle for a common aim.

ISOLATED

The PLO is seriously isolated from the Arab population of the countries in which it still has forces.

Many villagers in southern Lebanon who only yesterday fought with the PLO in the civil war, are today arming themselves and barricading their villages against the entry of the PLO and even helpless and homeless Palestinian refugees.

The Lebanese mass movement and left organisations, who were pulverised during the civil war, lay much of the blame for this on the PLO.

In Beirut during the civil war the PLO acted more like an occupying army than a liberating force. The Lebanese masses have not forgotten these things.

PRIORITY

The burning priority of every responsible Palestinian revolutionary is to mend the bridges that have been cut between the Palestinian masses, and the rest of the Arab population.

For, if this problem is not tackled in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and the rest of the Arab countries, there soon won't be a Palestinian Resistance movement worth speaking about.

ISRAELI MURDER EXPANSION

As we go to press Israeli troops are still pushing northwards, already far beyond their self-proclaimed 'buffer zone', shelling and murdering the Palestinians and civilian population as they go.

It is an act of such flagrant aggression that even the Western powers have felt obliged to make disapproving noises.

But they will do nothing to stop the murderous march — for the Zionist state is their creature. Only the solidarity of the

ISRAELI occupation of southern Lebanon is now well under way. In the early hours of 15 March infantry brigades and heavy armoured units comprising some 25,000 soldiers crossed along the whole length of the Israeli-Lebanese border, M. JAFAR reports.

The invasion was backed by heavy naval and air bombardment of the Lebanese coastline reaching as far north as the Palestinian refugee camps of Damour and Ouzai just south of Beirut.

Latest reports speak of almost 1000 casualties and yet another exodus to the north of 160,000 new refugees to be added on to the 200,000 Palestinian refugees from previous wars and the 250,000 Lebanese and Palestinians made homeless by the civil war in Lebanon.

All this in a country of 2.5 million people.

DESTRUCTION

The PLO 11 March guerrilla operation on Tel Aviv furnished the Zionist state with the excuse for launching a project that must have been planned from the days of the civil war, if not before.

A military operation on such a scale could not have been organised in a few days.

The Zionist leadership seems to be going for an all-out destruction of the last remaining Palestinian bases and strongholds in the south of Lebanon,

Solidarity

WITHIN days of the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon Arab students and socialists were organising in London to condemn the aggression.

Already there have been two successful pickets of the Israeli Embassy, with over 50 people on each one.

Next week we will report on the appeal by the Palestine Solidarity Committee for further actions. It is hoped these will include a mass rally and a campaign in the National Union of Students to secure the release of Ramas Al-Rhassa, a former President of the Lebanese Student Union who was wounded and detained by the Israeli army.

The occupation of Lebanon speaks volumes for the nature of the Israeli state. It is vital that Zionism is made to suffer a political defeat, both internationally and in the British labour movement.

which the Syrians had found politically convenient to leave more or less intact in the aftermath of the civil war and the Sadat diplomatic initiative.

Israel seems to be aware that its objectives cannot be achieved in a single short term military operation. It has to work towards permanently changing what was an unstable political status quo in southern Lebanon, in a direction compatible with the long term interests of the Zionist state.

STALEMATE

This what Israeli premier Begin meant when he spoke on 15 March of the creation of a 'security belt' in the south of Lebanon and the need to come to a 'diplomatic arrangement' about getting rid of the Palestinian presence there.

There do not appear to be many suitable candidates with whom Israel could negotiate a political pact. The extreme right wing of the Christian militia forces led by Camille Chamoun, is one possibility.

But it is unlikely they would be joined by the much larger Phalangist militia units led by the more astute Pierre Gemayel, whose political ambitions are more far reaching. A political stalemate is therefore likely.

The PLO will continue its attempts to wage a guerrilla war of attrition against the occupying Israeli army.

DOUBTS

Already the Palestinian military command is gearing itself up for this with the assistance of the Syrian and Iraqi regimes.

In this the PLO really has no choice. Its very existence is at stake.

There must be serious doubts on the ability of the PLO to successfully wage a classical form of rural guerrilla warfare for any time.

The PLO is an organisation of full-time professional fighters, with a top-heavy urban based bureaucratic apparatus, that no longer has the sympathy of the Lebanese population, much less their active support.

This sad fact — which has too frequently been overlooked by the Arab left — was brought about as a result of the heavy-handed way in which the PLO conducted itself during the civil war.

HELPLESS

Even before the civil war the PLO's support among the southern peasants had been steadily eroding as their villages were exclusively used to launch operations against Israel, while the population was left helpless to face the inevitable retaliation.

The truth on the bus killings

WHETHER through ignorance or for political reasons, the press has not released full details of the Palestinian raid into Israel on 11 March. In this report from Tel Aviv MICHEL WARSCHAWSKY explains that many of the civilians dead were killed by Israeli bullets.

The Palestinian commando, including at least two women, managed to get into Israel on Saturday afternoon in inflatable canoes.

Their aim was to land at Tel Aviv and to take hostages at one of the big hotels, to be released in exchange for five Palestinian political prisoners. For reasons which are still unclear they landed about 60 kilometres from Tel Aviv.

Deciding to carry on with the operation, the Palestinians hijacked two buses and, firing all along the

journey, they covered the 50 kilometres between the Maagal-Michael kibbutz and the outskirts of Tel Aviv.

The roadblocks put up by the Israeli forces were unable to stop them for more than an hour. It was only when they arrived at Tel Aviv that the commando's advance was halted.

The orders were clear: stop the Palestinians entering Tel Aviv by any means necessary. Any means necessary included the sacrifice of dozens of Israelis held hostage in the bus.

The Israeli authorities announced nearly 40 dead and more than 100 wounded.

The great majority were hit by the bullets of the Israeli soldiers who fired for more than ten minutes on the bus which, as well as the Palestinians, contained nearly 100 civilians, including many children.

A number of them were killed when the bus blew up for reasons which are still unclear.

L'S EROUS NSION

international labour movement and the resistance of the Arab and Palestinian masses can do that.

On these pages M. JAFAR, NIGEL WARD and MICHEL WARSCHAWSKY assess the importance of this latest episode in Israeli expansionism, accompanied by pictures from the battle zone never seen before in this country.



The predictable result is the almost total isolation of the PLO from all sectors of the Arab masses in Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt.

TOKEN

Even among the Palestinian refugees the active support enjoyed by the Palestinian organisations between 1967 and 1970 has become much more passive. It is striking, for example, that whereas in 1972 and 1973 the PLO could call upon hundreds of thousands to demonstrate in the streets of Beirut, the best it could muster in the wake of Sadat's visit to Jerusalem was a pitiful 4-6,000.

The prospects for guerrilla warfare in such circumstances cannot be much of a worry to the Israeli army. Syria and the other members of the 'Front of Steadfastness and Rejection' will give token support to the PLO. But Syria won't go any further. Its reaction to the invasion and even the air strikes south of Beirut has been noticeably mild.

Syrian policy will concentrate on building up its military arsenal from

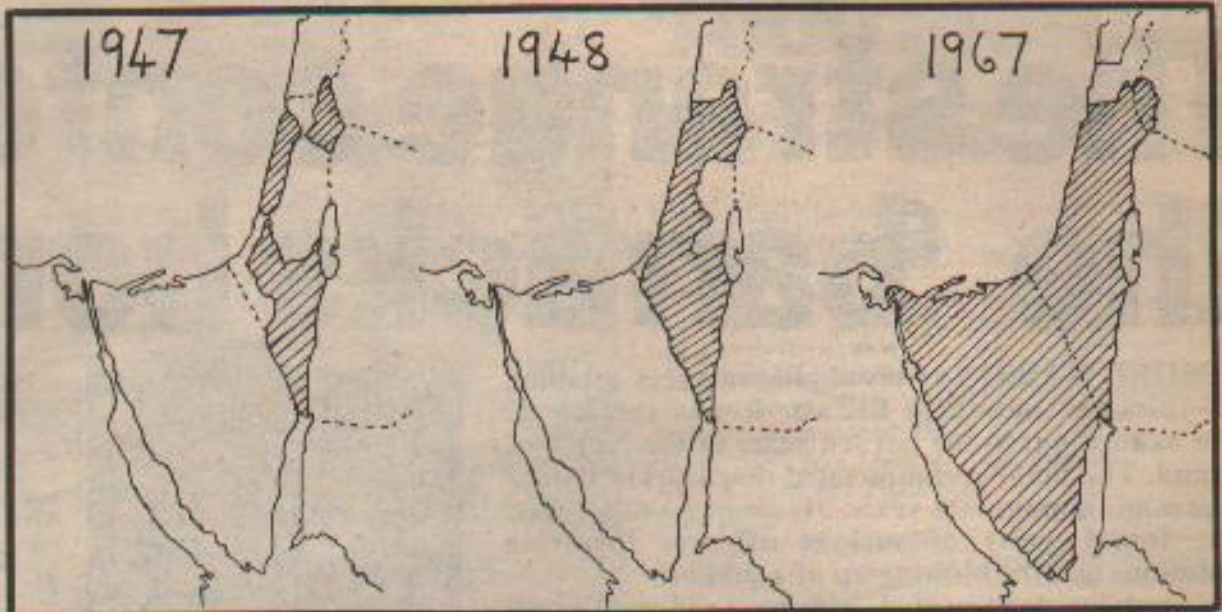
the Soviet Union and simultaneously attempting to reap the political benefits of Sadat's failure to make any headway with the Zionist leadership on the question of a settlement.

So far the Zionist establishment has spared us references to the pre-Biblical land of the ancient Israelites extending all the way up to the Litani river. Probably this will follow when the 'diplomatic arrangement' falls through, just as it has in every other Israeli territorial expansion.

ZEALOTS

Southern Lebanon, it should be pointed out for those whose knowledge of the old testament is not what it used to be, was much more integral a component of the land of the ancient Israelites than the Sinai peninsula ever was 3000 years ago!

The archaeologists, Biblical scholars and zealots of the Gush Emunim will no doubt be following in the wake of their army with much invaluable documentation on this subject as new facts grow old in Southern Lebanon.



The foundation of Israel: No room for the Arabs

'THEY take our land. Why? For security reasons!
'They take out jobs. Why? For security reasons!
'And when we ask them how it happens that we, our lands and our jobs threaten the security of the state — they do not tell us. Why not? For security reasons!'

Walter Schwarz, *The Arabs in Israel*, 1959

A glimpse of the map of the Middle East over the last thirty years shows one thing very clearly — the emergence and continuing expansion of Israel, writes NIGEL WARD.

In its early years, this expansionism had two motives. For the Zionists, the aim was colonisation. Swollen by the horrors of fascism in Europe, this movement had its chance to begin to realise its goal — the creation of an exclusively Jewish state.

The Jewish population grew from under 100,000 in the 1920's to 700,000 by 1948 and then doubled in three years in the area of the state of Israel at that time.

EXPULSION

As Joseph Weitz, head of the Colonization Department of the Jewish Agency, said, 'It should be clear that there is no room for both peoples to live in this country... Not one (Arab) village, not one tribe must remain. They must be moved to Iraq, Syria or even Transjordan.'

For the Arab inhabitants of Palestine this meant expulsion, repression and the disappearance of nearly half their settlements within the boundaries of Israel.

At the same time, US imperialism took the opportunity to aid a state which was prepared to act, out of its own interests, as a block on the rise of the Arab national movement.

RAIDS

After the early period of colonisation, the expansion of the Israeli state continued under a further pressure. For, given the conditions under which the state emerged, it was inevitable that it would confront the Arab national liberation struggle.

Since the 1950s, the Israeli state has conducted regular raids on Arab villages. With the backing of Moshe Dayan, special units were created for this purpose, one of their first operations being the dynamiting of dozens of Arab houses in the village of Kibye in 1953.

AGGRESSION

Such operations continued for years and provided the backdrop to the Suez war and the war of 1967.

The invasion of southern Lebanon today is also defended from the point of view of 'security'. It is just the latest

example of the Israeli Zionist cat chasing its own tail in a never ending spiral of expansionism and military aggression.

A Zionist state in permanent and inevitable conflict with the surrounding Arab population is incapable even of guaranteeing protection for Jews, as it claims. Only when the Zionist, colonialist root of the conflict is defeated will there be a future for the Hebrew speaking population.

There are also very specific reasons why the Israelis are interested in dominating the south of Lebanon up to the Litani River, beyond their desire to inflict a military defeat on the Palestinian liberation forces and hand out another bloody 'lesson' to the Arab masses.

Firstly, the Israelis have always faced a shortage of fresh water, so a major river such as the Litani would be of great value.

EXPANSION

Secondly, religious Zionists claim a biblical justification for their occupation.

In 1956 David Ben Gurion had a plan for re-drawing the map of the Middle East. It envisaged the expansion of Israel to include the West Bank and Lebanon south of the Litani River, along with the creation of a small Maronite (Lebanese Christian) state.

With the changing situation in the region today, this scheme no longer looks so ridiculous.



State terrorism in Ireland

The strange confessions of the 'barracks bombers'

EDMUND HARKIN received jail sentences totalling 165 years last month in Belfast. It was the largest total handed out in the last ten years in the North of Ireland. The judge recommended that Harkin should serve a minimum of 25 years. He and two other men were found guilty of various offences involving explosions and the blowing up of a soldier.

By studying documented evidence produced by the prosecution at the trial and talking to various witnesses, Socialist Challenge has pieced together the story of the interrogation and trial of Harkin and the two other accused men, Thomas Joseph Murray and John Joseph Burke.

It is a salutary tale of how justice is practised in the North of Ireland. GEOFF BELL reports.

1 THE QUESTIONING OF JOHN JOSEPH BURKE

ANYONE familiar with interrogation tactics in the North of Ireland knows that from time to time prisoners jump out of windows, beat themselves up, and burn themselves with cigarettes. Or at least so the police and Army say; as do their counterparts in South Africa when they are asked to explain injuries received by prisoners in their charge.

But in the questioning of 17-year-old Burke a new variation of the familiar theme was offered by the police. According to identical statements made by Detective Constables George Richardson and Robert Miller this is what occurred on 17 January last year.

"During the interview at 3.45pm, I (Miller) informed Burke we were making inquiries in relation to the bombs in Ebrington Military Barracks in July 1976 when a soldier was killed. I reminded Burke he was still under caution and he replied "I had nothing to do with it". At this point Burke appeared to get very nervous and started shaking.

"He started shouting that his father was dead and that he heard noises in his head. At this point he suddenly jumped out of the chair and dived with his head at the plate glass partition in the interview room, subsequently smashing it."

According to the police, Burke was then taken back to his cell. The following day he 'confessed' and signed a statement which the police agree was drawn up by them. Burke was later to withdraw his confession and in court he pleaded not guilty, claiming he had been forced to sign the statement. The 'confession' was the only substantive evidence offered against Burke.

2 THE QUESTIONING OF EDMUND HARKIN

AS WITH BURKE, Harkin was to sign a confession drawn up by the

police, but allegedly based on information freely given by Harkin. This 'confession' is remarkable for its complete lack of detail — important facts which Harkin 'couldn't remember'.

Harkin 'couldn't remember' who told him to make up the bombs, or where he made them up, but this it could be argued is because he didn't wish to implicate others. Yet according to the statement he also 'couldn't remember' whether he had made the bombs in a house or a shed, what type of equipment he had used in making them. 'I gave the bombs to the boys who were to plant them,' the statement said. 'All they had to do was to make the last connection. I can't remember exactly what happened.'

Now of course it could be that Harkin had simply a bad memory, but consider the extreme vagueness of this 'confession' in the context of the following statement which has been made available to Socialist Challenge by the first person to visit Harkin after his questioning on 2 February — two days after his 'confession':

LARGE BRUISE

"Edmund did not recognise me for a few minutes and he appeared to me to be under the influence of drugs. His eyes were dazed. He sat down at a table and I asked how he was. He showed me a large bruise on the top of his shoulder, at the base of his neck. When he pulled up his shirt there was extensive bruising on his ribs and spine.

"His hair appeared to have been pulled to the extent that it stood up and was soaking with water... I asked Edmund if he had complained about his treatment and he did not seem to understand me. By now he was extremely sleepy. I asked the policeman for an explanation about Edmund's state and at this point I was told to leave."

No other visitor was allowed to see



EDMUND HARKIN

Harkin for three days. He was later to tell friends that during questioning he was shown a list of charges and asked to 'take your pick' of the ones he was to confess to. Harkin was later to withdraw his confession, claiming ill-treatment, and that he signed a statement which he had no part in writing or giving details for. This would certainly explain the vagueness of the statement. As with Burke, the withdrawn confession was the only substantive evidence offered against him.

3 THE QUESTIONING OF THOMAS JOSEPH MURRAY

THE PICTURE presented in the questioning of Murray was of a young man who had been forced to carry the bomb into the Army barracks. His 'confession', dated 18 January 1976, ends: 'I would also like to add that I am not in any way connected with the IRA. I feel much happier now that I have got this cleared up and off my chest'.

So the impression is of a willing confessor pouring out all he can to the police. But the following day Murray was to make a further 'confession'. He was alleged to have said: 'I forgot to tell you last night that I took another bomb into Ebrington. As I told you, I took in the first bomb that morning and left it beside the workshop.

"Well at dinner time the same day I went back out of Ebrington Barracks and went to the same house I collected the first bomb from..."

Murray's statement then goes on to say how he planted a second bomb. But does all this square up to the image presented in Murray's first statement of someone eager to pour out all he knew as soon as he could? Only if he had 'forgotten' about planting a second bomb. Conveniently for the police, this is exactly what the second statement says. Murray, too, was later to withdraw his 'confession'.

4 THE TRIAL

WHILE THE three men were on remand, Edmund Harkin's sister Bernadette McLoughlan wrote to Roy Mason, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, to complain among other things of the length of time it was taking for the case to come to court. She received a reply from the Northern Ireland Office, part of which read:

"You say you were informed that it could take a year for your brother to be brought to trial. This is most unlikely. There have been cases where a long delay has occurred and this is very much regretted, but the majority of cases are dealt with in under six months. Many more are cleared up in a matter of a few weeks."

In fact it took exactly a year for the case to be heard. Such long remands are common in the North of Ireland. Usually they apply to suspects the police think they will have difficulty proving a case against, but who can be locked up on remand for a year and more. Police uncertainty certainly appears to be present in the Harkin case.

PLEA BARGAIN

Socialist Challenge understands that during the trial, Harkin's lawyer was approached by the prosecution who promised that if Harkin would plead guilty to the explosion charges, the charge of murder for the soldier killed in the explosion would be dropped.

The suggestion was also made that if Harkin co-operated, the police would speak on his behalf at the trial. Harkin refused the offer, but Murray

did change his plea to guilty. While it has not been established if any deal was made by the prosecution with Murray, he did get a lighter sentence than Harkin, and Police Inspector Riddle did testify on his behalf.

The trial itself was presided over by Judge MacDermott. Thanks to the odd standards of 'justice' which operate in the North of Ireland, the judge was also the jury. He found all three men guilty; Harkin and Burke on the strength of their 'confessions'; Murray on his 'guilty' plea. Evidence which provided an alibi for Harkin was not called by his defence lawyer, apparently because he didn't wish to implicate the witness.

INJURIES

But two doctors — including a police surgeon — did testify that Harkin had received injuries during his questioning. Dealing with the allegation that the police had caused these injuries, the judge made the surprising remark that this was 'too plausible'. In his opinion, the injuries were self-inflicted.

And that is how Edmund Harkin entered the record books for the longest total sentence of any 'terrorist' in the North of Ireland. Convicted on the strength of a confession that was withdrawn — in spite of prosecution uncertainty that the charges would stick, and despite injuries which were 'too plausible' to be caused by his interrogators.

Just one more thing. If you happen to visit a police station in the North of Ireland and see a smashed glass partition, rest assured that it will have been caused by a prisoner who suddenly dived through it head first.



In Parliament the Prevention of Terrorism Act was renewed last week. Twenty-one MPs voted against.

What's Left

HACKNEY: 2 rooms in flat available from April. Phone Robin or Vera on 01-988-3889 for details.

BROADSIDE MOBILE Workers Theatre requires versatile socialist musician (full-time). Long term commitment. Acting ability an advantage. Write: 56 Holbein House, Holbein Place, London SW1. Tel: 01-450-6892/7301-6386.

ZIONIST OPPRESSION of Oriental Jews (Sephardim) in Israel. Speaker: Robin Ezra, an Israeli lecturer. Sunday 2 April, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London. Organised by London Area British Anti-Zionist Organisation (BAZO), c/o 58 Old Brompton Road, London.

EAST LONDON Socialist Unity. Good Friday Benefit. Pop at St. Hilary's East, Dido Row, London E2. 5 till late, bar, bands disco.

MARK'S CAPITAL And Today's Global Crisis, a new pamphlet by Raya Daneyevskaya with an introduction by Harry McShane. Includes critique of Mandel's introduction to Capital and of Tony Cliff on Lenin. £1 from 17 Hornsey Park Road, London N8.

TRADE UNIONS AND APARTHEID: What can we do? Public meeting with speakers John Forester (AUEW) and Rob Peterson Workers Unity (SACTU). 7.30pm on 31 March in Town Hall Basement Theatre, Manchester.

HAMMERSMITH Socialist Unity is holding a meeting on Thurs. 30 March at 7.30pm to discuss standing candidates in the May local elections. Venue: Hammersmith Town Hall. All welcome.

F.J. LITHO LTD, 208/B Upper Street, London N1, urgently needs an experienced Touch Typist or someone

willing to learn. 35 hour week, £56. Please apply, enclosing full curriculum vitae, before 31 March, to the manager at the above address.

'FOR A SOCIALIST AFRICA' badges, ideal for selling to your workmates during the Anti-Apartheid month of action in March. Or 'End Immigration Controls' badges. Put yourself on the other side of the class lines from Callaghan and Thatcher, use them during the run up to the local elections. 15p each plus 7p p&p, or 11p each for orders of ten or more. From J. Wilson, 8C Badges, PO Box 60, London N1 2XP. Cheques payable to J. Wilson.

PIRATE JENNY Theatre's play 'Sir is Winning' by Shane Connaughton about Tyrone teachers is still available on certain dates in the coming months. May: 3,4,6 in South. 27 in Manchester. June: 5,10 in London. 14,16 in Home Counties. 20,24 in Yorkshire and 27,28 June and 1 July in Birmingham. If you are interested in booking the play for any of these dates contact Pirate Jenny immediately on 01-989-2292.

NORTH LONDON Socialist Unity meetings on Fri. 24 March at 43

Holloway Road, N19 to discuss draft electronic address and Tues. 26 March at Caxton House 129 St John's Way, N19 to finalise election address, select more candidates and get the campaign on the road. All SU supporters are urged to attend and bring proposals on candidates, election agents etc. Both meetings at 7.30pm.

SINN FEIN Easter Commemoration of the 1916 Rising will take the form of a rally this year owing to the police commissioner's ban on marches in London. Assemble 2.30pm Birchington Street, opposite Kilburn Square, on Sun. 25 March.

AUBREY BERRY Campbell Defence Committee benefit, 8pm on 2 April at Dingwalls, Camden Lock, London NW5. Bands playing will be Yachts and Swift. Also raffle and draw. Tickets are £1.50, £1 for claimants.

INTERNATIONAL Socialists and Revolutionary Unity report back from 11 Feb Conference in London of ex-IS members and others by Steven Marks. 2.30pm, 1 April at Swarthmore Centre, Woodhouse Square, Leeds.

THE CONFLICT in the Horn of Africa: the International Dimension, Fred Halliday, a writer on Middle Eastern and African affairs, has recently visited the area and will lead the discussion. Tues 26 March at 5.30pm at the Institute of Race Relations, 247/249 Pentonville Road, London N1.

BRITTON SOCIALIST Club Easter Dance with Man Made Set, Stan Daniels and others at Canterbury Arms, Canterbury Crescent, London SW9 at 8pm on 24 March. Entrance 50p.

ART AND RESISTANCE: 1968, events, film and exhibits accompanying the Chilean Patchwork exhibition at the Art Gallery, 120 Shaftesbury Ave, London WC2. 15 March to 1 April. 23.28.30 March, film 'Chile: The Most Painful Hour' at 1.00pm and 6.30pm. Sat 25 March, 2.00pm, Guy Brett on democratic form and content in popular art today. 4.30pm, Jane Gomez on the history of popular theatre in Chile in this century, plus his own experience of forming theatre groups in Chile.



'FIGHT RACISM' badges, sell them to your local anti-racist committee, friends and all anti-racist activists to show Thatcher and the NF what you think of them. 15p each plus 7p p&p or 11p each for orders of 10 or more. From J. Wilson, 8C Badges, P.O. 60 London N1. Cheques payable to J. Wilson.



Italy after the kidnapping Like Dodge City on a sunny Saturday

On nearly every wall in Italy is a poster bearing the photos of 12 Red Brigades suspects wanted for questioning over the kidnapping of Christian Democrat leader Aldo Moro.

Of the 12, two have already come forward and proved that they have no connection with the Red Brigades; two are already in prison; one is a known police agent; and one picture appears twice under different names, writes RICHARD CARVER.

Just a small indication of the mindless hysteria the state is fostering. The capitalist press is full of appeals for working class and anti-fascist unity! — not against the fascists but against the Red Brigades and, by implication, the far left in general.

The day after the kidnapping all the papers compared the event to an assassination attempt on Communist Party leader Togliatti in 1948! (Anna Libera's report from Rome on this page shows how the most militant workers are not ready to be so easily hoodwinked.)

SPECULATION

There has been the inevitable speculation that the kidnapping was carried out by police or fascists as a pretext for military intervention and that the Red Brigades are either a fascist organisation or the unwitting dupes of the fascists.

There are precedents. The Armed Proletarian Nuclei (NAP), an armed group with which the Red Brigades have links, has been well infiltrated by the right.

EX-STUDENTS

It fits the pattern. The Red Brigades originated in the early 1970s, mainly made up of former students who had taken part in the struggles of the late 1960s and were disillusioned

with the left parties.

To start with these dispensers of 'popular justice' had some limited support in the factories and colleges, but that soon began to dissipate as their strategy became to provoke a fascist coup to stimulate a revival of the left.

DEFEAT

So, whether or not the Red Brigades are infiltrated by the right, they are setting out with a counter-revolutionary goal — a conscious bid to inflict a massive defeat on the workers' movement.

Still, their despair is explicable, if not defensible. The decade of the Red Brigades has also been one of chronic confusion on the far left and, more importantly, of a rapid rightward drift by the Communist Party (PCI).

It is hardly coincidence that the kidnapping follows so closely on the formal entry of the PCI into the government majority.

COMPROMISE

The 'historic compromise' with Christian Democracy has been the party's aim ever since its general secretary, Enrico Berlinguer, decided that the failure of the Chilean Popular Unity Government was because of its desire to move too fast, alienating the capitalist class and state. He resolved that this mistake should not be repeated in Italy.

So keen was the PCI to enter the governmental bloc that it doesn't care that it has no representatives in the government itself. This alone has angered many PCI supporters.

But the problem is the go-

vernment programme and the fact that the major workers' party is ready to govern alongside the capitalists' party.

The programme is hinged around austerity. This has been the PCI's stock in trade for a while now, as it has supported vicious attacks on workers' jobs and pay and used its union confederation to stamp down on members who want to organise resistance.

But austerity also means strengthening state powers to deal with working class opposition, and it is the repressive clauses of the governmental agreement which have the most direct bearing on the Moro case.

STRONG STATE

This gunslingers' charter gives police almost unlimited power to use firearms. It increases judges' power to refuse bail and police powers to arrest on suspicion, and is a grave attack on the rights of those arrested.

Ironically the PCI opposed the use of 'confino' — which is like feudal banishment to a distant island — when it was used against the Mafia. Then it was an attack on civil liberties.

But it's quite alright now its being used against left-wing students!

PRETEXT

The Red Brigade attacks do nothing to fight these repressive laws — rather they give a pretext for strengthening state powers.

But it is hardly surprising that people should despair of the possibility of galvanising the working class into action

against the state, for the PCI cloaks its backing for repression with rhetoric about defending the 'democratic' Republic.

The Republic had a chance to demonstrate its respect for democracy in the Red Brigade trial that opened in Turin a fortnight ago and was the immediate cause of the kidnap.

The trial opened after a wave of hysteria fostered by the state (aided by the Red Brigades themselves) about the threat to justice posed by the guerillas still at liberty.

LUNATIC

The Red Brigades have behaved in the most lunatic manner, particularly their threats against the Radical Party (a small civil rights grouping) because one of the judges is a Radical member.

But nothing justifies the state's treatment of the Red Brigade prisoners. They are taken to and from the courtroom chained together round the neck like slaves and kept in a cage inside the court.

There is no security rationale for this: there are more police gunmen than in Dodge City on a sunny Saturday. It is just an arrogant display of state strength, fully backed by the PCI.

And they're surprised the Red Brigades decided to hit back!

The Red Brigades have nothing to offer the working class but a dead end (at best) or a rightist takeover (at worst). The only reassuring thing about them is that they are tiny and isolated.

TERROR

There is an opposition developing, especially in the unions — militants who stand for class struggle against the class collaboration of the PCI. These people, still relatively small in number, do offer a way forward for the working class.

The tragedy is that they are the ones who will be hit hardest if the state is allowed to get away with its terror campaign.

'Aldo Moro is not one of us'

KIDNAPPING has become part of daily life in Italy over the past few years. But the reaction to this one was different, not merely because it was aimed at the highest levels of the state, but also because it involved the killing of five police. ANNA LIBERA reports from Rome.

Everywhere one goes there is a feeling that this time 'something has got to be done'. But then people are immediately divided between those who favour draconian measures and those who fear that the authorities will simply use this opportunity to limit democratic rights still further.

The massive reaction of the working class left no room for ambiguity on this score. There was no sense of solidarity with Christian Democracy and its state, but rather a feeling that behind this event lay an attack on their democratic rights.

DOWNED TOOLS

Without waiting for instructions from their leaders, workers everywhere downed tools to hold immediate meetings.

On Thursday afternoon the largest demonstrations for several years took place in all the main centres: 100,000 in Rome, 30,000 in Bologna, 50,000 in Milan, 20,000 in Naples, 30,000 in Florence...

These demonstrations were essentially working class in composition. In Rome, for instance, the few white flags of the Christian Democrats were lost in the crowd.

After all, the Christian Democrats had condemned the general strike, and their leaders were furious at the turn of events: 'It was a good opportunity for us...and then the trade unions have to get involved...and the Communists too.'

The Christian Democrats had hoped to use 'their' martyr to improve their image. But it

was an impossible task even with the willing assistance of the Communist Party leaders.

'Aldo Moro is one of us!', the Communist mayor of Turin told demonstrators — instead of the anticipated applause, there came nothing but catcalls from sections of the crowd and silence from the rest.

SILENCE

In Rome, where most of the workers had come straight from the factories and offices, the silence was still more impressive. Trade union leaders rebuffed their efforts to pay tribute to Christian Democracy, and again there was no applause — even though the sympathies of most of the crowd clearly lay with the Communist Party.

The predominant feeling was: certainly we are against the Red Brigades and their terrorist methods, but we are also against the state and its party which has nurtured all the terrorist enterprises of the last 30 years.

'No, Aldo Moro is not one of us', was the common response. 'He is an enemy, but one against whom other methods of political struggle are called for than those employed this morning.'

The truth of this has been shown by subsequent events — not merely the gigantic police operation, but also the hurried vote of confidence given to the new Andreotti Government without any discussion of its programme.

UNITY

National unity was invoked by everyone from Berlinguer of the Communist Party to the neo-fascist Almirante, with the only dissenting voices from the handful of Radical Party and Proletarian Democracy MPs.

As a well-known Italian journalist recently commented: 'If the Red Brigades had not arisen by themselves, the Italian bourgeoisie would have had to invent them.'



The Moro family with the Holy Father in 1965

E. Europe campaign

THE LABOUR movement and socialists should take the defence of jailed dissidents in Eastern Europe out of the hands of the right wing. This was the message from the founding meeting of the East European Solidarity Campaign in London on 6 March.

A wide spectrum of socialists, from the Labour Party, Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party and International Marxist Group decided to launch the campaign to give socialists the chance to begin systematic defence of all those facing repression in Eastern Europe and the Soviet

Union because they have tried to exercise democratic rights.

The campaign hopes to gain affiliation from socialist organisations, Labour Party and trade union branches and students' unions. Individual socialists can also join. Eventually the campaign hopes there will be local committees throughout the country.

The founding meeting decided on immediate activity to defend dissidents. The first national event will be a conference on Eastern Europe and labour movement defence on the tenth anniversary of the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

French elections

All the tricks in the book

The electoral victory of the right in France was primarily the result of a gerrymandered election system, writes GILLES GIACOMIN from Paris.

The bourgeois coalition — composed of the Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR), the Giscardian Union of French Democracy (UDF), and a handful of 'independent' bourgeois politicians — won 50.5 per cent of the vote (only 300,000 more than the Communist Party (PCF), Socialist Party (PS), and Left Radicals) but will control 290 seats in the new National Assembly, as against 201 for the left.

The right gained by mobilising extra votes in the second round, where the turnout was two per cent higher than in the previous week. Its crude anti-Communist campaign had the support of the mass media, to the extent that the trade unions at one of the national television stations protested and threatened to prevent normal news programmes from being broadcast.

SQUABBLING

President Giscard d'Estaing, who according to the constitution of the Fifth Republic is supposed to stand 'above' political squabbling in the real world, intervened actively to bolster the right.

And all this 'normal' bourgeois election trickery was compounded by a good dose of the 'abnormal': bribes, fraud, and so on.

But all these factors, which account for the wide variation in the number of seats held by the two blocs, do not fully explain the disappointing showing of the left.

Almost exactly ten years after

their betrayal of the mass movement of the working class in May 1968, the leaderships of the reformist workers' parties have again betrayed their followers and supporters.

The six months of vicious polemic between the PCF and PS leaderships over minor details for a class collaborationist programme broke the united spirit that had been building up in the factories.

The workers, who had increasingly believed that their social struggles could find an outlet in the political defeat of the Government, were transformed into spectators at an unprincipled brawl of their leaders.

The last minute pact after the first round came too late to allow a real unitary offensive. This helps explain the shift of several percentage points between the two rounds.

The manoeuvres of realignment began immediately the results became known. Robert Fabre, leader of the bourgeois Left Radicals, announced that he no longer felt bound by the 1972 Common Programme, thus revealing the Left Radicals' role in the Union of the Left.

In the event of victory, the Left Radicals would have served as the watchdog of the bourgeoisie within the left government; given the defeat, the need for that role disappears, and the Left Radicals became the first grouping to accept the Giscardians' offer of an 'opening' for a new majority.

So far the leaders of the PS



have rejected that opening, stating that they intend to continue their policy of alliance with the PCF, simultaneously blaming the PCF for the defeat. The PCF has in turn blamed the PS.

The results represent a political defeat for the workers' movement. Despite the reformist programmes of the PCF and PS, a left-wing victory would have strengthened the workers' positions in their struggle against austerity, inflation, unemployment, and the general economic and social offensive of these employers.

The defeat, on the other hand, will undoubtedly provoke some demoralisation

among those who have been suffering most from that offensive and had thought that they could settle accounts on 19 March.

Nonetheless, the situation for the Government is far from ideal. The RPR, which had dominated the outgoing Assembly, lost some 30 seats. The decline of Gaullism is thus confirmed.

The PCF will have 86 seats in the new assembly, the PS will have 104, while the Left Radicals have lost two seats and will hold ten in the new assembly. The other left seat is held by a left independent from New Caledonia.

Giscard's UDF made clear gains (22 seats) and will hold

137 in all, but the Giscardians still remain a minority in their own majority, despite the weakening of the Gaullists.

The RPR has already rejected Giscard's call for an 'opening of the majority' towards the PS and will almost certainly block implementation of the 'reforms' the Giscardians promised during their campaign.

More important than the electoral scores themselves, however, is the depth of the economic and social crisis, which will be unaffected by the voting.

The workers will continue their fight against the effects of that crisis, and now the reformist leaders will be deprived of the argument that struggles

must be cooled so as not to prejudice electoral chances.

Throughout the campaign the PCF and PS showered workers with promises of the gains they could expect from a left government. Now, after a possible brief period of disappointment, the workers will try to win those very same gains through struggle.

It can be done, provided that the unity that was lacking during the election campaign is forged in reality in the factories.

The new bourgeois majority in parliamentary seats has no political legitimacy. And there is every indication that the workers will not grant it any.

Save Mahlangu

Stop the execution of

SOLOMON MAHLANGU sentenced to death for fighting apartheid



SOLOMON Mahlangu of the African National Congress of South Africa has been sentenced to death by the apartheid regime. The ANC has pointed out that this sentence is aimed at the South African opposition as a whole and not just one individual or organisation.

'We of the African National Congress of South Africa vehemently condemn this barbarous conviction and sentence. We demand that the

racist regime of Vorster complies with the newly introduced Geneva Convention which states that guerrillas captured in the war of liberation be treated as prisoners of war.'

The ANC goes on to call on the widest international solidarity to release all political prisoners including Solomon Mahlangu: 'It is the Vorsters and not the freedom fighters who have to be put on trial.'

Life in the Bantustans

Waiting for the bread package

South Africa is the one African country where the stage is set for the proletarian revolution, argues SAM MHLONGO. Here he begins a series on the prospects for revolution in South Africa with a look at the rural population.

FOR Marxists in Czarist Russia, China, Cuba and Vietnam, the land question was tightly bound up with the peasant question. But South Africa is unique in this regard in that it has no peasants.

South African Maoists and Stalinists talk about 'peasants' without ever defining what they mean by the term. A favourite of the Maoists is the small peasant.

Engels defined the small peasant like this: 'By a small peasant we mean here the owner or tenant — particularly the former — of a patch of land no bigger as a rule than he and his family can till and no smaller than can sustain the family.'

By this definition the search for peasants in South Africa becomes fruitless. Dispossession and proletarianisation have been so rapid, thorough and complete that wage labour has become the precondition for existence in South Africa.

At the end of each month countless scores of dependents in the Bantustans (homelands) wait anxiously for the registered package from their bread winner in the urban areas.

Such a package, itself meagre, supplements the meagre earnings of other members of the family who sell their labour to the farmers.

The noose of South African reaction and conservatism is tightest in the rural areas. The rural population, black and white, supplies the bulk of the police force and administrators.

The expropriation of the blacks' land in South Africa was rapid and ruthless compared even to England in the time of the Industrial Revolution. This ruthlessness has broken down all rural resistance.

SLAVE WAGE

The only escape route from absolute rural poverty is the slave-wage labour of the migratory labour system. Agriculture, mining, catering and services all rely on this system. It is the migratory labour laws too that mean that white workers can afford to hire domestic labour.

The rural proletariat is confined by law to these sectors

and can only be employed in manufacturing industry in 'border areas' — near the Bantustans. Along the borders between Mozambique and the North Eastern Transvaal, the Natal coast, the southern Orange Free State and the Western Transvaal are large numbers of foreign migrants from Mozambique, Swaziland, Botswana and Lesotho.

For political reasons mutually acceptable to South Africa and these neighbouring black-administered states the extent of foreign labour is not revealed.

This labour plays an important part in the maintenance, and in many respects the holding down, of the native black workers' wages. Migrants in the urban areas are largely drawn from South Africa's own rural blacks — the only exception being the mining industry where over 80 per cent is foreign.

The low wages for farm workers and high rural unemployment drive rural blacks to the urban areas despite arrests and deportations under the pass laws.

Migrants live in specially built hostels for single people in ghettos like Soweto. But they may not rent the sub-standard housing in the area — a privilege reserved for the urban blacks.

In this way migrants are kept isolated from the urban proletariat, where they can and have been used by the police to help crush urban black resistance.

Until the 1950s migrants lived in poor white areas. The decision (for reasons of apartheid) to move them to the ghettos creates greater social interaction with the settled black population, so the task of organising a united black resistance should have become easier.

But this cannot yet happen since the working class has no party of its own.

Next week: foreign migrants and the urban working class.

Apologies

We inadvertently forgot to mention that the minutes of the Zimbabwe internal settlement talks printed in last week's issue were made available to us by Counter Information Services, of 9 Poland Street, London W1. Our apologies.

THE POLITICAL situation in the Middle East has meant that Mark Jackson's article on Czechoslovak dissident Frantisek Kriegel, promised last week, has been held over.

DOCTORS dominate health services. Their ideas and assumptions about medicine inhibit the development of a form of health care more responsive to our needs. We are concerned with doctors' attitudes towards patients and other health workers, as well as their beliefs about the role of medicine in health care, about how it should be practised and about the nature of disease.

Here we call these attitudes and beliefs the 'medical ideology'. Doctors have authority over all health workers. This is justified within the medical ideology. To challenge the authority of doctors we need to question the underlying ideology, particularly as it is accepted by many other health workers and people generally.

Who Goes to Medical School?

Most medical students have middle class backgrounds. They often share common assumptions about professional autonomy and dominance, individual responsibility and their own intellectual superiority. The class bias in entry is largely due to working class students applying in proportionally much smaller numbers. This arises from inequality in education as a whole, where working class children are not given the same opportunities to obtain the necessary qualifications to enter medical school and are discouraged from applying by teachers and parents.

Although medical schools do not seem to actively discriminate against working class applicants, they do discriminate in favour of public school applicants and children of doctors. This is unrelated to academic ability, since, for instance, candidates from state schools are on average better qualified in terms of O- and A-levels.

The narrow class background of medical students and the fact that most come directly from school without any work experience nourishes elitism. In addition to elitist attitudes, students come with ideas about health care which are actively spread by media: the 'leadership' role of the doctor, the value of high technology treatment, and curative procedures. Medical education does not question these ideas; it strengthens them.

Doctors' Attitudes Towards Patients and Illness

In medical school, the common image of disease is that something goes wrong within the individual patient, a problem with their physiology or biochemistry unrelated to environmental or social factors. Even where external factors are recognised, they are underplayed. For example, the tubercle bacteria, bad housing conditions and inadequate nutrition are known to play a part in the onset of tuberculosis, but the bacteria is considered to be the cause.

A patient in a teaching hospital is essentially regarded as a malfunctioning piece of machinery which has to be repaired. This is a 'bio-engineering' approach to illness. It implies a sharp distinction between the pathological and the normal, which is particularly misleading in the area of mental 'illness' and chronic disease. The bio-engineering approach assumes that a person can be understood as a set of systems, one or several of which go wrong in illness.

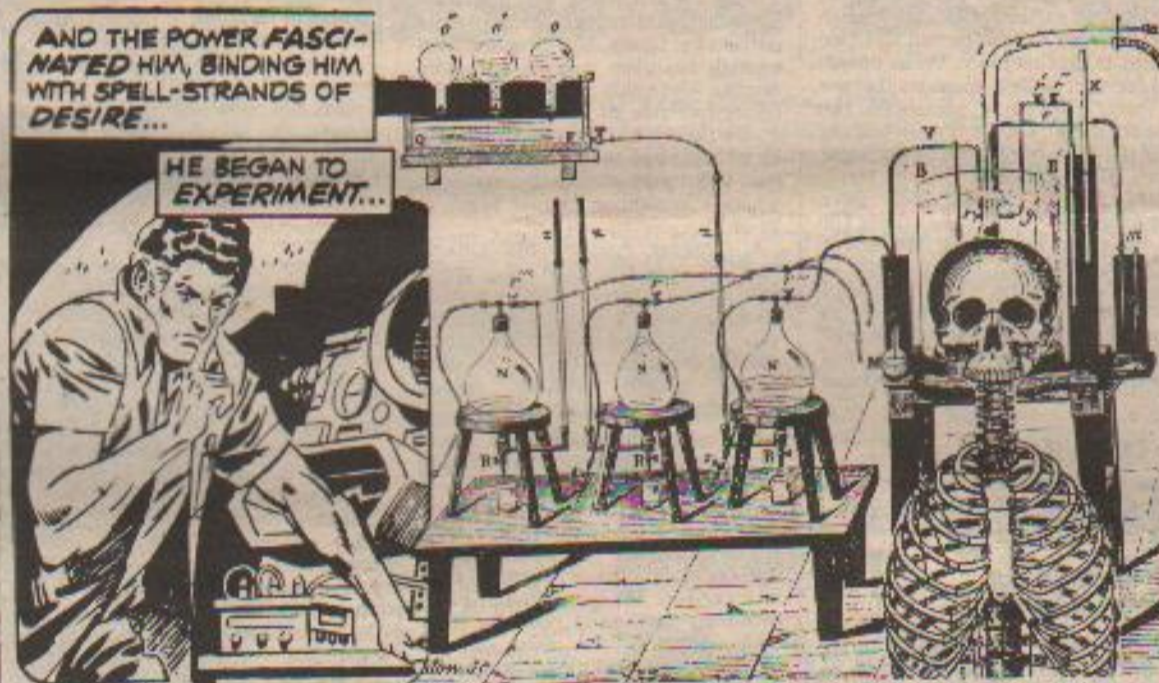
This approach ignores the subjective and emotional aspects of all illness, which are just as 'real' as the bio-chemistry, as well as the possible social origin of the complaint. The medical student learns to consider patients as a collection of symptoms from which a diagnosis and a course of treatment can be derived. The 'interesting patient' is the one with a rare and complex disease.

Intervention with drugs or surgery is considered the most effective way of treating illness, though in reality these methods are of limited use with the increasingly common chronic, degenerative illnesses and are sometimes dehumanising with psychiatric patients.

Preventative measures are no longer totally ignored in medical education and medical students are being made aware of 'risk factors' influencing the incidence of disease. But these factors are considered in individual terms as the patient's personal responsibility, whether the factor is smoking, lack of exercise or poor housing. Even when

'In medical school, the common image of disease is that something goes wrong within the individual patient, a problem with their psychology or biochemistry unrelated to environmental or social factors...Medical students learn to regard patients as passive objects of care.'

Where do doctors come from?



social factors are taken into account, only individual solutions are considered, not the necessity for social change. If you get ill it is often assumed either that it was your own fault or that you were 'genetically pre-disposed'.

Medical students learn to regard patients as passive objects of care. The majority of training takes place in a hospital, where patients are either too ill to be anything but passive or are intimidated by the hospital routine and environment, as most of us are. A 'troublesome' patient is one who asks too many questions. A 'non-compliant' patient is one who does not take the prescribed drugs.

Class distinctions can be seen here. While middle-class patients are given more time by doctors in consultation, receiving different treatment and more explanation, working-class patients are frequently given no explanation for their treatment or are given one in a simplistic, patronising way. Patients are generally assumed to be ignorant of their illness and of how their bodies function.

Sociology and Psychology

Recently sociology and psychology have been introduced into the medical curriculum. There are several reasons why we do not expect them to make much change in medical student attitudes or in their practice as doctors.

First, many attitudes and assumptions are already present on entering

medical school, reinforced, as we have argued above, not so much by the curriculum as by the organisation of teaching and the example of other doctors. Students are often hostile to sociology or psychology, considering them irrelevant to medicine, an opinion many consultants agree with.

Secondly, the medical course is designed around exams and the accumulation of facts. This means that either sociology and psychology are taught in a 'factual' way and lose any potential for challenging the prevailing medical ideology or in a challenging way and are detested by the majority of students who feel constrained by the next set of exams and want to avoid ambiguity.

Thirdly, even at their best, sociology and psychology remain bodies of theory, which perhaps help the medical student think about the relationships between society and ill-health or about the importance of a patient's psychological state. But they do not automatically lead to a greater political commitment towards change nor to a greater understanding of the patient who is ill. There is a danger of sociology and psychology replacing a bio-engineering approach with a 'socio-psycho-bio-engineering' one, where the doctor is simply aware of more 'symptoms'.

Medical Ideology and Women

The attitudes of doctors towards women are an example of how prevailing social attitudes spill over

into medical ideology. Discrimination and prejudice against women are clear in their subordinate position in health care work and in the treatment of women patients.

The division of labour in hospitals between doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, radiographers, etc. is predominantly a sexual one. The doctor (usually male) assumes the dominant role, retaining control over diagnosis as well as treatment, while other health workers (predominantly female, except for porters) take on specific tasks without real autonomy.

Until recently, only a small proportion of medical students were women. In the last 10 years, their entry into medical school has risen to approximately 30 per cent of the intake. It is too early to tell how this will affect attitudes of the medical profession towards women. Already it is clear that women doctors will be shunted into 'unpopular' specialities and will be restricted in their careers by the absence of child care facilities and opportunities for part-time work.

Picture-slides or pin-ups of nudes are sometimes used at the beginning of a lecture to 'establish rapport with the students'. Blatantly sexist remarks are often made, raising a laugh at the expense of women students (who laugh too). 'It's not that women aren't equal, they're just dumber', or 'one well-built patient...'

Text books are still written from an exclusively male point of view, often with explicit stereotyping. Obstetrics and gynaecology text books are the

worst offenders in this respect. A quote from a recent work: 'The traits that compose the core of female personality are feminine narcissism, masochism and passivity.' The sexism in medical education becomes translated into unresponsive, discriminatory medical care for women; the tendency to diagnose many women's complaints as 'psychosomatic', ignorance about women's illnesses and so on.

Medical Ideology and the Organisation of Health Care

The hospital-based training of medical students not only influences the way doctors consider patients, it also affects their view of health care organisation and relations with other health workers. The hospital is considered to be the ultimate treatment. The community is considered, if at all, to be an amorphous mass outside the hospital, which sends malfunctioning individuals to be repaired. People within the community are considered to be abstract groups ('the elderly', 'the disabled') or individual consumers, rather than potentially active participants in health care and in political struggles for healthier living and working conditions.

A commitment to the present organisation and priorities of health is thus reproduced by the hospital based organisation of medical education.

The sexism of many doctors, their narrow class background and elitist attitudes help form the barrier between doctors and other health workers. The elitism is reinforced by the total separation of medical from nursing and (so called) paramedical training, as well as by the hierarchical organisation of the teaching hospital with the doctor at the top. The attitudes of doctors does not create the subordination of nurses, physiotherapists, and social workers whereby the doctors retain control of diagnosis and treatment. This is an aspect of objective social relations and institutional spheres of control which have developed historically. But, a belief in their own superiority strengthens and justifies the domination, giving most doctors little interest in trying to change the social relations of health care.

Prospects of Change

Medical ideology helps prevent the provision of patient centred effective health care, as well as a wider understanding of how illness is produced. But it is not going to be changed by pressure from within medical schools. For not only does the ideology serve the apparent interests of most medical students and doctors, but it also serves those of the 'medical-industrial complex'. The emphasis on individual, curative care within a hospital, rather than social prevention and community care encourages expenditure on health-related commodities.

In a wider sense, by obscuring the social production of illness and by mystifying health care, medical ideology deflects criticism of a capitalist economy and reinforces our lack of control over our health.

Although we do not expect medical ideology to be transformed within medical schools, there will always be a minority of medical students and medical teachers who at least are dissatisfied with the prevailing ideology. At the moment they are isolated. There is a need for them to work together and make links with other workers, to understand what role they can play in fighting for change in health care.

HEALTH GROUP COLLECTIVE

THIS IS a slightly abbreviated version of an article that appears in the current issue of the magazine *Science for People*, produced by the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science.

The issue, entirely devoted to health, also includes articles on 'The social production of ill-health'; 'Save the EGA'; the role of the state in determining health provision; alternative forms of medicine; and a woman's right to choose.

Science for People is free to members of BSSRS [Membership Fees are £4 for full members and £1.50 for unemployed and students]; or on subscription for £2, from: BSSRS, 9 Poland Street, London W1. Individual copies are 30p plus postage.

Palestine: Where do you stand?

IN MEETINGS we have held on the Middle East in the North West recently, we have frequently been asked by members or supporters of the IMG: You call for support for the PLO but surely a solidarity campaign must support a people who have the right to self-determination and are struggling against imperialism, rather than just an organisation? Surely, then, our slogan must be support for the Palestinian people, and not support for the PLO?

We in the Friends of the Palestinians in Manchester would like to put our position on this clear, and say why a solidarity movement must support the PLO.

i) It is not for us to tell the Palestinians how to conduct their struggle. All real Palestinian forces recognise that the PLO is their only representative, whether or not they support the political line it takes. We do not support the political line necessarily, but if we support the Palestinians we must support the PLO because to not support the PLO is tantamount to not supporting the Palestinian people.

ii) Many comrades are under the misapprehension that the forces following Yasser Arafat and Fatah form the PLO. This is not true. The rejection front, for example, disagrees with the political line of the PLO leadership but nevertheless remains within it.

iii) What, then, is the PLO? The PLO is the representative body of the Palestinian people. It contains all the major guerrilla groups, such as Fatah, the Popular Front (PFLP), the Democratic Front (DFLP), the Arab Liberation Front (ALF), Saika and so on. It also contains the mass organisations of the Palestinian people, such as the Women's Union, the Workers' Union, the Students Union. It also contains the Palestine National Front, which organises Palestinians in the occupied territories, and many more groups and organisations: it therefore acts mainly as an umbrella for these groups.

iv) Which forces are there outside the PLO struggling against Zionism and Imperialism? To be honest, there are no real forces. Matzpen (the revolutionary leftist group within Israel) for example, is minute, split and in disarray. Otherwise, one has only minuscule terror groups (like the Abu Nidal faction) or forces not objectively opposed to imperialism, like some of the 'notables' of the West Bank, who also represent no-one but themselves.

In conclusion, we must be clear that we support real forces in the area, and give these positive support. This does not mean that if a major anti-imperialist group totally split from the PLO that we would not support them. However, this has not yet happened and looks extremely unlikely. Nor does it mean that we

support the whole programme of the PLO uncritically, or that we support the leadership position necessarily. We support the PLO because it is the Palestinian people — no more, no less. If we do not support them we end up looking at the alternatives, which at the moment represent insignificant or reactionary (e.g. pro-Hashemite) forces.

We hope that this letter opens up a debate on the Middle East within Socialist Challenge, and that readers will take the issue seriously and work with us to support the struggle against Zionism and imperialism in the Middle East.

Manchester Friends of the Palestinians

Scottish football

THE EDITORIAL BOARD may be amazed at the views of some Scottish supporters on Argentina, but I for one am more amazed at the way in which the EB has reacted to them. Your statements says, quite correctly, that 'a sense of proportion is needed'. Then to show that we are not all 'Social-Chauvinists' north of Carlisle, you refer to Bamberg, Fowler et al as comrades.

What does 'a sense of proportion' mean? The position to boycott or not to boycott is surely a question of tactics. The starting point is how to best isolate the Argentinian regime and therefore aid the struggle of the Argentinian people.

It is unfortunate, but there does not exist in Scotland the same awareness of the repression in the Argentine as there is of the nature of the S. African or Chilean regime. It was in order to discuss the tactics of this campaign that Socialist Challenge had an Open Forum in the first place. When people put forward tactical positions that are different from yours, you should not slander them. This is not in keeping with the spirit or practice of the paper in its last 36 editions.

You should realise that your comments were a poor substitute for an informed debate on the whole future of building a movement in support of the Argentinian people. I only hope that you will be able to repair the damage done by the style of your comments by recognising that you over-reacted to the letters in Issue 36.

PAT KANE (Glasgow)

Taking stock

NINE MONTHS after the launching of Socialist Challenge, it is time to take stock. We feel the paper represents a marked improvement on its forerunner Red Weekly. In particular, by its openness it has gained a readership far beyond the membership of the organisation which launched it, the International Marxist Group.

As a result, Socialist Challenge groups have sprung up in many areas.

These groups, mostly consisting of independent socialists, recognise the need to build the paper and fight for its central projects: a socialist opposition and a unified revolutionary organisation.

The aim of the North West conference called by the Warrington Socialist Challenge group is to build on these developments by bringing together supporters of the paper from all over the North West area. The morning session will discuss local groups' experiences to date, their future role and how the paper should be supported.

In the afternoon we will discuss whether Socialist Challenge is playing the role it could do in building a socialist alternative. We want to take a critical look at the paper so far and say what are the next steps.

A number of groups and individuals have already been invited to participate in the conference, but we think the invitation should go wider than this. We are asking all sisters and brothers in the North-West who have read the paper and sympathise with its general aims to attend, whether or not they have been involved in organised groups.

Many readers have no experience of left groups, some have had bad experiences of the sectarianism of the British left. We appeal especially to women and young people to come along and say what they think about the paper.

COLIN CHARNLEY (Secretary Warrington Socialist Challenge Group)

Age limits

REVOLUTIONARY Socialists are increasingly realising the importance of strong autonomous gay and women's movements which are an immediate and direct challenge to the patriarchal family. Unfortunately not enough attention is given to young people who also suffer from the oppressive role of the family. Even now a person is considered by law to be a child up to the age of 18. In the past there were serious disputes over whether adulthood should begin at 21 or 25.

A teenager entering the Labour Party or even a revolutionary group faced a barrage of ageism. Consequently it is necessary for young newcomers to be able to freely discuss socialist ideas with other young people without feeling intimidated or inhibited.

This raises the question of youth caucuses. The Labour Party Young Socialists has an age limit of 25 — which is reasonable, though if anything is high. Nevertheless some LPYS branches are attended by individuals who have outgrown their membership. These Labour Party members continually flout the principle involved: the right of self organisation for oppressed groups.

I would make the following points: First, not only should age limits in youth caucuses be strictly adhered to, but esoteric and exclusive discussions should be avoided. Secondly all existing members should make a conscious effort to encourage and nurture the political interest of new members, and encourage them to think for themselves. Thirdly despite

genuine political divisions, Young Socialists should form a coherent unified group which not only discusses theory but attends marches, demonstrations and so on as a group.

Each new member should feel that she or he has a banner to march behind and a group to march with. This is essential since many young people are in the first instance attracted to the Labour Party in order to involve themselves in practical anti-fascist activity.

Finally, the transformation proposed above will be an extremely arduous task due to the domination of the Militant group in the YS. But with the crucial importance of recruitment of young potential militants to the left, it is a task that we cannot and must not shirk. In any case, to state a truism, our task as socialists is not to accept the existing state of things but to change it.

CHRIS WOOD (North London)

Of parrots

SURELY THE LETTER from Steve Jefferys of the SWP Central Committee (Socialist Challenge, 9 March) constitutes a flagrant breach of his party's policy on elections. He states that 'the SWP has already made it clear that where we are not standing our own candidates then we will be supporting the candidates of Socialist Unity'. On the contrary: The SWP's 1977 conference decided that no campaigning support would be given to Socialist Unity in elections, only the most passive token halloing by individual SWP members.

For following the policy now advocated by 'Judge' Jefferys — scourge of the deviationists — Martin Shaw was twice suspended by the SWP and forced into a de facto expulsion since the party centre did nothing in response to his requests to have the suspension lifted.

A further crime of Martin Shaw, in the eyes of the SWP, was that of writing a letter in defence of electoral support for Socialist Unity to that far-out, heretical journal Socialist Challenge. Steve Jefferys has now committed exactly the same crime — may we await his expulsion, or at the very least his suspension, by the Bloody Assizes over which he himself has presided as purger-extraordinary?

Martin Shaw at least had the excuse, in writing to Socialist Challenge, that a letter by him on similar lines to Socialist Worker was refused publication. May we assume that Steve Jefferys is driven to writing to the paper of the IMG because Socialist Worker denied him a voice in its correspondence column of strictly-laundersed controversy? Perhaps we must assume that SW has indeed suppressed his new conversion to joint electoral work with other Socialists: for no word has reached the readership of that paper to the effect that the SWP now regards its experience of running against Socialist Unity in by-elections as 'negative'. SWP supporters will clearly have to read Socialist Challenge, rather than Socialist Worker, for news of their party's official line.

At all events, the news of the turn has evidently not percolated far into the SWP's ranks. This is hardly surprising, since it is a move taken by

the leadership over the heads of the members in advance of the party's conference which, in any other left organisation but the SWP, would debate and decide such a move. For example, the SWP in the Brixton election is still planning to put up a candidate in competition with the West Indian Block (now in negotiation with Socialist Unity for a joint campaign).

Orwell once remarked, a propos of the CP's prospective de-Stalinisation, that 'nothing is gained by teaching the parrot a new tune'. One can only hope, though, that in conducting the policy of unity with other Socialists now decreed from above by their party's hierarchs, the membership of the SWP will lose some of their enthusiasm for parrot-like behaviour.

Socialist Unity groups should at once contact SWP branches and ask for their active support in the impending SU candidatures in the local elections and at Brixton — instead of waiting (as Comrade Jefferys suggests) for a General Election to 'sit down with Socialist Unity and make sure that divisive clashes are avoided.'

PETER SEDGEWICK (Leeds)

Radical Feminism

IN YOUR 4-page article 'Revolution and Women's Liberation' (9 March) you emphasise the importance of an autonomous women's liberation movement.

You also emphasise the role of the nuclear family in the oppression of women. Both these ideas are central to the women's movement. However, there are a number of distinct contributions which the women's movement has made to left politics which you do not emphasise.

It is not only radical feminists who attempt 'to create new lifestyles'. The creations of new forms of personal relationships and the building up of a feminist culture has been a central concern throughout the women's movement.

I think your article tends to play this down. It does not mention the work that has been done on creating new forms of struggle — using small group structures to encourage the confidence and participation of all, fighting the psychological aspects of women's oppression, and creating self-help groups in all areas of life so that all women can feel equally significant and important in the struggle for change.

Nor do you describe the analysis of sexuality itself — coming from the women's movement — which illuminates the failure of most heterosexual relationships to meet the needs of women.

It is only from within the women's movement — and from within libertarian politics also dating from the late 60s — that attempts have been made to work out the organisational forms that prefigure the socialist-feminist society we are trying to build. The reasons of these attempts must not be ignored.

LYNNE SEGAL (Islington Gutter Press)

Socialist Challenge EVENTS

NORTH WEST

WARRINGTON Socialist Challenge group meets regularly. Ring Manchester Socialist Challenge offices for details. 051-236 2302.

GREATER MANCHESTER Socialist Challenge School students who support the paper and would like to get involved in anti-fascist activity please contact Chris 273 5847 (daytime), or Steve 226 4257 (evening), or write to Manchester SC Centre c/o 14 Piccadilly.

PRESTON Socialist Challenge supporters can be contacted by ringing Preston 64616.

SOUTH MANCHESTER Socialist Challenge group meets every other Thursday at the Albert Inn off Wilmshurst Rd. Help sell Socialist Challenge between 11.30am and 1pm at Moss Side shopping centre or Longsight Market, Dickenson Rd. Further information from 061-236 2562.

BURY Socialist Challenge group meets 28 March to discuss youth unemployment, 8.15pm. Whitehead, Whitefield, next to Whitefield bus station.

LIVERPOOL Socialist Challenge group meets fortnightly on Wednesdays at the Dolphin, Canning Place.

YORKSHIRE

HUDDERSFIELD Socialist Challenge meets Thursday 30 March, 7.30pm. Friendly and Trades Club, Northumberland Street, (opp. station). Meets again on 6 April and fortnightly thereafter.

NORTH EAST

DURHAM Socialist Challenge supporters group meets regularly at Big Jug Pub, Claypath, Durham City. Details from J. Fox, 41 The Avenue.

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

MIDDLESBOROUGH Socialist Challenge meets on Saturdays outside Boots at Cleveland Centre, 11am-1pm. Socialist Challenge is also available from Harrogate (newagent) in Linthorpe Street.

SOUTH WEST

SOUTHAMPTON Socialist Challenge meets every Saturday from 10am-11pm outside Ullowes Bar Post Office, Barrow.

BRISTOL Socialist Challenge group meets next 4 April, 7.30pm. The Swan, Sionce Croft, Bristol.

WALES

SWANSEA Socialist Challenge group meets every other Wednesday at 7.30pm in St Helena Inn, Vincent St, Swansea. All supporters welcome. Next meeting 5 April.

SOUTH EAST

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

COLCHESTER Socialist Challenge group to be set up in town. If you are interested, come along to a meeting at the Labour Party Hall, North Chapel Street, 14 March, 7.30pm.

BRIGHTON Socialist Challenge Forum, Tuesday, 4 April, 8pm. What sort of revolutionary paper do we need? Resources Centre, North Street.

SCOTLAND

For information on Socialist Challenge contact Scottish Socialist Socialist Challenge bookshop, 64 Queen Street, Glasgow (Tel: 041-221 7481). Open weekdays 10-4, late closing Thursdays at 8pm. Wide range of Fourth International publications.

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

EDINBURGH Socialist Challenge meetings every second Wednesday. Contact George Korovin, 12 Merchiston Grove, Edinburgh (Tel: 031-346 0465).

ABERDEEN: Information about Socialist Challenge activities, ring Jim on 43695 (after 5pm).

MIDLANDS

For details of activities of local supporters contact the Socialist Challenge Centre 765 Digbeth High Street, Birmingham. 021-543 8206.

LEICESTER Socialist Challenge supporters meet fortnightly at the High-Inch Community Centre. For details ring 0533 25854.

WOLVERHAMPTON Socialist Challenge Forum, Tuesday, 26 March. Nuclear Power and Socialism with Dave Agnew and others from local survival and environmental groups. The Vine, Stafford Street, 7.30pm. SW11. Next meeting Wednesday, 22 March, 8pm.

BIRMINGHAM Socialist Challenge Forum, Wednesday 5 April, 7.30pm. Austin Bar, Hurst Street, Alexandra Kallionis, Speaker Axi Hall.

LONDON

ISLINGTON Socialist Challenge readers group, Wednesday 29 March, 7.30pm. Hammingford Arms (corner of Hammingford Rd. and Clarendon Rd. N1). France the elections and after. Speaker is Martin Metyard who has been in France covering the elections for Socialist Challenge.

CAMDEN Socialist Challenge Group meets Wednesday, 29 March 7.30pm. 30 Camden Road, NW1 (Camden Toronto Federation). Regroupment of the left and building a unified revolutionary organisation. Discussion involving SWP, Workers League, MG and Socialist Challenge supporters.

HAMMERSMITH Socialist Challenge group meets fortnightly — date a from PO Box 90, London W1.

GREENWICH/LEWISHAM Socialist Challenge group meets fortnightly. For details ring Roy, 01-859 1167.

MARROW Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly. Anyone interested please contact PO Box 90, London N1 2XP.

SOUTH WEST LONDON Socialist Challenge supporters meet fortnightly in the WCCP Neighbourhood Centre, 172 Lavender Hill, SW11. Next meeting Wednesday, 29 March, 8pm.

BRENT Socialist Challenge Open Forum. Supporters meet every other Monday. Next meeting 26 March, 7.15pm. Discussion on the Tribunal on the British presence in Ireland. Phone Tests on 965-0897 for venue.

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

Liverpool 0 Nottingham Forest 0

What would it be like under socialism?

Most readers would probably not be turned on by stumbling across an undergrowth of beer cans and wading through puddles of piss in order to spend two and a half hours crushed like sardines watching 22 men kick around a piece of leather 100 yards away and 100 feet below.

Well, like the other 99,999 normally sane, hard working people at Wembley on Saturday for the League Cup Final, I was, writes MICK GOSLING.

Watching Liverpool overrun Nottingham Forest was a bit like watching the lions pawing the Christians in ancient Rome. Unfortunately someone had extracted the lion's tailons with the result that Liverpool ran around like a sleek white cat in midfield and had the finishing power of a fat tabby up front. The result was the inevitable 0-0 draw.

POLAR OPPOSITES

Liverpool and Nottingham Forest are the polar opposites of English football — reflected right down to the personalities of their managers. Liverpool is a machine. They play to dominate the midfield. When they can't see a way forward

they are content to square pass and sling the ball from one side of the field to the other.

On Saturday the final thrust for goal was missing, so Liverpool's play was very skilful, very pretty — and very ineffectual.

Think of Notts Forest and you automatically think of Brian Clough. At one time competing with Muhammed Ali for the title of the largest mouth, Clough has taken Forest, as he did Derby, from the bottom of the second division to the top of the first in successive seasons.

They are now six points clear of the pack and probably still will be at the end of the season. Their team is young, fast and exciting. They don't run

forward when they attack, they surge.

Unfortunately they were overwhelmed by Liverpool's experience in midfield at Wembley so the surge wasn't seen. Only the latest of their young players, 18-year old Chris Woods, had the chance to shine with a brilliant display in goal.

'MODELS'

That these two teams represent the dominant 'models' for English football, including the way the game is taught in schools, shows lack of imagination and variety, which results from a fear of losing. The more money that has been put into football, the more teams have become limited companies rather than clubs, and the more fiercely competitive football has become.

Far from this competitiveness leading to a struggle for excellence and experiment, it has produced an increasingly standardised and brutal game, re-inforcing its male exclusiveness and macho image.



Chris Woods, of Notts. Forest holds a shot from Terry McDermott

Not surprisingly, the fans have the same attitude. Especially for young people, watching Liverpool and Forest battle each other to a standstill (and virtually any other sporting activity) becomes a substitute for the lack of prospects and excitement and control over their own lives.

Excitement, like everything else, is something to be bought and sold. On Saturday this meant being prepared to be squashed into tube trains, herded like cows and finally caged like wild animals.

Nevertheless there was the traditional scouse humour to compensate. If the Liverpool

team had broken the number of legs they were instructed to during the match, Forest would have had to field three complete teams. No doubt Forest were similarly instructed by their fans.

I can't wait for the replay. But I wonder what it would be like under socialism.

Glad to be Gay

GLAD TO BE GAY, by the Tom Robinson Band, has been yo-yoing in the top four of the daily top 10 of Capital Radio's phone-in hit-line in London for over two months, writes BRINLEY MITCHELL.

The appeal of the band lies in the seeds of a new kind of music not yet heard in this country, especially given the relationship of an openly gay singer, 'controversial' songs, a large following — and the signing up of the group by a giant of the music industry, EMI.

COURTESY

The EP, *Rising Free*, includes four live songs which have made the group well-known. *Martin* and *Don't Take No For An Answer* deal with a reality people can easily understand, while *Glad To Be Gay* and *Right On Sister* are the more overtly political songs.

They are radical songs, yet

they come courtesy of the multi-national EMI. It is perhaps a measure of the strength of the band, and the perception of EMI, that these songs are played.

The Tom Robinson Band sings for its audience, and the alternative press should not forget that. If EMI will help them put out their kind of music, fine — and it will, since

it has detected a potentially large new market.

Glad To Be Gay when sung in a big gig is a contradictory sight. Here is a gay man, on stage, vulnerable in that being 'out' is a stepping outside society's oppressive norms of behaviour, yet powerful in that he is backed by reputation, EMI, commercial success, numerous followers and musical talent.

At the same time, Tom Robinson is reaching out to isolated gays and informs heterosexuals about the oppression of gay men.

Right On Sisters is probably the only song in the history of the British recording industry that does not put women down as scheming, thwarted lovers wanting a man. While it would be better if women sang this song to large audiences, it is a reflection of the male-dominated music industry that for a pro-woman song to get out into the High Street it is being performed by an all-male group.

Nevertheless, feminists are organising rock groups, and... 'the women's music is marching'.

COMMENT

Playing to the folk

SALLY FELDMAN, who reviewed the compilations of folk songs (16 February), was interested in the relationship of folk music and the working class. As far as England is concerned, folk music has virtually been deprived of any role it had to play in the lives of ordinary people.

One of the reasons for this is the particularly perverse method by which the music has been 'preserved'. The folk club in England is almost entirely the watering hole of academics and intellectuals, liable to deem the origins and obscurity of a traditional song more important than the 'vulgar' melody or lyric which would concern the 'uninformed' masses.

The folk clubs have preserved traditional folk music in the same way a chemist preserves a specimen in a jar!

I am a member of the Chanter folk band, which has chosen not to play primarily in folk clubs because of all the elitist, incestuous paraphernalia which surrounds them. For almost a year now we have been able to operate almost totally in pubs as a viable professional band playing good folk music. This is the aim of the London Folk Co-operative.

I would urge readers to

come along to a Co-operative concert on Wednesday, 29 March, at the Archway Tavern, London N19, from 9pm to

midnight. The bands performing are Crannog, Segui, and Chanter. Admission £1. TOM PRESNO (London N8)



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Tom Robinson speaking in defence of Gay News

Media watch

What the editor fancied

A LOCAL NEWSPAPER which achieved notoriety last year with its crudely racist reporting is now devoting its pages to gross sexism. The North London Weekly Herald has angered local women's groups by publishing a thousand-word account of the Miss Tottenham contest, reports EMMA JONES.

Written by the paper's editor, Peter Edwards, who was one of the 'judges', the article on 10 March included such lurid details as: 'Big bosoms, small bosoms. Some bra-less...Thighs encased in tight hot pants, buttocks wobbling, hips gyrating...'

Following a meeting of the National Union of Journalists chapel at the paper, 17 of the Herald's 24 journalists signed a letter objecting to the tone of the article, which they considered contravened the union's code of conduct. This

lays down that journalists must not originate material which encourages sex discrimination.

The journalists asked to be dissociated from the article and requested that their letter be published in the Herald's correspondence column. They wrote that the article 'fosters the view that women are mere bodies and reinforces the attitude that they are second class citizens with little of value to contribute to society.'

Editor Edwards, who is not an NUJ member, promptly refused to publish the letter, announcing: 'The journalists' job is to report life and events around him or her — not to jump on every radical crusade and campaign that catches his or her fancy.'

The journalists replied: 'We note with regret that "press freedom" does not permit such free expression of dissenting views.'

Back to Edwards, who said he would have published the journalists' letter if 'the subject matter warranted it', and concluded his memo with a dictatorial flourish: 'This correspondence is now closed'. Members of the local community have threatened to occupy the office if their letters of complaint are not published this week.

Misogyny is not an isolated phenomenon among the Herald management. During house agreement negotiations last week, managing director Major Windsor-Aubrey asked the mother of the chapel to clarify the union's demand for no discrimination in the selection of editorial staff.

She explained that journalists should not be refused jobs because, for example, of their colour or gender. 'Just because you've never won a beauty contest', the Major replied.

Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

PAKISTAN: GENERALS SENTENCE BHUTTO TO DEATH

THE PUNJAB High Court has sentenced Pakistan's former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, to death. He has been transferred to the death cell in Kot Lakhpat jail, some miles outside the provincial capital of Lahore.

The Generals might not yet realise this, but they have probably signed the death warrant of Pakistan as an independent state. If they kill Bhutto, it will unleash hidden rivalries which exist inside the army. It will open the door to more bloodletting and needless to say, in most cases, it will be the blood of the people which will flow.

Bhutto was toppled last July by a military coup led by Gen. Zia-ul-Haq. The army then thought that Bhutto had discredited himself so thoroughly that the people would reject him in any election which followed. Within the next three months they realised that they had made a mistake. The reason for the change in public mood was not that people had forgotten Bhutto's misdeeds and crimes. Far from it. They had simply understood that the military was worse.

In the weeks that followed the military take-over there was a sharp increase in the eviction of tenants by landlords. There were arbitrary cancellations of bonus payments to factory workers. There were a number of reports of landlords triumphantly shouting at fleeing tenants: 'Now go and tell your Bhutto to help you!' In the city of Multan the

police shot 30 workers dead earlier this year. The workers had been on strike.

SYMPATHY

The net result of all this was a popular upsurge of sympathy for Bhutto. The military singled out his People's Party for repression. Its leaders were arrested and its newspapers victimised. Despite all these measures it was obvious that Bhutto and his supporters would still win a General Election. In fact Bhutto's central demand since his arrest has been: 'Let us have a free and fair election.' The Army has consistently refused that demand. Bhutto's political opponents, frightened by his support, backed the army all the way.

In September 1977 Bhutto was arrested. The meeting of army Corp Commanders

which took that decision toyed with the idea of killing him during his arrest by organising a scuffle and an 'accidental killing'. But the opposition of one General in particular, who refused to be a party to 'cold-blooded murder' stopped them at that stage. At that meeting another leading General said: 'We made our biggest mistake in July. We should have killed him then and no one would have opposed it.'

It is these same Generals who today exercise absolute power. Zia-ul-Haq is himself a weak and lacklustre figure. He is surrounded by a clique of strong men which consists of General Iqbal, General Chishiti, General Sawar Khan (who commands the important Lahore garrison), General Fazal Haq and General Ghulam Hassan Khan (a specialist on 'Security'). It is these men who have now authorised the judi-

cial murder of Bhutto. The Lahore High Court was the instrument chosen to rid them of this turbulent politician.

We have been strongly opposed to Bhutto's politics for many years. His period in office saw a number of unparalleled brutalities against the Baluchi people, against workers and against all his political opponents. These cannot and should not be justified, least of all by those who are now fighting to save Bhutto's life. But nor should it be made the pretext by which he can be physically eliminated. Bhutto certainly did not give the masses what he promised them ('Food, clothing and shelter'). But he gave them a feeling of self-confidence against the landed gentry. And it is that which partially explains his continuing popularity. His political opponents, men like Wali Khan and Asghar Khan, could not defeat him politically. But by allowing him to be killed will not make conditions any better for them or any civilian politician. Their subjectiveness may prove to be extremely short-sighted.

CLEARANCE

Bhutto claims that his overthrow was organised by the CIA. He has stated that 'Operation Wheeljam' (a CIA organised plan for an emergency military take-over) was put into effect by Zia after a meeting with a departing Western Ambassador. It is impossible to verify this claim, but one thing is clear. The Generals will only be able to kill Bhutto if they have the neces-



A SPECIAL supplement was produced last Sunday by the Urdu-language London daily Millet to protest against the death sentence. The other daily Jang is as usual, supporting the government in power.

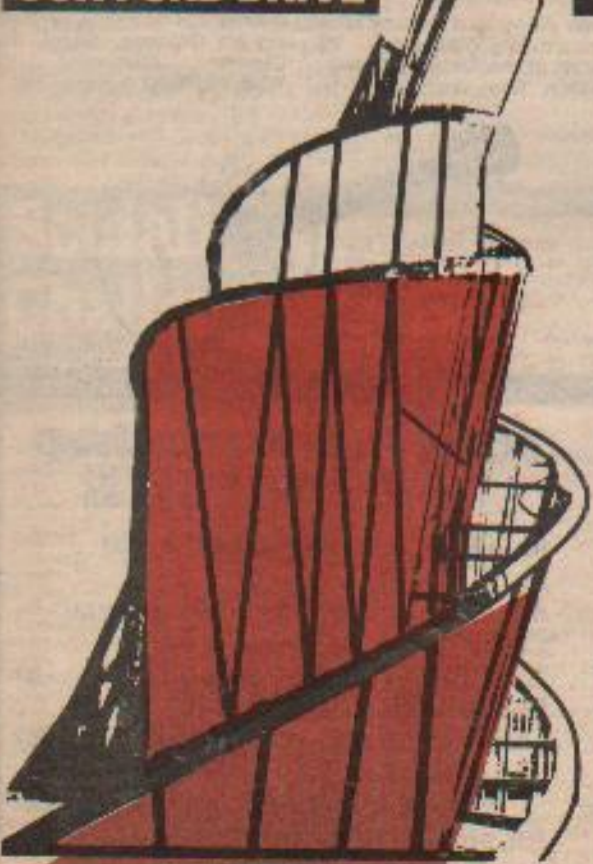
sary clearance from the State Department and the Pentagon. Whether this permission comes directly or through the Saudi Arabian embassy is only a question of form.

Pakistani socialists and workers in this country must wage a campaign to stop Bhutto's hanging. Whatever differences we have with him and his political party, they do not justify giving even one inch of support for his judicial murder. We should demand: 1) An immediate general election in

Pakistan (as opposed to a Generals' election) 2) The release of Bhutto and all political prisoners 3) Lifting of press censorship.

Demonstrations and pickets are being organised daily outside the Pakistan Embassy in Lowndes Square, Knightsbridge, London SW1. Telegrams opposing Bhutto's execution should be sent to: General Zia-ul-Haq, Chief Martial Law Administrator, Islamabad, Pakistan.

OUR FUND DRIVE



Bad week for left

IT WAS a bad week for the left everywhere last week. The French left lost the elections. The Israelis invaded Lebanon. The Red Brigade kidnapped a Christian Democrat politician in Rome. And, yes, wait for it, our fund drive reached a new low.

Donations to the emergency fund drive slipped down to £15.31. Given the other emergencies in the world comrades probably couldn't be bothered with the thought of this little one. But don't give up. Our fight still goes on.

The Tattler tower this week received £74.05, which still leaves just over £400 to come if we are to paint the tower red by the end of March. Our thanks to:

Cardiff Supporters	20.00
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OC	1.00
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