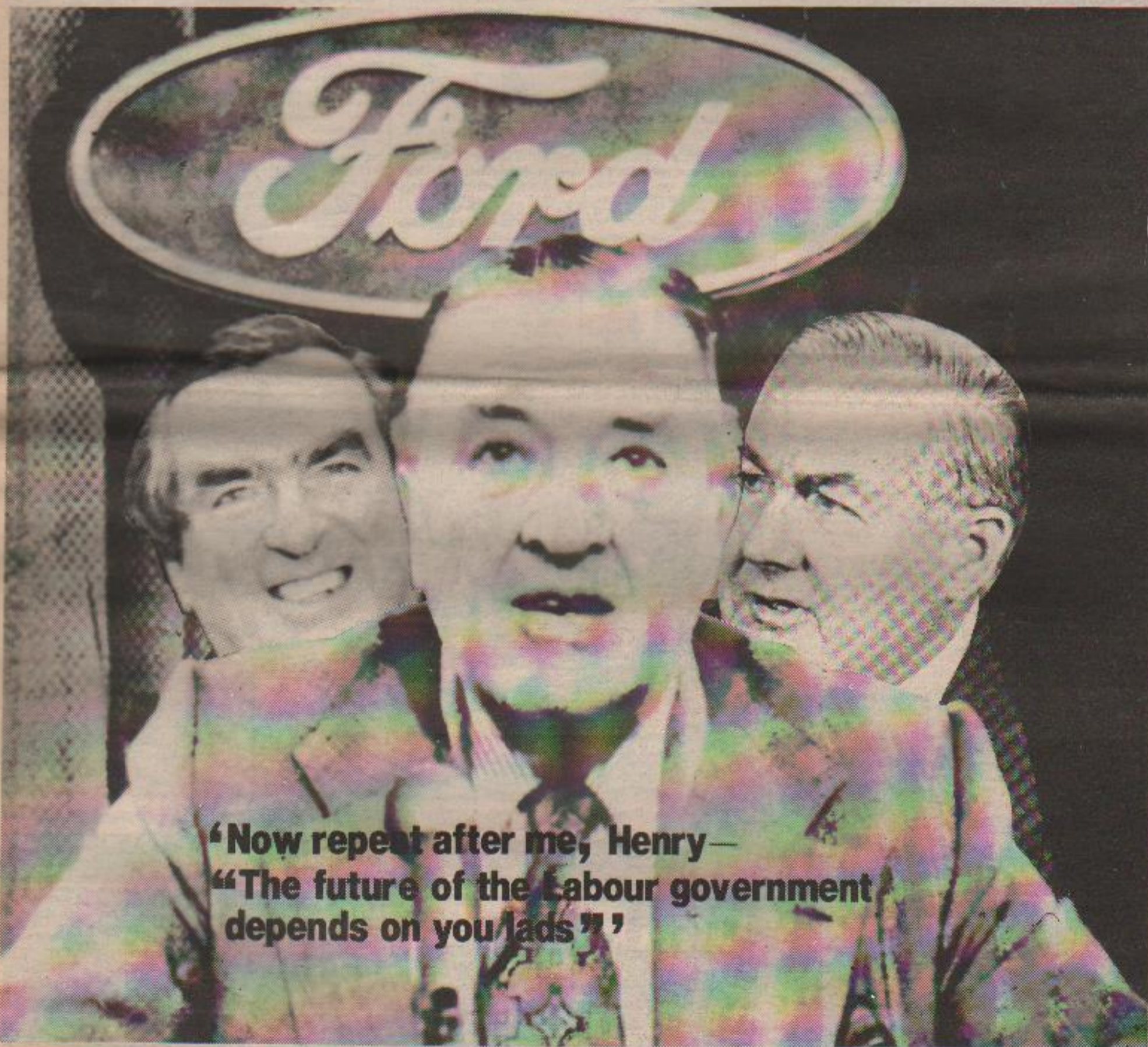


# Socialist Challenge

## A MESSAGE FROM JIM HENRY FORD



**‘Now repeat after me, Henry—  
“The future of the Labour government  
depends on you lads”’**

**FORD WORKERS MUST WIN — pages 2,3,4&5**



# EDITORIAL

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## The Ford strike and the Labour Government

THE OUTCOME of the Ford strike could condition the whole of British politics in the immediate future. It could answer the question: will this Labour government end with a bang or a whimper? Could moves to the right which we have recently noted in a number of unions be reversed?

Rank and file pressure had been building up for some time. Despite the setbacks of the past two years, culminating in the defeat of the FBU strike at the end of 1977; despite the ascendancy of the right wing in a number of unions including the AUEW; despite other setbacks of this character, no profound defeat has been suffered.

The working class has kept its organisational strength. More important, it is clear that the rank and file leadership in the plants remains largely intact. The retreat of Duffy in the face of the Leyland toolmakers was a real illustration of this fact.

It is for this reason that since the FBU dispute we have seen the continuation of defensive struggles and even a number of important offensive disputes. We have seen the POEU struggle for 35 hours, the parity claims by the Leyland toolmakers and the Chrysler lorry plants, the social workers' demands for local agreements, the Bathgate strike for increased money for operating new machines, and a whole series of plant-based productivity fights and claims.

### ISOLATION

To be sure, all these struggles remained sectoral. No alternative perspective was suggested to oppose that of Callaghan and the trade union bureaucracy. Hence these disputes remained isolated. When even a hint of openly confronting government policy was posed, the leaderships, as in the case of POEU, derailed the struggle.

This lack of an overall socialist alternative which could appear credible to a section of the working class now emerges as a real threat and indicates the weakness of the labour movement.

At present the Ford strike does not break out of this situation. Whilst the claim openly flouts the government's 5 per cent incomes policy, it is posed by union leaders as a special case. Ford workers must reject the argument that they should get a pay rise only because Ford has made a profit. This will not win the Leyland and Chrysler workers, nor indeed the local government workers, to their side.

### MULTINATIONAL

In the face of opposition not only from a ruthless multinational firm but also from the government itself, the only guarantee of victory is to win the support of the rest of the working class — in the first place, other car workers.

It is not so much the profit making of Fords which is central but the need to nationalise all the car industry, including components, under workers control; the breaking of the logic of production for profit and the need for automatic wage rises to keep pace with the cost of living.

Of course, the present leadership of the strike will not do this. Socialists must fight for a real alternative to the threats of Callaghan and the phoney ostrich-like 'special case' arguments of the Ford leadership. At the same time they must fight for initiatives which develop the self-organisation of the rank and file whereby such a political alternative can find a real basis of support and lead to action.

### MASS MEETINGS

The TUC will only be made to act. The running of the strike must be taken out of the hands of the Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee and placed in the hands of a strike committee elected by a recalled national stewards conference. Flying pickets should be sent out from regular mass meetings to the ports and the airports to stop the movement of Ford products, and a call made for international solidarity.

Such a course would very quickly win the support of wide layers of the working class and knock the smug smile off Callaghan's face whilst beginning to develop a real socialist alternative in the working class.

# THE FIRST WORD

## The lost Tribunes

This will be the third successive Labour Party conference where the heirs of Bevan will not confront the heirs of Bevin and Gaitskell.

For while Tribune occasionally indulges in muted criticism of the Labour government, its supporters have refused to launch a concerted struggle against the policies of either Wilson or Callaghan.

The only organised opposition from within the Labour Party will come from the Militant current. All that this will amount to is militant resolutions, militant speeches, winning of militant and not-so-militant votes, but no action.

In 1975, when the Wilson Cabinet was considering a series of savage expenditure cuts and rigid wage controls under pressure from the IMF, the Tribune MPs sounded the tocsin.

They met and agreed to a policy statement, which was published over three pages in Tribune. This stated:

'Unfortunately there are signs that the government believes that, somehow, short-term capitalist remedies — large scale unemployment and cuts in living standards, including savage public expenditure cuts — are consistent with long-term socialist planning. They are not, and we will not support them.'

They went on to declare their

THE TATTERED banners of left social-democracy will not be in evidence at the Labour Party conference in Blackpool next week.

One rumour was that they had been sent to the dry-cleaners. But the sad fact is that they've disappeared.

TARIQ ALI writes on the pathetic state of a once significant current.

outright opposition to wage controls: 'For our own part we would reject a return to statutory wage control and would not support other similar and scarcely distinguishable schemes.'

The key words in both extracts we have quoted are **will not support**. The logic of this is to organise an opposition in the Labour Party and the trade unions and launch a public campaign.

But, and there's the rub, they **did support** all the measures of the Wilson/Callaghan regimes. They failed on their own criteria as left social-democrats.

Today their forces are in disarray. Some Tribunes act as the loyal supporters of Michael Foot; others are more attached to Benn; others still flirt with Militant; and a few, perhaps one or two, are responsive to the calls of the extra-parliamentary or non-Labourist left.

What will they do at Blackpool in 1978? We suspect that there is only a one-word answer — nothing.

Granwick strikes could not. A victory at Ford could certainly unleash a chain of demands which would make it well nigh impossible for the union leaders to contain further struggles.

In the field of international politics, Labour has the blood of hundreds of Zimbabwean freedom fighters on its hands. The sanction-busting cover-up is a scandal of Watergate proportions.

Will the Labour left accept Callaghan's nauseous apologies and not demand a full-scale discussion both at the conference and in parliament?

And what are the supporters of Tribune going to do about the backing given by Callaghan to the Shah of Iran? Is that, too, going to be quietly buried as the hatchery continues in the streets and torture chambers of the 'King of Kings'?

Zimbabwe, Iran, and domestically the Ford dispute now threaten the cohesion of the Callaghan government. Socialists outside the Labour Party are already in the forefront of these and other struggles (such as the ANL, CARL, etc.).

So far all they have got from even sympathetic Labour MPs is words, words, and more words. The 1978 conference will not be an exception. This fact alone indicates the extent to which the spectrum in the Labour Party has moved to the right.



The RAR Concert at Brockwell Park on Sunday. A hundred thousand people were there; see pages 7 and 16.

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.

## OUR POLICIES 2

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



# FORD

## Ford workers speak out

# We're not a special case

ROB McCRAE, a press operator in the press shop at Ford, Dagenham, explained to Socialist Challenge how the strike developed.

Since the Labour government got elected in 1974, there has not been any move to a national fight in Ford's.

But last year's claim saw the beginnings of a mood amongst the rank and file to launch some action.

The problem was that the official claim — submitted by the full-time convenors and officials and presented to the company before we got to see it — was larded with a very low cash demand of 15 per cent.

Despite many other good clauses in the long shopping list of demands, management was able to buy off a struggle by offering 12½ per cent.

The officials — led by Moss Evans — sat on the fence. They refused to call for acceptance of management's offer, but they also refused to call for rejection!

Added to this, votes at mass meetings are not based on a 'head count' of Ford workers, but on a 'plant by plant' basis — each plant having an equal voice despite their different sizes.

This situation is still the same this year. The difference is the massive feeling in the plant in support of the claim, which was drawn up not just by the full-time convenors' committee but by the 4 June conference of shop stewards in Coventry.

This claim has generated massive enthusiasm on the shop floor. Many workers starting



McCRAE, Dagenham

wearing a badge, produced by the unofficial rank and file grouping — the Ford (UK) Workers' Combine — calling for the full claim with no strings.

Workers who previously have not been known for their militancy showed real interest in the claim.

What's more they were determined to fight this year when Ford announced massive profits of £250 million.

With Company Chairperson, Sir Terry Beckett being 'rewarded' with a salary increase of 80 per cent, worth £459 per week and taking him to over £54,000 a year, they had no intention of being fobbed off with some derisory offer.

At Dagenham, it was at first left to shop meetings organised by the stewards who recommended at 24-hour stoppage, to



FORD workers lobby the pay negotiations in Moscow Place, London.

PHOTO: LAURENCE SPARKMAN (JFL)

**FORD WORKERS** are out on strike for a wage claim that would breach the Social Contract.

On this page we talk to a number of Ford workers and stewards about the background to the claim and the strike, and how they are organising to win the battle with the bosses and the government.

show solidarity with strikers at Halewood and elsewhere.

With this degree of action, the union leadership was clearly worried. In complete contrast to last year, an official recommendation, taken to the Monday mass meetings, called for all out action.

'Now, we've got to concentrate on organising the struggle and ensure no retreat on the full claim. What's really important is that we don't leave it up to the full-time officials.

We've had experience of them in the past. Ron Todd, who is the chief TGWU officer responsible for Ford negotiations, won his spurs as a humble district secretary for the area that covered Dagenham.

In 1974, during the press shop strike, he organised a mass meeting over the heads of the stewards with full cooperation of the Company recommending a return to work, after only one week of strike action.

We can't rely on these people. That's why it's vital there are regular mass meetings and the election of local strike committees to run the dispute. Most important of all, there must be a recall of the Coventry national shop stewards conference to elect a national strike committee.

## 'This strike will escalate'



HARRAWAY, chief steward

FOLLOWING the mass meeting of the Dagenham body plant on Monday, Sid Harraway, Communist Party member and convenor of the stewards committee talked to the press.

BRIAN GROGAN reports. 'We don't want to challenge the authority of the government', Harraway declared, 'but it is coming to us in a contradictory way. If it pursues pro-capitalist, Tory policies, then it has only itself to blame for the loss of support from working people.'

Harraway's leftism reflected the high feeling of the several hundreds of jubilant workers who had just voted nearly unanimously for all out strike action.

Would he be making any demands on the TUC? 'The TUC is already committed to supporting the fight against the

5 per cent through Congress decisions.'

But wasn't this the case with the fire fighters which they refused to mobilise support for? 'Yes. But many things have changed since then. This strike will escalate. The whole of Ford will be closed down by tomorrow. This is where the real strength lies.'

Did this mean he would be fighting to mobilise the full strength of the Dagenham workers?

'We are so solid that only token picketing is required. We don't need flying pickets and regular mass meetings. If necessary the docks will be blacked through the official machinery of the T&G. No special call is necessary. The union fully supports the strike.'

Harraway didn't feel that the Ford workers were taking on the government. Fords could pay and should ignore the 5 per cent.

## The claim...

\*A £20 a week all round increase in pay.

\*A 5 hour reduction in the working week for all Ford workers, without loss of pay. Once achieved this cannot be taken back by inflation. To prevent redundancies and create new jobs.

\*80 per cent of full pay during all lay-offs. For a guaranteed week's pay, work or no work.

\*The claim also includes clauses to improve pensions, holidays, holiday bonuses, and demands to improve the pay and conditions of shift and line workers.

## and the offer

\*A maximum of 5 per cent increase for all workers, in other words average weekly increases within the range of £3.64 to £4.57.

\*More money would be made available if agreement could be found on self financing plans 'for improving the company's efficiency and capacity'. In other words - productivity deals.

\*No decrease in the working week — the company's products would not be competitive.

\*No payment for lay-offs caused by 'an internal dispute'. If stoppages of work are eliminated such lay-offs would not occur.

\*No improvements in holidays, holiday pay, pensions, or for shift and line workers.

## 'A bigger share of the cake'

THE WORKERS in the Ford plants at Southampton and Halewood were the first to walk out when they heard of the management's derisory offer.

MARK TURNBULL spoke to GEORGE HITCHMOUGH one of the strikers in Halewood.

Halewood, and has been there eleven years. He wasn't surprised by the reaction to the Ford offer.

A hundred toolmakers immediately packed up when they heard it on Thursday.

And at 2.30 in the afternoon the body and white workers did

the same. The paint, trim and assembly shop stopped work for the rest of the day.

When the workers came in on Friday morning there was a mass meeting which produced total support for a strike.

'They make the profits, we want a bigger share of the cake', said George.

George made it clear that Ford's record profits were not the most important point in the strike. 'We're not a special case, we are fighting the 5 per cent limit. Look at the local government workers, they've put in a smashing claim'.

And the claim is not just about wages, he stressed,

showing his badge, '£20 on the pay and 1 hour off the day'.

25 years ago he worked only 37½ hours each week in the mines, now he has to work a regular 44 hours for Ford.

George pointed to the central importance of regular strike rallies and mass meetings. He said he was dependent on the largely hostile news coverage in the press and television for news of the strike.

Large pickets are being mounted on the gates of the plants in Liverpool and Southampton, to prevent the removal of components to Ford factories abroad via the docks.

## The Ford (UK) Workers' Combine

THE FORD (UK) Workers' Combine is a left-wing, rank and file grouping organised nationally within Ford.

Prior to the strike it distributed thousands of leaflets calling for a fight for £20 a week and a reduction in hours, in the face of vacillation from the bureaucrats.

During the strike they are putting out leaflets and badges. Next week Socialist Chal-

lenge will talk to one of the militants involved in the Combine about its role and aims.

In the meantime our supporters in Ford should contact the Combine and get involved in its work.

Contact: The Secretary, Ford (UK) Workers' Combine, 25 Deamer House, London SW2, Tel: 01-471 5584.

CIS Anti Report



THE ANTI-report on Ford, produced by Counter Information Services.

From: CIS, 9 Poland St, London W1. Tel. 01-439 3764. Price 90p, plus 15p p&p.



# FORD

## Moss Evans, Ford workers' friend

# 'I believe in having the membership with me'

'THE COUNTRY does not need another tight pay curb, but free, socially responsible, collective bargaining, both in the private and public sectors.'

That's what Moss Evans, the Transport Union's general secretary, told Callaghan last week.

RICH PALSER tries to understand what Evans means by this in relation to the Ford strike.

Moss Evans was chairperson of the union negotiating committee during the 1971 Ford strike. At that time he said: 'We are not unreasonable — Ford can afford to meet our claim.'

This time round, Evans again thinks that the Ford workers' claim is reasonable, because of the massive profits that the company has been making.

In 1971 the nine-week national Ford strike started, as today, when management made an insulting offer.

The bosses argued then, as they will argue now, that Ford would be unable to compete if they granted the claim, and 'Britain' would be the loser.

Evans' philosophy is simple. Shop-floor involvement can reduce the risk of disputes, as he explained in '71: 'I believe in having the membership with

me, so that I can say to an employer that a deal I make is a deal that will be kept, because I can say I'm genuinely accepting it on behalf of our membership.'

In 1971, faced with anger and demands for action from the shop floor, this meant, as now, making the strike official.

The next step is to clinch a deal.

In 1971, Mr Ford's impatience, when the strike went into its seventh week, led him to have words with the Prime Minister.

### AGREEMENTS

Even the President of the United States Auto Workers' Union, who favoured 'long term' wage agreements, was brought in to persuade Scanlon and Jones that a settlement was needed.

After talks with the Prime Minister, this dynamic duo had secret talks with Ford's management, and arrived at a deal. In return for an improved offer, including future rises of £2 in December 1971 and August 1972, they agreed on a settlement to last for two years.

Management made only one small condition — that the union sign a no strike agreement.

In order to sell this to Ford workers, instead of the usual mass meetings and show of hands, a secret postal ballot was arranged.



MOSS EVANS (4th from left) with members of the US Auto Workers Union in London during the 1971 strike.

No chance to collectively discuss what to do; whether it was possible to win more; or for opponents of the deal to say why it should be rejected.

One worker at the time said: 'After nine weeks on strike you read something in the paper. Perhaps you go round to your mates.

'You travel into the plant. A few placards saying "No ballot — a show of hands". No one to talk to. "Ah fuck it" you say, and put your cross.'

Workers at Halewood and Swansea refused to go back for a time, but after Moss Evans spoke to them they knew there was no hope.

Reg Birch, the Engineering Union's negotiator, went back to the AUEW executive and tried to stop official endorsement of the deal. He attempted to censure Scanlon for his role in secret negotiations.

Moss Evans took no such action against his boss. He's a Jack Jones man.

Evans supported the Social Contract but now wants a return to 'responsible collective bargaining'. When he says 'responsible', it should mean responsible to the membership. Not responsible in the eyes of the bosses and the Government.

## Wage claims pending

# Labour's facts of life

WHEN Jim Callaghan announced that the date of the General Election was postponed, the Stock Exchange shot up. When the Ford workers took action for their claim into their own hands it plummeted.

Those are the facts of life for Callaghan's government. STEVE POTTER examines the line-up in the wages fight.

The City gents are only too pleased for Labour to stay in office so long as they carry out their number one role: policing the working class in the wages

struggle.

If they can't do that, then the same bosses who heap fulsome praise on Callaghan today will be kicking him where it hurts

tomorrow.

That's why the Labour Government means to really stick by the 5 per cent wages limit. And why they told a million low-paid council workers that they would be getting even less than the five per cent, to take account of 'wage drift'.

But the Ford workers' action could change all that. Last year workers saw the firefighters eventually lose after a long and bitter fight, betrayed by the TUC leaders who did nothing to help them.

In British Leyland, small groups of workers have fought bitterly; often against trade union bosses fronting for Michael Edwardes.

Only in one or two plants, like Cowley, have plant leaderships stuck to their guns and fought for a wage claim that could unify Leyland workers against the participation plans of trade union officials and reformist plant leaderships.

So the Ford strike is good news for:

\*1,200,000 manual local government workers who have claimed a £60 minimum wage and the 35-hour week.

\*250,000 hospital ancillary workers pushing a similar policy for their 27 October settlement date.

\*40,000 water workers who were only knocked back from strike action last year by the acceptance of 10 per cent by the manual workers.

put these plans into effect now. If the NUPE leaders won't do it, then the action should be organised by wage action committees in the facilities, demanding backing from their officials.

The Ford workers, by taking action a month in advance of their final settlement date, have put their negotiators on the spot. They can have no doubt what the wishes of the rank and file are.

### SETTLEMENT

The settlement for the Cowley claim, which aims to restore living standards to the level they were at in 1974 — the beginning of the Social Contract — is due on 1 November.

They will never be in a stronger position to secure their justified claim than if they take action now. Throughout the car industry the time is ripe to put forward a wider strategy to all car workers at the bosses expense.

Nationalisation of the car industry under workers control would prevent the butchering of British Leyland workers' jobs. It could also provide a strategy to stop the crisis of the car industry being visited on the heads of car and car component workers.

There will be no special cases under this Labour government. Callaghan has made this point absolutely clear. However, a united offensive on wages can make the Labour leaders whole arsenal of austerity measures explode in their own faces.

It can also open a way to put forward credible, alternative socialist policies. And it's on that basis that we can start to build a new left wing in the trade unions, committed to class struggle policies, and to form a unified revolutionary organisation.

## What militants should do

# Organising to win

THE FORD strike must win. This message must be taken to the heart of the labour movement.

A victory for the Ford strike would bust wide open the government's pay policy. The government and Fraud bosses know it. That's why they're determined to stand firm.

We must be equally determined in our support for the Ford workers. Here are some ideas of what you can do to support the strike.

\*Put down a resolution of support for the Ford strike at your next shop stewards' committee, union branch, trades council or Labour Party meeting.

\*Make sure they get collection sheets, start organising collections.

\*Try to get official demonstrations of support for the Ford strike organised by trades council in cooperation with local Ford strikers.

\*Try to get a Ford worker invited to speak to explain the case.

\*Demand the TUC turn its Congress resolution opposing the 5 per cent and the 12 month rule and supporting a reduction

in the working week into action. Don't let Ford become another Fire Brigades disaster!

\*If you're in a union which has submitted a wage claim, demand a fight for the claim now. Action now by other workers fighting the 5 per cent is the best way of supporting the Ford strike.

\*Join the Ford workers on the picket lines. Get your union body to send official delegations. Make sure dockers and airport workers boycott any transferred work.

\*Contact workers in car components firms to give their support. In the 1971 strike, workers at Armstrong Patents in York and Hull, at GKN in

Smethwick, Wolverhampton and Cardiff, at Lucas and Wilmot Breedon in Birmingham and at BSC in Wrexham were laid off or put on short time.

Try to get such workers to say they stand full square behind the Fordworkers.

\*In 1971, the press tried to stir up the male workers' wives to oppose the strike. Wives can stop this by organising in support of the strike.

\*Above all, maximum united action in support of the Ford strike is needed. Readers and supporters of Socialist Challenge should seek maximum cooperation with the SWP, with Big Flame, with the ISA and with all other organisations and individuals in organising to win!

If you're a Ford striker....

\*The Ford strike cannot win on its own. Remember the Fire Brigades strike. There's support to be won for the strike, because the Ford strike against the 5 per cent is everyone's

fight.

\*Ford is a special case only because of the strike, and not because of Ford's super profits. Ford workers are out because they've suffered the same government pay policy and rising prices as everyone else.

\*It was the Coventry shop stewards conference that originally formulated the claim. Now the stewards must organise the struggle.

The Coventry conference made provision for being recalled. It must be recalled now!

\*Insist on regular mass meetings of all those on strike and the election of local strike committees based on those actively involved in the strike.

\*It's the workers on strike who must be in control of the struggle. National negotiators must be responsible and accountable to them. By insisting on this we can ensure...

No Retreat on the Full Claim!





FORD fought bitterly against union organising in the 1930s, using a 3,500-strong private armed force and an army of spies in the workforce. It would willingly return to such methods of open violence if it got the chance.

A SINGLE year's profit of £264 million — double the figure twelve months earlier. That's the incredible record of Ford in Britain.

Ford's international empire produces 1 in 10 of all cars sold worldwide. The British plants are only a part of its European network. But the latter is becoming steadily more vital to the whole operation.

In the United States, Ford has been steadily losing out to General Motors. But in Europe it sells more cars

than anyone else, with a 12 per cent share of the market. It is the single biggest car seller in Britain.

Its overseas sales are also more profitable. In 1976, sales outside North America accounted for 30 per cent of production but 41 per cent of profits. In 1975, the peak recession year in the USA, over 70 per cent of its profits came from its overseas operations.

On this page JOHN ROSS explains how Ford is able to rake in such incredible sums.

# Ford's bloodstained millions

## Ford not against the Nazis

THE HISTORY of Ford is that of one of the world's most ruthless and bloody private employers — even by capitalist standards.

The company's founder, Henry Ford, was violently anti-venetic.

The leader of the American Nazis, Fritz Kahn, was on the Ford payroll. As late as 1938 Ford accepted the Nazi German Eagle from Hitler.

This decoration came after Ford had set up a special plant in Germany to manufacture trucks for the Nazi armies.

## Safety last

AT THE HEART of Ford's profits lie continual speed-up and cuts in staffing levels.

The casualty, of course, has been health and safety. In 1975 Ford had a mere six medical staff and one industrial hygienist and assistant for a total of 60,000 workers.

Cancer caused by oil on the skin, poisoned swarf cuts, limbs lost in accidents, deafening through noise, lungs damaged by tar fumes from coke — these are all everyday hazards in the different sections of Ford's.

At the Dagenham body plant alone there are 80-140 eye injuries reported every month.

And it's not just Ford workers who suffer because safety means less profits. Take the customers who bought the Pinto model.

Even before its release on the market, tests showed that the petrol tank burst in any crash at over 30mph, meaning that the car was likely to burst into flames.

By 1977 over 500 people had burned to death in Pinto crashes. Yet for eight years Ford fought off any call to install safety mechanisms against fire hazards in the car. In this time it sold two million Pintos.

Around 70 people a year for many years to come will continue to burn to death as a result of this policy. Because dead people help to keep Ford's bank balance high.

## Fighting for control

THIS continual drive for profit means that Ford are engaged in a constant attempt to smash trade union organisation — and especially shopfloor power and control.

During the late 1950s the Ford Joint Shop Stewards Committee at Dagenham built up tremendous strength.

Union control on the job was considerable. The stewards didn't have to make appointments to see the supervisors — it was the other way round. The stewards demanded the handing over of the work schedules

from leaders of the Transport & General Workers Union and the Blastfurnacemen's Union that the company would reinstate him.

Ford refused to allow the workers back, however, until they had individually signed an agreement to accept company decisions. Militant organisation was then broken up by the reallocation of hundreds of workers to new jobs. Seventeen key militants were weeded out and sacked.

The results for Ford were wonderful. Resistance to speed-up and reductions in staffing collapsed.

Days lost in strikes fell from 184,000 in 1961 and 415,000 in 1962 to a mere 3,400 in 1963. Ford workers became the lowest paid, with the worst conditions, in the British motor industry.

In 1969 the organisation so badly damaged in 1962 was largely rebuilt after a successful strike led by the shop stewards. This was the signal for Ford to go on the offensive again.

In the 1971 strike, which lasted for nine weeks, Ford agreed a 'no strike' deal at a secret meeting with union leaders Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon. This was then rammed through over the heads of the stewards.

The company then set to work to break up shopfloor organisation.

At Halewood a total assault on shop steward organisation was launched when the company, with union leadership connivance, moved shop steward John Dillon from his section because it had opposed a company deal, and permanently deprived him of the right to be a steward.

His section defended him with a strike. Within a year Ford had broken up the section and sent the 29 men to different parts of the factory.

The end result for Ford workers was clear. Wages in other car firms raced ahead of theirs. By July 1974 the basic rate of day-shift line workers in Chrysler, Coventry was £53.57. In Ford it was a miserable £38.

For the company, however, the outcome of the 1971 strike was a bonanza. It was then that Ford started its triumphant march to the highest car sales in Britain and its present astronomical profits.

Let there be no doubt about it. Ford is one of the most ruthless companies in the world. With Callaghan's backing it will stop at nothing if it feels it can win. That is the challenge which faces us,

## Divide and Rule

FORD uses its multinational position to full advantage against workers who, at best, are only organised nationally.

Thus the Halewood plant workers are told through Ford News that the plant is abysmally unproductive in comparison with German plants; while workers in Germany are told that the high value of the German mark makes them less competitive than the British factories.

Ford plants are carefully sited — on the basis that there's nothing like a dose of mass unemployment to keep workers in line and the profits rolling in.

The Halewood plant in Liverpool was opened in 1963 because Ford thought that high unemployment in the North-

West would mean a tame workforce — though on this occasion they got it wrong.

Today a new plant is being built at Bridgend in South Wales. Recent steel closures just happen to have sent local unemployment rocketing. The same aim of ensuring a divided, cowed workforce lies behind the company's widespread use of 'contract' immigrant labour in continental Europe. These workers only come for a limited stay, have few or no trade union or political rights, and can be instantly sacked and deported if they step out of line.

Racism is also a notorious weapon of Ford management in Britain. Incitement by white foremen against West Indian and Asian workers is common, and has led to important struggles in Dagenham.

By thus dividing its workers, Ford keeps up the rate of profit for itself.

## And at Leyland

# Cowley claim points way

WORKERS at British Leyland's Cowley Assembly plant endorsed a wage claim for £100 a week at a mass meeting on 14 September.

The Ford workers' action should give them a massive boost, reports MICK LAST.

The Cowley claim is a model of its kind. It aims to restore living standards to their 1974 level, before they were slashed by the Social Contract.

In addition to the £100 claim, there is a clause which would provide for a 1 per cent wage increase for every 1 per cent rise in the cost of living. This is often called a sliding scale.

This has the effect of making the claim inflation proof while making it clear that the responsibility for price rises lies with the ruling class not with the 'greedy' workforce.

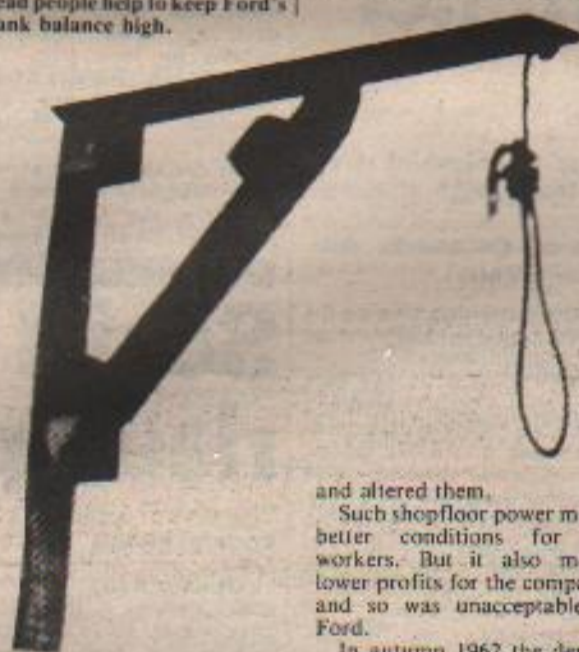
If implemented, the total package — which includes other aspects like 100 per cent sick pay — would be a sure way of maintaining the Cowley

workers' living standards. The shop stewards in the plant, elected nine months ago on a class struggle programme, intend to put up a serious fight for the claim.

The near unanimous vote at the 14 September meeting, attended by 3,000 workers, shows that the workforce is still right behind the plant leadership, and the possibilities for action are strong.

But the Cowley claim is the only one so far submitted by any Leyland plant.

Others are awaiting the meeting of the Leyland combine committee in October — which means that a golden opportunity to link up with the Ford struggle could slip by.





# HOME NEWS

## 7 Oct: Garners, Drylanders, Hounslow The struggles that won't go away

**THE WORKING CLASS** can be forgiven if it sometimes overlooks the fact that we have a Labour government.

On Saturday 7 October workers engaged in three separate struggles are holding pickets and rallies in an effort to build support.

They are struggles which would be understandable under the Tories, but... It's up to us to help them win!

### Garners: 8 months on

**THE MESSAGE** from the Garners restaurant strikers in Central London is one of a continued need for physical and financial support. **KEY WOOD** reports during this, the eighth month of the dispute.

The strike for union recognition is currently in stalemate, although Garners' profits have been cut by 80 per cent. The strike committee believes that the company cannot face the end of season

decline in trade and that the deadlock will soon be broken.

Supplies have been boycotted, and the management has to pick up goods from the London markets.

Throughout the course of the strike, pickets have been assaulted. A case against the boss's wife is due to come up in court on 27 October.

The comparison with Grunwick is one that boss Cyril Margolis is only too eager to make. Waiters at Garners took home £28.49 for a compulsory 55-hour week before the strike. Dismissal notices were handed

out like confetti.

The strikers are only too aware that the low-paid workers in the catering industry — many of them from abroad — are looking towards their lead, and that demoralisation will result if the strike is crushed.

Saturday 7 October is to be a day of solidarity, starting with a mass rally at 3pm at Speakers Corner. There will be speakers from the Transport Union, Grunwick, and the Sandersons strike, now approaching its 18th month.

The rally will be followed by a march to the Garners steakhouse in Trafalgar Square.

Support on the daily pickets and — not least — funds are urgently needed. See What's Left for details.

### Hounslow: anniversary of resistance

**HOUNSLOW HOSPITAL** in West London is about to celebrate a year of occupation with two days of resistance. **THE OCCUPATION COMMITTEE** says ...

When they raided our hospital on 6 October and stole our patients away in private ambulances, they left our wards devastated.

They thought that by smashing our six-month work-in they had ended the struggle to save our hospital.

### OCCUPY

We decided to stay and occupy until our hospital was re-opened. We have maintained a 24-hour picket; operated the switch-board for the outpatients department and the health education centre.

We have helped to build an area-wide campaign against the cuts and the hospital has become a popular meeting place for local organisations and campaigns.

We found that other local campaigns fighting the cuts around the country also needed the strength that comes from sharing experiences.

**Fightback** is now a national co-ordination of campaigns with almost a hundred affiliates based on Hounslow Hospital.

This is our reply to those who raided our hospital.

We have found great

confusion in the trade union movement because every real struggle has brought workers into conflict with the policies of the Labour Government, which has the support of the TUC.

While we agree there is a crisis, we cannot agree with policies which find solutions at the expense of working people.

On 6 and 7 October, we are commemorating our occupation with two days of activities.

We still have a lot to learn and we are inviting friends from all over the country to share experiences with us in workshop discussions on how to understand and fight back against the many problems of:

Closures, redundancies, unemployment, low pay, rights for women and black people, how to deal with government policies, our union responsibilities, and how we start to fight for a socialist health service.

Friday, 6 October. Afternoon: presentation of community hospital to area health authority. Evening: Films, theatre, music. Saturday, 7 October: Noon, march and rally (assemble Hounslow Hospital). 2.30pm workshop discussion. Evening: films, songs, video.

Hounslow Hospital, Staines Rd, Hounslow, Middx. Tube: Hounslow Central. Tel. 01-570 4448.



### Drylanders: no trespassing

**THE CRIMINAL** Law Act (better known as the Criminal Trespass Act) has been wheeled in to mow down 140 workers — mainly women — who are occupying the Drylanders textile firm in Liverpool.

The reason for their occupation, which began 10 weeks ago, is the 'crime' of fighting for their jobs. The plant owners, William Glassberg, shut up shop and Drylanders is now in liquidation.

The decision to occupy was immediate, which seemed to embarrass the General and Municipal Workers' Union.

Officials advised the women to keep it quiet.

St Helens Trades Council has decided otherwise. At an emergency meeting last Sunday it decided to call for mass pickets if the bailiffs attempt to enforce the court's eviction order.

It has also called for a march to the factory on 7 October, beginning at St Helens town centre at 10.30 am.

The trades council is concerned to defend jobs and fight the Criminal Law Act. It is affiliated to CACTL, the campaign which has done much to draw the attention of the labour movement to the implications of this Act, happily sanctioned by the Labour Government.

## Student unions face Thatcher Mark 2

**STUDENTS** in Brighton banned from inviting ANL speakers ... Funds withheld from Leigh students' coach to Carnival 2 ...

**PAMELA HOLMES** writes on the attacks now facing student unions across the country.

\*At Leigh Technical College, the staff treasurer of the student union has refused to sign a cheque for the coach that the students booked for Carnival 2.

\*In Brighton, the Tory council has banned the ANL from using council premises while allowing the National Front access. The ban covers Brighton Poly, where the student union will continue to invite the League to address meetings.

\*The authorities at North Trafford FE College, where 60 per cent of the students are from overseas, have imposed fees of £1,502 a year for those beginning O- and A-level courses.

Not surprisingly, intake has dropped from 160 to 38. With voluntary redundancies now being negotiated by the NATFHE members at the college, the net result is quotas against overseas students, course closures, and possibly the closure of the college.

\*At Park Lane FE College in Leeds, following an invitation from the student union to the ANL, the principal has banned all political organisations and 'pressure groups' adding that the students can no longer have a full-time president.

If this ban is not lifted, the students will organise a mass rally.

A successful attack on the right of student unions to control their own finances will

have a shattering effect on the social, cultural, and political life of the unions.

In 1972, when the then Tory Education Minister, Margaret Thatcher, sought to destroy the autonomy of student unions, the NUS was absolutely clear on what it wanted.

A memorandum was sent to the Department of Education setting out what the NUS considered to be the minimum basis for ensuring the independence of student unions.

The message was: 'Hands off our unions!'

Today's Broad Left leadership, dominated by the Communist Party, has made no such submission. It seems to consider independent organisation as a luxury to be forfeited in a period of social and economic crisis.

It is manoeuvring for a position as a respectable junior partner in negotiations with the authorities, while the DES seeks a quiescent student movement that accepts cut-backs and helps to implement them!

The cost of such a 'social contract' is a student movement which is incapable of joining in the struggles of the working class for jobs, education, and a decent standard of living.

And it is that kind of development which must be opposed by the student and labour movement alike.

## Social workers rise up

**THE DAY** of action yesterday by social workers throughout London was a step in the escalation of a dispute in which social workers in three areas have been on strike for almost two months, reports **DAVE BURN** of Islington NALGO.

The day of action, with a march and rally in London, was originally called by the unofficial All London Social Workers Action Group in support of the demand by social workers for local re-grading.

It was then officially supported by NALGO's London district. In spite of the strikes in Tower Hamlets, Southwark, and Newcastle, the union leadership has been sitting back.

As Dick Charlton, a social services shop steward in Tower Hamlets, explains: 'The NALGO leadership has held back other social workers, such as those in Brent, from striking, and has not backed local action with a national campaign of publicity and support in order to encourage escalation.'

The strikers in Tower Hamlets are prepared now for a long struggle. But Charlton

considers:

'It's crucial that the strikes are spread to other boroughs. Pressure has to be mounted to break the employers' unity.'

Lewisham and Wandsworth social workers are approaching the NALGO executive for official backing for strike action, and Liverpool and Chester are in the pipeline.

### ABC part 2

**THE ABC** official secrets trial is scheduled to re-start at the Old Bailey on Tuesday 3 October, with a picket from 9am to 2pm. At the formal bail hearing last Monday, the defendants were told that the new jury, like the last, would be vetted for 'loyalty'.

One of the nine charges against journalist Duncan Campbell has now been dropped, and four Labour MPs — Jo Richardson, Robin Cook, Philip Whitehead, and Christopher Price — have called on Attorney General Sam Silkin to abandon the trial altogether.





## Carnival 2 a big success

# 100,000 ROCK AGAINST RACISM

IT WAS a big success. Despite all the hostile publicity in the press, 100,000 people gathered in Brockwell Park in Brixton for Carnival 2.

At the same time East End anti-racists gathered in Brick Lane to defend it against the Nazis.

MYRA TREVELYAN and DAVE WAX were at the Carnival. DAVID LAWRENCE was in Brick Lane.

The sun was smiling as the trains began to pull in at Euston and the coaches reached Hyde Park. Slowly but surely the park was filling up. Soon it was a sea of banners.

On the platform Ernie Roberts was getting the rally started. Paul Holborow spoke first but said nothing new. There were hardly any politics in his speech. A lot of anger which, alas, sounded fake.

Then there was Arthur Scargill. He made the most political speech of the rally — explained why the racists and fascists had to be fought, why the Anti Nazi League was such an important initiative and why it had to be built.

### LABOUR

Then Tony Benn explained that the ANL offered the 'politics of hope rather than the politics of fear'.

Benn's presence suggests that the Labour Party has decided that votes can be gained as well by fighting racism. Though Ernie Roberts's attempt to use the chair to plug Benn as leader of the Labour Party was sectarian and constituted a misuse of an ANL platform.

There were a few more speeches and then the march left, to arrive at Brockwell Park a few hours later.

On the way was music and dancing and slogans ('One, two, three and a bit... the NF are a load of shit' seemed the most popular amongst school students).

### 'REVOLUTION'

At Brockwell Park there were tents for different groups, but they were all dwarfed by the giant marquee organised by Socialist Challenge and Revolution, the new revolutionary socialist youth paper.

Incidentally this last was a massive success. Two thousand were sold at the Carnival and the response was terrific.

At the Rock Against Racism concert the compères led anti-fascist chants and the groups (especially Misty) were clearly delighted with the response.

### SHAM '69

Jimmy Pursey from Sham '69 also appeared, denying reports which had appeared in the recent issue of Melody Maker.

Nearly 40,000 people had assembled in Brockwell Park alone, a clear indication that all talk of diverting the Carnival was foolish in the extreme.

All in all, Carnival 2 was a massive success! Nothing can take that away.

## ...and meanwhile at Brick Lane

The fascists had deliberately chosen to march on 24 September to disrupt Carnival 2. The choice confronting the ANL was not an easy one.

They decided to go ahead with the Carnival, but East End anti-fascists were asked to mobilise to defend Brick Lane and its environs.

A thousand anti-fascists assembled in Brick Lane. Double that number of fascists, protected by 5,000 policemen, were marching from the Embankment at 2pm to their new headquarters in Shoreditch.

### FOOLHARDY

It was obvious that the only thing that anti-fascists could do in the circumstances was to stay around Brick Lane and be on the alert for any attacks. Any notion of 'taking the offensive' was foolhardy.

And yet the stewards quite arbitrarily decided to march away from Brick Lane.

The result was an attempt to block Shoreditch High Street. This was broken up by Special Patrol Group squads and there were 35 arrests.

The defence of these prisoners should become a major priority for the ANL and all anti-racists.

In a demoralised state the anti-fascists returned to Brick Lane. Here there was a competition as to who could denounce the ANL louder, a competition in which Phil Marfleet, the local Socialist

Workers Party organiser, entered his name.

The only speaker to defend the decision to continue with Carnival 2 was Jonathan Silberman from the International Marxist Group.

Patrick Kodikara of the Tower Hamlets and Hackney Defence Committee denounced the state for not banning the NF march and the ANL for not coming to the East End.

As dusk overwhelmed the Lane, the anti-fascists gradually dispersed. When a group of 25 thugs inspired by fascist propaganda attacked the Bengalis later on, the strong advocates of 'taking the offensive' had already gone home.

Given the fact that it was impossible to cancel or divert Carnival 2, the only serious tactic was to remain in the Brick Lane area and be prepared to defend the community against racist attacks.

What created the demoralisation was the display of 'mindless militancy' and the stewards' failure to respond in a political fashion.

Even if 2,000 anti-fascists had arrived from Carnival 2 in time, the tactics should still have been to maintain an alert rather than go off on a futile chase.

The other lesson from Brick Lane is the following: unless the local community is itself



BENN at Hyde Park: hoping to win votes?

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The other lesson from Brick Lane is the following: unless the local community is itself

mobilised, problems will continue.

The reason why the one-day strike against racism was such a success was precisely because the Bengalis themselves were out in their thousands.

On 11 March, Wolverhampton's anti-racist committee held a demonstration against racist violence and police harassment of black people.

The organisers of the march announced before it took place that the demonstration would be orderly and peaceful.

Some three thousand people supported the march, and — apart from one incident — it was indeed orderly and peaceful.

The one problem occurred when a lone racist tried to make a kamikaze charge at the march.

Minutes later he was led away by the police — though he has never been charged as far as members of the anti-racist committee (WARC) can discover.

But four demonstrators were also arrested and they now face charges which could well bring heavy fines or imprisonment.

After the arrests, WARC decided to launch a campaign to bring mass pressure to bear on the Director of Public Prosecutions, demanding that he drop all charges against the four.

As the National Front's electoral strategy has been faltering in the past months, there has been a big increase in racist violence in many parts of the country.

The response of those who are supposedly responsible for the 'defence of law and order' has not been to ensure the security of the threatened black and Asian communities, but to

step up arrests of blacks and Asians who resist the racist violence.

In East London, for example, the four Virk brothers were convicted in court after they defended themselves against an attack by five racists instead of waiting for the police to arrive.

Although it was one of the Virk brothers, Sukvinder, who telephoned the police, it was the Asians and not their assailants who were arrested; Joginder Virk has been sentenced to seven years jail.

In Manchester there is the Ahmed case, now being taken up by a defence campaign which has the support of Longsight Anti-Fascist Committee.

Every time there is a successful prosecution in one of these cases, every Nazi is encouraged and the task of defending the black communities is made that much more difficult.

This issue should not be seen as simply the concern of anti-racists. The Wolverhampton arrests are a challenge to anyone who may want to

participate in any demonstration on any issue at any time.

It just so happens that when the arrests were made, Bills were coming up in Parliament which included procedures for tightening police control over demos in the West Midlands and Greater Manchester areas.

The WARC Defence Campaign has been active on a number of fronts. A petition has already gained several thousand signatures, which will be presented to the DPP.

Sponsorship for the campaign has been obtained from prominent figures, both locally and nationally, and resolutions of support passed by numerous organisations.

Many thousands of leaflets, posters and pamphlets have been distributed to help these tasks.

Local pickets have been organised whenever the cases have come up for processing by the magistrates court. When the full trials come up in the Crown Court, later in the year, WARC will be calling for wide support for national pickets, the importance of which was shown this month by the acquittals at Stoke Crown Court.

The following have added their names to the list of sponsors:

Jo Richardson MP, Renee Sutt MP, Bob Edwards MP, Tom Liddle MP, Brian George MP, Neil Kinnock MP, John Maynard MP, Dennis Skinner MP, Audrey Wise MP

Shropshire Council, Dennis Turner, Bishop Doss, S. Duffin, Alan Garner (NUR exec), Cynthia Duffin, Fay Garner, H. Davis, Ian Cawthorne

Councillors from elsewhere: John Edwards (Birmingham), L. Taylor JP (Sandwell), K. Griffin (Sheffield), Teresa Stewart (Birmingham)

Labour Movement: Arthur Scargill (P.M.S., Paris, NUM); George Reed (NUM); Roy Wight (ALEW Assn. Nat. Sec. 1, John Tocher (ALEW for Dist. Org), Dick Emridge (ALEW)

Organisations: National Anti-Nazi League; Indian Workers Assoc. (IGBI); Indian Workers Assoc. (IWI); Indian Workers Assoc. (IWA); Wolverhampton and Bilston Trades Council; Plus many local ANL branches, and local Anti-Racist and Anti-Fascist Committees.

# Derailing the Nazis

ON THE eve of the ANL Carnival in London and around the corner from the Teachers Against the Nazis meeting on Saturday, nearly 60 railway workers attended a national half-day conference of Rail Against the Nazis, writes ALAN SOSKIN\* who chaired the meeting.

Anti-fascist sentiments on the railways were much in the news recently, and RAN's conference showed that this awareness was no mere flash in the pan.

But it also revealed that there are genuine differences among anti-Nazis about the best way forward.

A West London member of ASLEF, the loco-drivers' union, moved that fascists be expelled from the trade unions as such membership was considered incompatible with union membership.

But Bill Rooksley, national president of ASLEF, warned against expelling NF members. With the closed shop agreement on British Rail and London Transport, he argued we would be making martyrs of the fascists.

This debate coloured much of the afternoon's discussion, and the motion was finally remitted to RAN's open steering committee after a split vote.

Tony Donaghy of the NUR executive stressed that we cannot rely on leaders to crush the NF, but that the rank and file must take the initiative in the

struggle.

Billy Taylor, Engineering Union convenor at London Transport's Acton Works, noted the Irish dimension to both the NF's fascism and the police state effects resulting from the operation of the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

The significance of the RAN meeting, which was large by railway standards, was to bring together trade union leaders and rank and file activists across union lines in a common endeavour to find a positive way to fight the fascists.

All shades of the reformist and revolutionary left were in attendance, with Communist Party supporters well-represented on the platform.

The meeting adopted the Rail Against the Nazis steering committee resolution calling for the setting up of local RAN groups throughout the railway network to monitor and counter racist actions and propaganda.

That no earth-shattering formulas for smashing fascism emerged was predictable.

But the need for clear and forthright action to defeat the racists and fascists was amply demonstrated, with no one in any doubt that the struggle is being stepped up.

RAN, c/o Rank and File Centre, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

\*ALAN SOSKIN is a member of the Transport Salaried Staffs Association.

# The Wolverhampton trials

IT IS NOW just over six months since the police moved into an anti-racist demonstration in Wolverhampton and hauled out four marchers who now face heavy sentences.

DAVE ASHCROFT reviews the defence campaign and the importance of defending arrested blacks and anti-racists before they receive the justice of the courts.

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ARTHUR SCARGILL speaking at last Saturday's conference of Teachers Against the Nazis, attended by 800 people



# INTERNATIONAL

## Labour's Watergate How BP and Shell busted the sanctions with the knowledge and connivance of Labour and Tory Governments and why all the guilty parties should be publicly tried.

A FEW months after the white settlers in Zimbabwe unilaterally declared independence, the British Labour government imposed sanctions in order to bring down Smith. Wilson stated categorically that Smith would be brought to his knees in 'weeks rather than months'.

TARIQ ALI disentangles the truth from the fiction and explains the truncated and restricted character of British bourgeois democracy.

The British Labour government's record of opposition to the Smith regime is not very edifying. It reveals a sordid web of chicanery, intrigue and outright deception.

We now know that all talk of effective sanctions was a gigantic fraud. Its perpetrators were the giant oil multinationals, the mandarins who run Whitehall, and the major leaders of the Conservative and Labour parties.

The 'Report on the Supply of Petroleum and Petroleum Products to Rhodesia' by T.H. Bingham, QC, and S.M. Gray, FCA, otherwise known as the Bingham Report, is, despite limitations, convincing on that score. But though the report (410 typewritten pages long with 87 pages of appendices) is extremely thorough in what it sets out to prove, it is weak on the inter-relationship between the BP/Shell sanction-busting and the complicity of Whitehall and the Labour government.

The report tends to lay the main blame on BP/Shell executives in Africa. This may be convenient, but it is somewhat absurd.

Are we really expected to believe that regional executives, albeit with continental responsibilities, were capable of making such vital decisions without the knowledge of their bosses in London,

not to mention the British government?

T.H. Bingham, Q.C. did not, one presumes, ask whether there existed any reports from British intelligence on the question of toppling the Smith regime via economic sanctions.

A lot was made of the fact that British warships were stationed outside Beira port (in Mozambique) supposedly to enforce sanctions. This would indicate that all the country's intelligence services had some knowledge of what was taking place. But Bingham was clearly not allowed access to such material.

The report is crisp and clear on one basic fact: BP/Shell were breaking sanctions from the moment they were imposed.

He explains that this was so because of the refusal of the South Africans to comply with sanctions and 'by the strong pro-Rhodesian sympathy of virtually all white South Africans employed by the companies'. All attempts to restrict the flow of oil to the white settlers were successfully impeded by these factors.

Despite using language typical of quasi-official reports, Bingham is convinced that from 1969 onwards the Labour government was aware of what was going on. Before that year he tends to lay the blame for the cover-up almost

# The Labour Party and South Africa



THE NATIONAL executive of the Labour Party issued an important statement on South Africa in August 1976. The recommendations of the statement, which were approved at the party's conference the following month, would — if implemented — go a considerable way to reduce Britain's involvement in apartheid.

Those of the recommendations which would affect the operations of Shell and BP in South Africa are listed here:

\*Ensure that British companies already there create the conditions necessary for the proper functioning of free African trade union activity.

No Shell or BP employees in South Africa are trade union members.

\*Ensure the ending of all relationships with South African security forces.

Shell and BP both supply fuel to the South African armed forces and police.

\*Ensure that the export of capital goods to South Africa cease and ban the transfer of patents and licence rights.

Shell and BP are providing sophisticated technology for the development of South Africa's oil, petrochemical and mining industries.

\*Ensure the repatriation of profits earned in South Africa to prevent further investment.

Shell and BP are reinvesting all their profits to help finance their massive expansion in South Africa.

### PROHIBIT

\*Prohibit all further investment by British companies in South Africa.

Shell and BP have announced plans to invest £400m during the next five years.

\*Investigate the possibility of nationalised industries withdrawing their investments from South Africa.

BP has nearly £150m invested in South Africa. Sixty-eight per cent of the shares of BP are owned by the British Government.

\*Work at the UN towards a mandatory ban on all trade with apartheid South Africa.

Shell and BP supply nearly £300m worth of oil products of South Africa every year.

\*Ensure that all British companies operating in Namibia...withdraw from the occupied territory.

Shell and BP continue to market petroleum products in Namibia.

\*There should be an intensification of sanctions against the illegal regime [in Zimbabwe].

The Bingham Report has revealed just how seriously Labour leaders and Shell/BP viewed this recommendation.

entirely on the shoulders of Walker, the General Manager for Consolidated in South Africa (a holding company for BP/Shell).

It was Walker who failed to inform his superiors in London. Therefore 'we do not think the Groups are to be criticised for failing during 1966 and 1967 to send a team from London to investigate methods of Rhodesian supply directly.'

But surely if sanctions were seriously intended, then it was in the interests of Shell/BP as well as the British government to find out the exact sources of oil supply and mount an international campaign to demand that it be curtailed.

### AMNESIA

Bingham's account of the period between 1966-68 is not very convincing. It may well be 'that memories have faded with the passage of time' but we rather doubt it. Where profits are involved, memories rarely fade. What we have here is clearly a case of self-induced amnesia.

The following passage, carefully worded and mild though it is, indicts the Labour government:

'We are unsure whether the proposed solution [i.e. selling oil through the French company Total — TA] was fully communicated in February 1968, but during the year following HMG [Her Majesty's Government] was given

sufficient information to enable a fair judgement to be made. The contrary has not been suggested to us. The proposed solution was accepted. It was therefore reasonable for the Groups [BP/Shell] to proceed on that basis.

'The Total exchange arrangement plainly did not have the effect of denying supplies of oil products to Rhodesia. That an arrangement having this deficiency was accepted by HMG had, we think, an important consequence.'

'It induced among some of those most directly concerned a belief that compliance with Sanctions Orders was to be regarded as a matter of form rather than substance, that it was the letter which mattered, not the spirit...'

And there we have it in a nutshell. There is, however, one small question that arises. Why has it taken 12 years for all this to be revealed?

The facts were known by Zambian intelligence (not well-known for either its efficiency or possession of the latest technological devices) ten years ago. They were known in Salisbury and Pretoria. They were stated by Tanzania's President Nyerere and met with angry British denials.

We should certainly congratulate ITV's World in Action and the Sunday Times for exposing the scandal a few weeks before a report commissioned by the Foreign Office (itself a result of pressure from black Africa) was due to be published. But the fact remains that they are a decade too late. Pure

coincidence? We think not.

Soon after the Watergate scandal rocked the American political system (it is worth recalling, incidentally, that The Times defended Nixon till the last possible moment) a complacent and smug Harold Wilson was interviewed on television.

### MANIPULATED

'It could never happen here', he explained. Britain had a parliamentary system. The Prime Minister was accountable to the House of Commons, unlike the American President, who was a power unto himself.

This is, of course, formally correct. But the operations of British bourgeois democracy are, in fact, thoroughly manipulated.

Even the supposedly sacred 'Question Time' in the House of Commons involves the questions being vetted by a committee. 'Sensitive' questions by left-wing Labour MPs are disallowed.

As a matter of fact — and the sanction-busting scandal is a dramatic confirmation — the House of Commons is a moth-eaten assembly.

Its powers are limited. Its capacity to investigate matters of importance through independent committees is non-existent. It has no equivalent of the Special Committees established by the representative assemblies in the United States.

The disillusionment with the war in



# Imperialist Aims in Zimbabwe

THE two main imperialist powers in southern Africa, Britain and the US, like to pose as benign, disinterested brokers between the two intransigent camps of white racism and black nationalism. This should be seen for the mystification it is.

**THE AFRICA IN STRUGGLE GROUP** looks at the international forces at work in Zimbabwe.

Imperialist strategy for Zimbabwe and southern Africa has not changed — only the tactics.

The long term aims remains an orderly transition to pro-Western black regimes which would keep the region firmly within the world capitalist system.

Diplomatic and constitutional efforts are now seen as the correct tactic. This 'soft' offensive, coupled with empty rhetoric about human rights, does not rule out military intervention to reinforce the aims of the talk shops.

The events in Zaire in May illustrate this point. When there was diplomatic option and no alternative to the existing neo-colonial regime of Mobutu, the US sent air transport and other logistical support to ferry French and Belgian

paratroops and military equipment to stamp out the threat to imperialist interests.

British Foreign Secretary David Owen has revealed that contingency plans for a British military intervention in Zimbabwe have long existed and have recently been updated in light of the Zaire experience and the growing military crisis.

We are also informed, without any explanation, that British paratroopers are to spend Christmas in South Africa.

Owen uses the well-worn rhetoric of humanitarian concern for the people of Zimbabwe, black and white.

But where was Owen's (or Carter's) concern when the Rhodesian forces massacred 400 black Zimbabwean civilians in the Chimoiio raid on Mozambique in November 1977 or when South African troops killed 600 Namibian civilians in Kassinga in Angola in May?

Contingency military plans apart, Owen and US Secretary of State Vance continue to push the Anglo-American settlement proposals as imperialism's optimum tactical option.

If the leaders of the nationalist

movements can be peaceably brought into a neo-colonial settlement, so much the better.

For them the best solution is to co-opt both wings of the Patriotic Front, ZANU and ZAPU, since then the central threat of the guerilla war is removed.

Those rank and file guerillas and militants who opt out of this sell-out and continue to pursue genuine liberation would face the full wrath of a PF leadership turned neo-colonial government, backed by Western arms.

The second option would be to split the PF by incorporating the Nkomo leadership and its following. The outcome would depend on the resolve of ZANU and ZAPU militants to continue the struggle and on whether President Machel of Mozambique were to maintain his support for the struggle.

Joshua Nkomo of ZAPU has now emerged as clear favourite with an international backing that includes the US and Britain, the USSR and Cuba together with President Neto of Angola, Zambia's President Kaunda and the Nigerian government, and even the doyen of imperialism in the sub-

continent, Tiny Rowland of Lonrho. This coterie of backers and his burgeoning army gave Nkomo a clear lead in the neo-colonial race.

Vorster's resignation as South African premier changes nothing. South Africa feels concern for its considerable economic interests in Rhodesia, threatened by guerilla war, by a potential hostile post-colonial state, and by US and British rival imperialist interests.

Doubtless the new Prime Minister will inherit from Vorster military and other contingencies to counter such threats.

The front line states — Zambia, Mozambique, Botswana, Tanzania and Angola — play a crucial role in imperialist strategy and in influencing the course of the liberation struggle.

Zambia and Mozambique especially, as hosts for military bases and refugee camps, are key elements in the Owen-Vance plan to pressurise the movements into compromising the anti-imperialist aims of the struggle.

Kaunda has many times shown himself willing to act against the struggle by repatriating, imprisoning or

even killing scores of ZAPU militants for challenging the direction of the struggle.

He has on several occasions arranged and participated in negotiations between Nkomo, Smith and Vorster.

Machel too has acted with the ZANU leadership in detaining scores of ZANU militants for 'opportunism', 'ultra-leftism', 'being reactionary agents of imperialism'.

Like Zambia, Mozambique is feeling the pinch of world recession and especially the South African stranglehold on its economy.

The fact that fewer Mozambican workers are going to South Africa for slave labour in the mines is because South Africa doesn't need so many at the moment, not because Machel has a strategy of disengagement.

Machel and Kaunda urgently want the restabilisation of Zimbabwe, even as a neo-colony. This is the imperialist strategists' trump card.

The signatures of Kaunda and Machel on a neo-colonial solution for Zimbabwe would be a serious set-back for the struggle.

Vietnam was aided partially by the public and televised hearings conducted by Senator Fulbright on behalf of the Foreign Relations Committee. The Watergate issue itself exploded after a Senate Committee (again publicly) interrogated the culprits.

Such an examination is virtually unthinkable in Britain. In reality the modes of functioning of the government and the decision-making process are engulfed in secrecy. That is why Cabinet Minister's dreams are the dream of every publisher.

Thus there is an element of truth in Wilson's observation referred to above. The reason why a Watergate is unlikely is because of the closed nature of British bourgeois-democracy.

There is a conspiracy of silence which involves the civil service, the government, the judiciary and the media. The British press is notorious throughout the capitalist world for its servility and timidity.

## EXPERTISE

It has neither the equivalent of a *Washington Post*, nor a *Le Monde* or a *Frankfurter Rundschau*. As for *Aftonbladet* (the newspaper of the Swedish social-democracy, financed by the unions) it would be unthinkable. It might actually interest social-democratic workers in politics.

It is these specific features of British society which help to explain how the cover-up on sanctions could have taken place over a period of 12 years. It constitutes a unique tribute to the skills and expertise of the British ruling class, perfected by years of experience.

Revolutionary socialists have always argued that bourgeois-democracy could be nothing but limited, as its central purpose is to preserve the rule of capitalists over the working class. That remains our position.

However, all social-democrats, and not a few liberal-democrats, should be asking themselves more than a few questions at the present time.

They all claim to be ardent defenders of democratic rights. In fact they claim that democratic rights can only be defended by bourgeois-democracy.

At the very least, then, they should subject the functioning of the system in this society to a fundamental critique. They should agitate for more democracy, for a written constitution, for making the media accessible to political, racial or cultural minorities.

There are some things they could learn from Sweden and other countries in the field of democratic rights.

The other question which is raised is that of the Labour government. Labour has now been in power almost continuously since 1964, with the brief exception of 1970-74 when Heath was Prime Minister. There is no way in which its role can be whitewashed.

In a pungent survey of Labour's record on this question, Bruce Page in the pages of the *New Statesman* challenged (correctly in our view) the attempt of the Labour establishment to load all the blame on the drooping

shoulders of Harold Wilson.

It is true that Wilson is increasingly being seen as a seedy and shallow politician. He will probably be remembered as the most discredited post-war Prime Minister.

removed in summer 1966 from the Commonwealth Office and replaced by Herbert Bowden. Bottomley was extremely hostile to Smith; as for Bowden — he was ideal.

According to Crossman, Wilson

sanctions'. His removal from the Exchequer to the Foreign Office is unlikely to have changed his mind.

And yet, despite this fact, Callaghan pretended to be hurt when President Kaunda of Zambia questioned British

its own laws? Will the Attorney-General prosecute Shell/BP executives? Will the House of Commons impeach Wilson, Heath, Callaghan, and Healey? Will the civil servants involved in this cover-up (including the one who has since become a BP executive) be charged with breaking the law?

## CYNICAL

At the cost of being charged with being cynical, we must confess that we doubt it. A few scapegoats will be sacrificed. Some of them are already dead politically. But nothing more will happen.

For we live in Britain, and British politicians, judges, leader-writers, civil servants, and capitalists are loyal to their own.

Will there be a hue and cry at the Labour Party conference? Will Tony Benn unleash a ferocious attack on Wilson/Callaghan? Will the sad figure of Michael Foot rise above his own opportunism?

## ATTITUDE

Will Terry Duffy and Moss Evans defend the workers, peasants and students of Zimbabwe who have fallen in struggle against Smith and the white settler regime? Once again we doubt it.

The issue of sanction-busting in Zimbabwe cannot be seen as isolated from the attitude of British Labour towards Southern Africa as a whole.

British policy has sought to present the South African racists as 'realists', who were trying to restrain Smith. They were. But only because they feared that a defeat for the whites as a result of a protracted guerilla struggle might have even more of an impact in South Africa itself than the liberation of Mozambique and Angola.

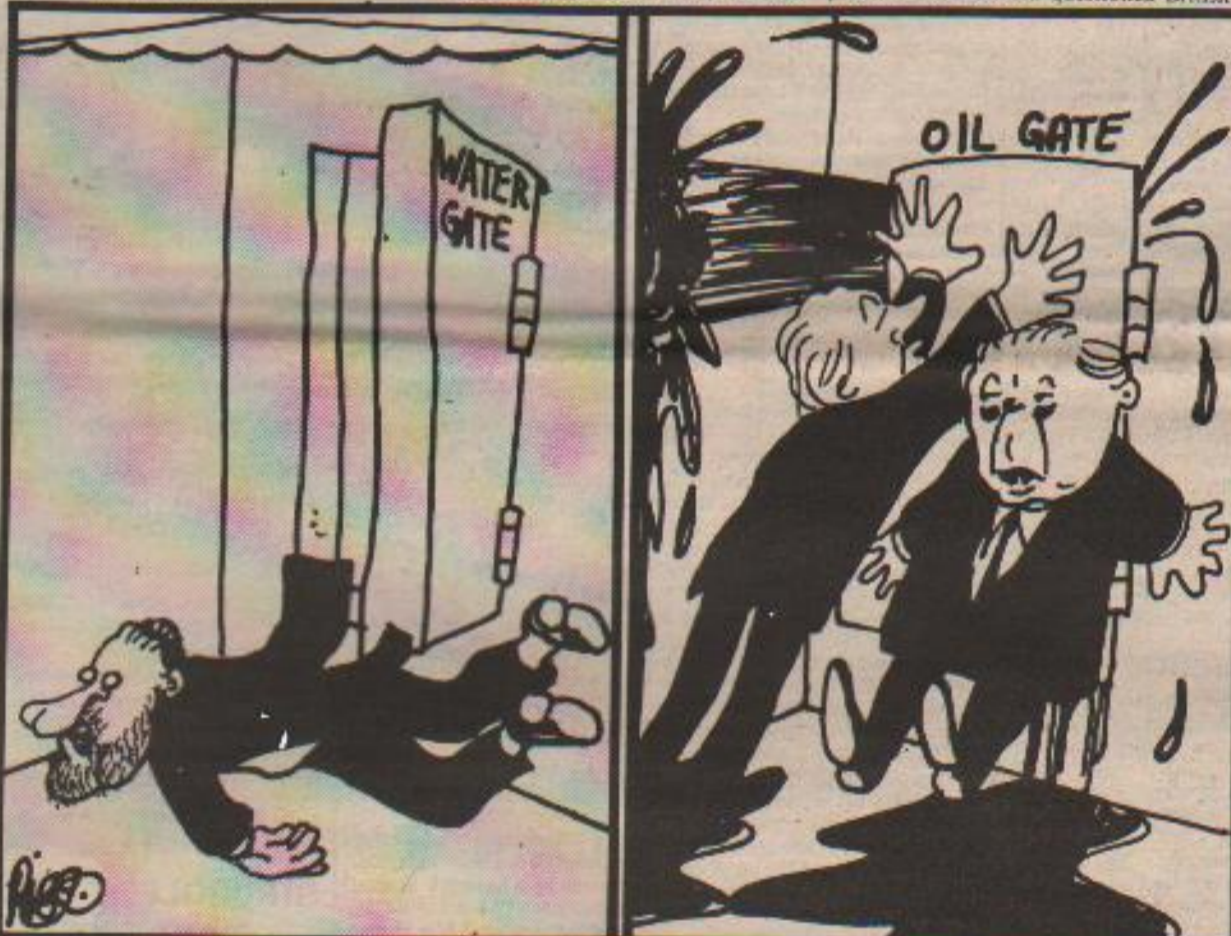
The United Nations has called for an economic boycott of South Africa. Britain has opposed such a boycott for obvious reasons. British capitalism is heavily involved in the exploitation of the South African blacks. It is, in a literal sense, 'dripping with blood from hand to foot'.

It is a measure of the chauvinism and insularity of the British labour movement, and of the weakness of the far left, that no effective campaign has been mounted on Southern Africa.

## OPPORTUNITY

Unless this changes in the coming years we will not be able to proffer too many excuses to those who fought in Zimbabwe or confronted their oppressors in Soweto.

Both history and time are on their side. We must ensure that they do not fight alone. The sanction-busting operations of British Labour offer a real opportunity to develop a broad campaign on these and related questions.



We'll have to think of something better than HE did, Jim!

Wilson's attempt to deny knowledge of what was going on after February 1968 is simply pathetic. If it were true it should leave even the staunchest anti-Marxist to unpalatable conclusions regarding the nature of British democracy.

Wilson's statement has been sharply rebutted by Lord Thomson, who admits that the Cabinet was conscious of what was going on and that its decision to accept what was taking place was conditioned by the forced devaluation and the economic situation of Britain.

## DECISIONS

Bruce Page stated last week that all decisions on Rhodesia were diverted to Cabinet committees known by the code-name RX.

Their existence was first revealed in the *Crossman Diaries*, and their composition was designed to exclude ministers who were for effective sanctions, such as Barbara Castle and Judith Hart.

Arthur Bottomley had also been

explained the matter thus: 'Bert had to be selected — and when he had told the Queen she had said how delighted she was that that kind of non-political man was in the job' (*New Statesman*, 15 September).

That opens up yet another dimension: the sympathy of the British royals for the 'plucky white Rhodesians'. The Queen Mother was a known partisan of Ian Smith. Her aversion to black Africans is well-known.

This is not an irrelevance. The influence of the royal family on Labour Cabinet ministers should not be underestimated — especially in a situation where they had already decided to abandon any real attempt to get rid of Smith.

Harold Wilson is perfectly aware of the attempts to make him the chief scapegoat. His statement, which was otherwise characteristically evasive, was, however, sure of one fact: Callaghan had been involved at every stage.

Certainly Callaghan, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, had said at a Cabinet meeting that Britain 'couldn't afford

sincerity in applying sanctions.

Only a year ago Britain's man at the United Nations, Ivor Richard, stated: 'The UK has tried honestly and hard to enforce sanctions, and we are not ashamed of our record...'

To put it mildly, this was untrue. We have 410 pages of the Bingham Report as a riposte to that particular gem.

British Labour in office always serves the needs and interests of British capital. This statement always annoys left social-democrats.

We are told that it is typical of Trotskysts to caricature their opponents. We are supposed to be simplistic, crude beyond belief. We are alleged to live in a dream-world of our own making.

## GUILTY

Whenever anyone makes these remarks again we shall reply with one word: sanction-busting. For Labour is guilty on every count.

Will the British state now implement



## SRI LANKA

THE Joint Trade Union Action Committee, consisting of virtually all the major trade unions in Sri Lanka, has called a one day general strike for today, 28 September. This is to protest against the rising cost of living and the anti-trade union and repressive policies of the government.

The UNP government of J R Jayawardene has threatened to sack all government and state corporation employees who participate in the strike. But a delegate conference of over 1,000 workers who met on 17 September voted unanimously to go ahead with it.

## GREECE

THE Karamanlis government has introduced a Bill in parliament which would enable the police to harass and imprison gay men at will.

Gay men can be locked up for a year if they are found 'loitering with the aim of picking up other men' or for activities 'lewd and against nature'. Police acting on 'privately received written information' can force gay men to undergo three weeks of 'medical treatment and therapy'.

The Bill was first drafted when the Colonels were still in power, and one can imagine the therapy they had in mind.

The newly-formed International Gays Alliance (IGA) has organised simultaneous pickets of Greek embassies throughout Europe. Be there at 12 noon on Saturday 30 September: Greek Embassy, 1a Holland Walk (Notting Hill tube).

## BRAZIL

NAHUEL Moreno and Rita Strasberg, two Argentinian revolutionaries, were released on 19 September from a Brazilian prison. They had been taken into custody a month ago while attending a meeting of the Socialist Convergence group.

There was a real danger that they could have been deported back to Argentina and almost certain death. But after an international campaign on their behalf they have now been allowed to go to Colombia.

## CHINA

CHINA's foreign policy can hardly be said to be full of surprises. Apart from Somoza, the Chinese are backing virtually every existing anti-communist dictatorship in the world.

China's policies in the Middle East now include developing friendly links with the most reactionary Arab states. It is still wooing Saudi Arabia, but the Wahabi fundamentalists remain suspicious.

At the same time China is in full support of the Shah of Iran's attempts to organise a Gulf security pact. Designed to repel 'aggression' (presumably from the USSR) the pact, in reality, is designed to crush social revolutions in the area.

A meeting between Hua and King Khalid of Saudi Arabia is currently being arranged.

# Nicaragua under the Somozas Monopoly played with real money

WHEN the 'Wall Street Journal' came out against General Somoza a fortnight ago, it became clear that the Nicaraguan dictator had more to worry about than the gallant but poorly armed militants of the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN), writes CHRISTOPHER ROPER.

After more than 40 years in power, the Somoza family no longer adequately safeguards United States interests in the region. Far from providing the 'stability' which foreign investors require, Somoza is now perceived as a major cause of instability.

The first question to ask is why the Somozas' dynastic rule began to crumble in the mid-'70s, after so many years of untroubled tyranny. It has very little to do with the military efforts of the Sandinistas, even though the FSLN is providing a powerful pole of attraction for the forces of the opposition.

## EARTHQUAKE

The growing popularity of the FSLN over the past ten years has also probably had the effect of galvanising the previously supine opposition parties into taking a harder line against Somoza.

But none of this would have affected Somoza seriously if it had not been for the 1971 earthquake, which devastated the capital city of Managua.

This had two important effects. In the first place, it ruined an important sector of Nicaragua's petty bourgeoisie and commercial elite, who had lived in relative comfort under the Somozas.

Secondly, it opened up undreamed of possibilities for looting and corruption to the National Guard. Businessmen watched aghast as all the relief funds were channelled directly into the pockets of the Guard.

## COMMERCE

The flourishing black market in food and blankets began to take over the commerce of the country, with contraband selling in greater volume than legally imported goods.

Somoza and his cronies began, slowly, to rebuild Managua on the basis of their holdings of real estate. Their contracting companies built highways to their new housing estates and shopping centres.

It was just like Monopoly — played with real money.

It is in this process that you can find the origins of the 'businessmen's strike', which caught the imagination and

sympathy of the Wall Street Journal.

The National Guard also found new sources of profit in the war against the rural guerrillas of the FSLN. Peasants suspected of 'sympathising' with the guerrillas were driven off their land, which was then aggregated into valuable estates.

## ROADS

Roads had to be built, with United States aid, into the rural areas to allow easy access of military vehicles. The Somozas were hated more than ever.

General Anastasio Somoza, the present head of the family, is not a stupid man. He is well educated and can discuss modern economic theory with the officials of the World Bank or the United Nations.

He was making every effort to modernise the rather old fashioned family business which got its start when the United States marines left his father in power in 1934.

Somoza has diversified the family's investments, especially into multinational corporations. He is rumoured, for instance, to be the largest individual shareholder in Nestle, the Swiss baby food manufacturer.

He has purchased control of Vision, a Latin American news magazine. Many of the companies he controls in Nicaragua are held through foreign banks or nominees.

Unlike Trujillo in the Dominican Republic or Duvalier in Haiti, Somoza's dictatorship is not flamboyant. The family has always maintained a low profile, occasionally even handing over the presidency to a family retainer.

But since the earthquake, he has been unable to control the rapacity of the National Guard and of members of the growing Somoza clan. Furthermore, the earthquake focussed international attention on Nicaragua.

## CARTER

With the arrival of Carter in the White House, Somoza's prospects took a further turn for the worse. It is always easier



SANDINISTA guerrillas behind makeshift barricade

for the United States to throw its weight around in Central America than in the Southern Cone (Chile, Argentina etc.), and Carter was obviously looking for some successes on the human rights front.

The Somoza dictatorship had become publicly indefensible, even as a bulwark against communism. The word began to go out from the White House that Somoza's days were numbered.

Few tears were shed, but when it came down to finding a suitable successor, things became more difficult.

The obvious replacement was Pedro Chamorro, whose family is as deeply entrenched in Nicaragua as Somoza's. Chamorro ran the opposition newspaper and in normal times remained just within the permitted lines of criticism.

## CRISIS

But Somoza had Chamorro assassinated last February, and this precipitated the present crisis. At the same time, Somoza's public relations men in Washington were busily, and quite successfully, persuading the White House that the only alternative to Somoza was communism.

At this point the businessmen began to make common cause with the Sandinistas, realising that Somoza would have to be physically overthrown. The

national chamber of commerce has been in the forefront of the struggle.

There have been bizarre episodes such as the arrest of the manager of the local Coca Cola bottling plant as a leader of the opposition.

## STRUGGLE

The decisive struggle will be played out after Somoza is overthrown. The longer it takes, the harder it is likely to be for the Chamber of Commerce and its allies to restore 'the system'. Much will depend on the leadership provided by the Sandinistas.

But once Somoza does fall, it is unlikely the upheaval can be confined to Nicaragua. This is likely to be Washington's greatest worry.

The importance of Central America for British socialists can be summarised as follows:

\* Popular struggles in Central America are closely linked to those of the Caribbean. Belize, still a British colony, is threatened by Guatemala. A former British dependency, the Mosquito Coast, was incorporated into Nicaragua at the beginning of this century.

\* The region is of strategic importance to United States hegemony in the Americas. Nicaragua is the best alternative location for an interoceanic Canal.

Central America and the

Caribbean countries are not particularly industrialised, but they do provide 'off shore platforms' for North American capital.

These countries' role as tax havens for banks is well known. They also have a less publicised role as hosts to certain capital intensive and often polluting industries.

\* Although the United States will probably never permit 'another Cuba' in any simple sense, there is no doubt that the example of Cuba is exercising an increasingly powerful influence in the region.

It is no accident that Cuba's closest allies in the whole Western Hemisphere are nearby Jamaica and Panama.

## MODEL

There are trends which suggest that the region as a whole could begin to move in Cuba's wake, recognising a model of development which provides at least some escape from the all-too-evident horrors of dependent capitalist development in the United States' back yard.

\* There is growing evidence that Mexico has perhaps the largest oil reserves in the Americas, comparable to those of Saudi Arabia. Mexico's oil fields stretch down into Central America.

The United States already regards this oil as part of its manifest destiny.



THE line-up in Central America last week as the Sandinistas battled with the National Guard for control of the cities

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# INTERNATIONAL

## Vorster resigns through illness

# Not as sick as the state he ruled

THE WORLD will retain a brutal memory of John Vorster, writes RICHARD CARVER. It will remember him as the butcher of Soweto, the man who sent troops into Angola, the Justice Minister responsible for the round up of African nationalists after Sharpeville in the early 1960s.

It will also remember him as the Nazi, a senior officer in a South African pro-Hitler movement who said: 'We stand for Christian Nationalism which is an ally of National Socialism. You can call this anti-democratic principle dictatorship if you wish. In Italy it is called Fascism, in Germany

National Socialism, and in South Africa Christian Nationalism.'

All these impressions are accurate, but if we remember him as a blood-crazed maniac we will miss the changes and contradictions that have emerged under Vorster's rule. South Africa is now effec-

tively a one party state. Since the black population is already excluded from the franchise, this may not seem particularly important.

But it means that the contradictions within white South Africa are increasingly expressed inside the ruling Nationalist Party. Vorster as party leader has played a vital role in balancing out the various factions.

First, he has managed to cut down the political influence of the English-speaking politi-

cians and their multinational backers. Many multinationals are opposed to aspects of apartheid for economic reasons.

For example, the migrant labour system is costly to many firms because it makes it impossible to cultivate a stable semi-skilled black labour force.

### UNDERMINED

Vorster has undermined the demagogic humanist rhetoric which such people used to cover their real motives by liberalising certain aspects of 'petty apartheid' in areas such as sport.

This has made the Afrikaner purists squeal, but Vorster has stuck to the basic principles of apartheid. It was he who presided over the 'independence' of the 'Bantustans' which were supposed to be the crowning glory of 'separate development'.

The fact that he has never wavered from the essential principles of apartheid has enabled Vorster to straddle the contradiction between liberal and conservative elements in his own party (the terms are, of course, relative).

Even when a group of hardliners broke away Vorster isolated them by some tough talking Afrikaner electioneering which kept the ultra-racist vote for the Nationalists.

The basis for Vorster's success in holding white politics together was the phenomenal boom in the South African economy in the 1960s. Between 1960 and 1970 there was a real annual growth rate of seven per cent.

### RIVAL

More specifically Vorster presided over the emergence of a larger and rejuvenated Afrikaner capital to rival the English domination of the economy.

This has been accompanied by the almost total disappearance of the Nationalist Party's white rivals and the defection of English-speaking voters to what was once the exclusive party of Afrikanerdom.

Just as there was tension with the multinationals over domestic policy, so also Vorster

faced differences with the imperialist powers over foreign policy.

Vorster soon came round to some of the neo-colonial plans of Britain and the US but this was less because he was 'responsive to world opinion' (as the political obituarists would have us believe) than the fact that Vorster was just a lot smarter than many of his colleagues. He realised that the imperialist powers had the interests of white capitalism at heart.

Just as importantly the new native South African industry was looking for a market. Black Africa was the obvious place but that required a greater sensitivity to South Africa's neighbours than there had been hitherto.

### UNEASILY

But the economic breakthrough into the African hinterland never came and the Vorster regime found itself caught uneasily between policies.

The 1973 Middle East war produced a new political situation. While an Afro-Arab bloc hardened in opposition to South Africa there developed an axis between countries like Israel, Iran, Brazil and South Africa — countries armed by the US as 'police' for their respective regions.

His final years were not

happy ones for Vorster. A nice orderly transition to neo-colonialism was one thing; the ring of liberation movements tightening their grip on southern Africa in the early 1970s was quite another.

And so the invasion of Angola was undertaken — largely against Vorster's better judgement.

### SHATTERED

The result was traumatic. The white dream of South African invincibility was shattered; South African blacks crowded around televisions in bars to watch black soldiers giving the Afrikaner a pasting.

The appalling conditions and issues which fuelled the Soweto uprising are well known — but it was Angola which set the townships alight.

The impact of these two disasters for the apartheid regime is still felt and had a significant part in Vorster's resignation.

The reason South Africa will not give an inch over Namibia is because of the black encirclement of the racist state. And Vorster's last months have seen the removal of most of the few democratic rights remaining to blacks.

If he had planned to go down in history as a man of peace and reason he has failed. It is as a crypto-Nazi that he will be remembered.



500 people, predominantly from Iran, attended a meeting called by the Campaign Against Repression in Iran to oppose martial law in Iran and demand that Britain stop supplying arms to the Shah's regime. There were speakers from a broad range of organisations including Tariq Ali [IMG], Steve Jeffries [SWP] and Irene Brennan [CPGB]. The latter announced that the CP were considering affiliation to CARI.

After the meeting there was a torchlight procession through the West End to 10 Downing Street [above]. The marchers pledged to make the 14 October national demo on Iran a big success.

## OPEN FORUM

# Free Astrid Proll

THE 'FRIENDS OF ASTRID PROLL' are in fear of her life, knowing that eight political prisoners in West Germany have already been murdered in the last two years by the 'democratic' West German state and that the British state will be complicit in carrying out their demands for extradition.

She faces a return to the conditions that nearly destroyed her.

She was arrested in May 1971 when she underwent 4½ months sensory deprivation in the 'Silent Wing' in Koeln-Ossendorf.

She was transferred to Frankfurt/Preungesheim in September 1973 for her trial, which dragged on for four months, until on medical advice she was found unable to stand trial and she was put on bail for reconvalescence with daily reporting to the police. In all she was in solitary confinement for two years.

These conditions produce complete loss of identity, overwhelming sensations of pain and in Astrid Proll, complete breakdown of her circulatory system, which led to her hospitalisation.

### ACTIVE

Despite her problems here in overcoming her ordeal, and the necessity of hiding her identity and her constant fear of discovery, she has always been active, deeply involved with struggles at work over sex discrimination while a fitter's mate at Lesney's toy factory and strongly committed to her work as an instructor at the car-mechanics workshop for young unemployed.

The press has attempted to do what it usually does to women, which is to trivialise and delve into personal details rather than discuss the real implications of her arrest.

But the commitment and support from her workmates who have all, including the

manager, made public statements saying she should be freed, have made public some of the reality of Astrid Proll.

This is the way that she relates to people; her warmth, supportiveness and directness have won widespread friendship. She is well-known within the women's movement and has set up a women's car-mechanics course.

She also looked after her friends' children, to free them for their own activities and has close relationships with these children.

### POSITIVE

This is typical of her positiveness in encouraging people to do things they previously hadn't thought possible — her great strength is that she can bring out such positiveness in other people.

Ulrike Meinhof described her own sudden return to the isolation cell like this:

'The shock is as if a sheet of iron crashed down onto one's head...constant roaring in the ears...the feeling that one is moving in slow motion... understanding is impossible between prisoners and people who do not know what isolation from noise is... obviously when one is there one would rather be dead.'

This is what Astrid Proll faces.

The Friends of Astrid Proll are fighting for her life here. The campaign has to be on legal and humanitarian grounds to win as broad support as possible, because we are confronting the violence of the repressive state in Germany and Britain's complicity with it, through its agreement under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Astrid needs support in the form of letters to the press, donations, publicity. Write to FAP, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1 and organise meetings in your own area.

## The SOF Bug Bites Early!



### Mommy, can I go to Rhodesia?

THE young gent who is so keen on helping the white racists is reading an issue of Soldier of Fortune magazine. The back page is an advert for mercenaries in the Rhodesian army.

But it isn't just the lunatic fringe who encourage the racists and 'soldiers of fortune'. The Wild Geese, a film which glorifies the role of white mercenaries in Africa, will probably be showing at



### I CAN?

your local cinema over the next couple of weeks.

Contact your local anti-racist committee or Anti Nazi League and get them to follow the example of Islington Campaign Against Racism and Fascism, who last Saturday organised a 70-strong picket of the film.



# IRELAND

## Prisoner's dramatic account

# Life in H Block

THE LABOUR Government does its best to hush up what is happening to the Irish prisoners in H Block, Long Kesh.

This is understandable. All the talk from Callaghan and Owen about 'human rights' is so much cant in the light of the horrific treatment inflicted on these prisoners.

Two months ago, in our issue of 6 July, we printed a letter from inside H Block which had been sent on to us by a supporter. Here we publish a further letter from the same prisoner, written on 25 August.

It's early morn. The screws just took out my mattress and blankets for the beginning of another three days c.c. (cell confinement).

This means three days without bed, blankets, association with other people, no shop, papers, TV, radio or the wearing of leisure clothing, etc., etc. This is a real farce since I've been on one

know actually what was happening to us here in the H Blocks and demand our political status.

Since then our deprivation has gone beyond all imagination. The one letter per month which was permitted now never

reaches us or, if it does, its major contents are missing.

The only other thing we had were toothbrushes and sometimes toothpaste. Well they took those last week, or the week before.

Keeping check on time is difficult for men who have nothing but the light which comes through a window to say if it is dark or bright, morning or night.

I am a lucky man in that I have accumulated some sheets of toilet paper on which to write and this makeshift pen held in one piece with pieces of the blanket. These are luxuries, believe me.

I lie here in what can only be described as a pit. The ceiling, floor, walls and door are covered with waste food, rotted and covered black, brown, grey, all dark and grimy.

There is an army of insects, maggots, flies of different breeds and colours. Big and small, noisy blue bottles to quiet jumpy ones which bounce around like lightning. There are so many I just don't kill them any longer.

To be honest, and this should sound funny, and it would be if it wasn't true, if you kill one there are hundreds at the wake, only they eat the remains.

I awoke the other morning to find about twenty or more maggots on my blanket. I was too revolted or shocked to panic, I merely shook them off and tried to sleep again.

### NUMB

I believe my (when I keep referring to myself, I really mean everybody because I am one man and there are over 300 of us I believe) senses are strained beyond their normal endurance.

When the noise here gets so loud that it irritates and aggravates I switch off, or rather I'm numb to it.

Then the opposite. The silence can be even louder, if you can understand, and racks the heart to a panic within, leaving one aggressive or scared stiff.

The stench of urine, excrement, unwashed bodies and waste food leaves one breathless at times. Other times just sick and then you are unable to eat the slop they call food.

They are really trying to crush us to conform. I've heard the Governor and screws come and tell my faceless friends that a relative — father, brother or someone else — has died and again later heard them return to say that the request for parole to attend the funeral was denied because you won't conform.

I saw the bodies of two other friends (through a crack in the side of my door) lying on the ground surrounded by no less than seven or eight screws all kicking and beating them with

batons. I heard my friends scream with panic. It came as no surprise when I heard one spent a period in hospital.

And strange as it may seem, along with the great fear I felt inside, I also died a thousand times because I was unable to share their burden.

Understand, these are friends I've met only here and in strife. Who I've spoken with through the hollow pipes which run through every cell at the dark of night when the screws had left.

### SHARED

We've shared visions, dreams, sadness and joy; taught each other our native tongue long since stolen and conditioned out of our very history books by that same enemy who once again tries to crush us. So when they hurt one, they hurt all.

I recall the night I was awakened by the force of a power hose on my body and I stood naked in my cell. Blankets and mattress all ankle deep in water. There is nothing else to wet. We have no beds, tables, lockers or such things.

I stood for some time listening to the shocked anguish of my comrades as they received the same treatment. I just started laughing, it was either that or cry my eyes out.

Then I started singing, not as a sign of bravado, I think the singing was my nerves and my mind screaming for survival against the madness and brutality of the system.

This prison is just part of the

whole combine geared to kill, crush and maim. The system we fight in here wants one thing, our total subservience; in short my comrades and I to deny our birthright, our heritage, our future.

They will never beat us and again that's not bravado. I state a fact. We are political prisoners captured while fighting against British imperialism.

On our streets there is an occupying army supported by their lackeys, the RUC, SB, UDR, courts (special), laws (special), all geared for a special situation.

We here in the H Blocks are the end results. Political prisoners. The facts speak for themselves. While you read this our struggle continues.

Show this to someone. Ask them to tell their neighbours what is happening here. What is being done to us. Tell the people in your country their government does it in their name.

### CONDONES

Their silence supports it, condones it. Ask them to speak out, protest, write about it, do something on our behalf.

I just don't have enough room or paper to tell you half the things that happen here. I just quickly read over what I've written. I don't believe those things myself yet they happen every day and will continue.

This is the 25th and two comrades out of the other wing got beaten up and taken to the punishment cells, one with a badly cut eye, both bruised.

The struggle continues.



continuous c.c. for almost or over 14 months. The first man on the blanket enters his two year mark next month.

So in actual fact my comrades and I have had nothing in all this time, except a blanket which keeps us from being completely naked.

I know voices of men yet I've never seen their faces. We don't know what it feels like to get exercise outside these pits we now exist in, or feel the sun or wind on our faces.

Why this deprivation and extreme inhumanity? Because the British Government has decided to criminalise a struggle which has been waged for over five hundred years.

Ulsterisation — the localisation and criminalisation of the Republican Movement — is now Britain's last attempt to crush the socialist-republican struggle in Ireland.

The stepping up of our prison struggle five months ago was an attempt to let the people

# Bring Mason's war home, 7 Oct

THE FIRST weekend in October marks the tenth anniversary of the birth of the latest phase of the Irish Revolution, writes AILEAN O'CALLAGHAN.

On 5 October 1968 the Royal Ulster Constabulary viciously attacked a small civil rights march in Derry. Their actions, seen on TV screens the world over, laid bare the essential repressive nature of the Six County state. Virtually overnight a mass movement was built.

Ten years later, building solidarity with the Irish people's fight is a more urgent task than ever, especially given the struggle for POW status in the H Blocks and elsewhere.

It is to take the solidarity movement another step forward that the United Troops Out Movement has called a demonstration in Barnsley on 7 October.

Barnsley is the constituency of Roy Mason, the Minister for

Northern Ireland. The march will assemble at Rock Street (off Sackville Street) at 12.30 and will pass the Yorkshire Region headquarters of the National Union of Mineworkers.

The importance of this is that the NUM continues to sponsor Roy Mason as an MP. One of the slogans that Socialist Unity and other supporters of the UTOM will raise is for the union to break its links with the man who presides over Britain's torture policy in Ireland.

### DEMANDS

In doing so they will be echoing demands already raised by trade union branches in the Six Counties in the wake of the controversy surrounding Willie Gallagher's imprisonment.

Willie, it will be remembered, was the subject of a recent TV play, 'The Legion Hall Bombing', a transcript of his trial which exposed the

mockery of the 'no-jury' Diplock Courts.

Willie's father, Brendan Gallagher, is expected to speak at the Barnsley demonstration in support not only of his son but of all the victims of Mason's prison camp system.

An impressive turn-out in Barnsley could give a big impetus for an ongoing campaign in the NUM and the rest of the British labour movement to dissociate the mass organisations of the working class from Mason's War.

Whether or not such a campaign could achieve big successes in the short term, it would at least begin to group some industrial militants on the side of the Irish people. As a first step to building a mass 'troops out' current in the unions this would already be a major achievement.

And there couldn't be a more fitting tribute to the decade of anti-imperialist struggle waged by the Irish people.

*socialist*

## REVIEW

*In the October issue:*  
**Eamonn McCann**  
 on the Ten Years of Struggle in Northern Ireland

British Leyland can I survive?  
**CP/SWP stewards debate**  
 Iran background: Steve Godch on theatre,  
 Terrorism ...

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# SURPLUS VALUE

WORDS LIKE 'silicon chip', 'microcircuit', and 'integrated circuit' are now in everyday use. What do they mean?

In an integrated circuit, a number of transistors, anything from three to 100,000, are made on a single piece of silicon between a twentieth and a quarter of an inch square and less than a hundredth thick (a 'silicon chip'), together with other associated components. Even in their packages they are still quite small.

The first ones, made in the early 1960s for use in nuclear missiles, were very simple and very expensive. Cost is no object for the warmongers!

Microcircuits soon became cheaper and more sophisticated. By 1970 the simpler devices were cheap enough for computers to be mainly built of them. They cost less, were smaller, and were cheaper to assemble than circuits made of separate parts.

At the same time, more complex circuits containing a few thousand transistors were appearing. The breakthrough was coming.

It happened on several fronts. Perhaps the most visible is the pocket electronic calculator.

## COMPLEX

This now common tool was made possible by the development of chips so complex that a single one could do the job (several thousand transistors even for the simplest calculator), and by their production cheaply enough for people to afford them.

Since then, the technology has so advanced that some 'scientific' calculators are like small computers.

Different and much simpler chips found their way into the home in televisions and radios. They don't make much difference to the television itself. It performs a little better and breaks down less often. The main impact is in making them.

They use fewer parts and are a lot easier to adjust. Consequently they can be made with fewer workers, at less cost. This has been happening since televisions were first developed.

An ordinary black and white set now costs about the same in money terms as in the early 1950s. It is a much better set. The value of money has fallen like a stone since then, so it is much cheaper in real terms.

The cost of a computer of given power is falling in money terms. This is due to continuing improvements in integrated circuits. The designers cram more and more onto a single silicon chip (100,000 transistors in some types). As they learn more about making them, the price falls.

Recently another development has been in the headlines: the so-called 'microprocessor'. This is the 'central processor' of a small computer on a single silicon chip. In some simpler types, memory and input-output parts are included too.

The central processor is the part of the computer that reads and obeys the programme. They are not very powerful computers, ranging from the equivalent of a 'scientific' pocket calculator to the smallest minicomputers. The simplest ones are very cheap, though.

By themselves they do not achieve much. The more powerful ones can be

used, with large numbers of other chips and parts, to make small minicomputers more cheaply. More interesting is the possibility of building these devices, especially the simple, cheap ones, into machines previously too expensive to benefit from computerisation.

Some microprocessors are cheap enough to put in washing machines, never mind lathes and milling machines. The recent publicity comes from the fact that this has actually happened.

It is at this humble level that the impact of the microprocessor will probably be greatest. After all, the means to automate a production line have been available for a long time.

Microprocessors will not make possible anything that minicomputers could not do five years ago, though they may make it cheaper. But at the cheaper end, the impact will be much greater.

Building a £3,000 minicomputer into a single machine was usually too expensive. Building in a microprocessor is often well worth the cost.

In the meantime, simpler types of integrated circuit have become so cheap that the humblest domestic or industrial machine may contain a few.

The industrial impact of silicon chips is mainly felt in two ways. First, as in televisions or in electronic telephone exchanges, they are used in the product.

This is then simpler, quicker, and cheaper to make and goes wrong less often. This means that fewer working hours are needed to make them and to keep them working.

Secondly, they may make economic the automation of tasks formerly requiring direct human supervision of effort. Again the effect is to reduce the number of working hours required.

## AUTOMATION

This is not new, of course. Automation came before electronics, never mind silicon chips. Both processes have been occurring on a large scale for a long time. The pace of development of modern technology ensures that they will continue for a long time yet.

Basically these improvements are a social advance. They reduce the amount of human labour required to achieve a certain standard of living within the community as a whole, or they improve that standard of living with no extra effort.

In other words, they could lead to a shorter working day and a better life for all. Karl Marx long ago pointed out the necessity for the highest development of the forces of production in achieving socialism.

Indeed, when the author was young, lots of books were written for children with glowing accounts of how automation would soon so reduce the need for actual human labour that people would have difficulty in occupying their extra leisure time.

Even leaving aside the exaggerations, the reality of today bears little resemblance to this picture. The standard working week is still 40 hours. Workers still come home worn out by back-breaking manual labour.

# Chips with everything

**JAMES BLANCO WHITE** looks at the possibilities opened up for us by the revolution in electronics — and what is actually happening instead.



There are also 1½ million people on the dole.

Newspaper headlines about automation are more likely to say 'thousands made redundant' than 'working week cut'. So what went wrong?

Britain today is a capitalist society. The motor force of the economy is profit. If automation is introduced into a factory, it costs the owners

money. In return, they want more profit.

Having introduced new methods, the factory owners will not wish to cut the working week to match. That would give to the workers the benefit of the owners' expenditure, which would contravene the nature of a property owning society. Rather, they want to keep the amount of work done by each employee the same.

The improved method increases the productivity of that employee, so part of the workforce becomes surplus to requirements and is sacked (or used to make more of the product, perhaps making other workers elsewhere redundant).

Thus the factory owners make more profit, since the cost of labour per item produced has fallen.

## BENEFIT

In real life, competition in the market place usually means that some of the benefit has to be passed on to the consumer (perhaps also a worker) and possible 'labour relations difficulties' may mean passing part of the benefit to the factory's workers.

The factory's owners always keep a large chunk for themselves, though. That is the whole point of their investment.

All this also has another consequence. As long as this state of affairs continues, the individual worker has an interest in preventing such advances in technology. As bad as 40 hours hard labour may be, it is much better than unemployment with lots of leisure... and no way to enjoy it.

This problem is inherent in the unplanned economic anarchy of capitalism. As long as considerations of profit rule over all else, the benefits of improved productivity of human labour will not be enjoyed in our society.

Only in a planned economy can technology yield its full fruit for the benefit of humanity.

That lies in the future, unfortunately. What can workers do now if faced with automation or with new products that take less work to make? The most likely answer is to demand a shorter working week so as to preserve jobs.

This is not an easy demand to win. Management will fight very hard against it. Not only does it give the benefits of the improvements to the workforce, it may also leave the factory uncompetitive in the market place against others which did not concede this demand.

The alternative would be to demand that the reduced costs be passed on in reduced prices, and that the surplus labour be redeployed to make other products (to mop up the extra spending power due to the reduced price).

But this is apt to lead to hidden redundancies elsewhere, and the redeployment is not often possible.

# WHAT'S LEFT

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**WIN A £450 HI-FI** Coventry Anti-Racist Carnival must sell 15,000 tickets to successfully fight the Tory council and hold a carnival in Coventry next year. Tickets 50p per book. cheques/postal orders with SEA to — Coventry Carnival Against Racism, c/o Wage Co-operative, 13 High St. Coventry, W. Midlands. Open 24 Oct. Licensed under 1978 Lotteries and Amusements Act.

**CONNECTIONS: Britain and Southern Africa** — a one day conference for trade unionist and youth. Sponsored by the North West TUC. Chaired by Colin Barnett (Sec NWUOC). Workshops on: action in the workplace, action in the Labour Party, an ABC of Southern Africa. Swets and youth, women under apartheid, the media. Venue: Abraham Moss Centre, Crumpton, Manchester. Sat 11 Nov. 10-5pm. Details of venue and conference from Manchester Anti-Apartheid, 58 Tinsell Ave, Manchester M20 2ND. Tel: 061-434 7849.

**RED COLLAR:** ASTMS Rank and File paper now available from EOA Books, 24 Cowley Rd, Oxford, price 10p. Rank and File conference on ASTMS Rules Revision at Central London Poly on 21 Oct. Details from above address.

**PICKET GARNERS:** Mass pickets every day, noon to 3pm and 5.30 to 11 pm at 399 Oxford St., London W1 (opp. Selfridges); 243 Oxford St. (Oxford Circus); 40-41 Haymarket; 56 Whitcombe St. (Leicester Sq.). Mass picket every Saturday at noon, 399 Oxford St. Donations urgently needed as strike pay is only £8. All donations to Garners Strike Fund, c/o TGWU, Rm 54, 12-13 Henrietta St., London WC2 0JZ.

**PEOPLES NEWS SERVICE:** Special meeting to introduce persons interested in producing the non-sectarian bulletin. The imminent departure of two stalwarts makes our position critical. Tues 3 Oct, 182 Upper St. London N1.

**SOCIALIST SCOTLAND:** a new Marxist journal supporting Scottish Workers Republic — out now. Articles include Referendum, MacLean, etc. Send £2 for 5 issues or 40p single issue. Socialist Scotland, 45 Niddry St, Edinburgh.

**SABOUE COMRADE** from the Fourth International desperately looking for accommodation in London. Any information to be phoned to Jean Chénal at The Other Bookshop. Tel: 01-225 6271.

**REVOLUTIONARY Communist Tendency public meeting:** The Labour Movement and Racism, speaker Frank Richards. Tues 3 Oct, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Holborn Tube, adm. 20p.

**WOMEN'S STUDIES CLASSES '78-'79:** Women in Society: Past and Present — Morley College, Waterloo, at 6.30pm Mon, beginning 18 Sept. Tutor: Saily Alexander and Barbara Taylor. Feminism in 18th and 20th Century Britain — 7pm Tues beginning 19 Sept. For location ring 828-3735. Tutor: Saily Alexander and Barbara Taylor. Sponsored by WEA. Marxism and Feminism: the theory and practice of the modern women's movement. 6.30pm Thursdays beginning 21 Sept (time might be altered to 7pm after first meeting) at S. London Women's Centre, 45 North St, London SW4. Tutor: Barbara Taylor. Sponsored by WEA. All classes run for 24 weeks.

**TOWER HAMLETS Socialist Unity** is holding a media/jumble sale on 8 Oct. We urgently need books, records, posters, tapes etc. Bring anything suitable to The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1 or phone 247 2717 for arrangement to collect.

**LATIN AMERICA:** 1½ day school now changed to Sun. 8 Oct. Open to IMG members and close contacts. Topic: 'The crisis of Castroism, with special reference to Cuba and Argentina. Cost £1 plus pooled fare. Postage reduction for weeklies. Details from local IMG or LAF. PO Box 56, London N7 2XP.

**HARROW MULTI-RACIAL carnival:** Sun. 1 Oct. 1.30pm at Huddstone Manor Park. With: Misty, Isolator, Innocent Exposure, Indian dancers, sideshows, speakers and food. March to park from Harrow Civic Centre. Assemble 12 noon.

**SELF-DETERMINATION FOR IRELAND** conference, Sat. 30 Sept at Swansea University. The aim is to plan a series of actions in South Wales for the winter months. Details of agenda, transport, arrangements from Irish Conference Organising Committee, c/o 1-4-8 Bookshop, Salisbury Road, Cathays, Cardiff.

**RED LADDER** is a collectively run, socialist theatre company based in Leeds, and tours regionally in non-theatrical venues. We require female and male performers/musicians a director and a stage manager/technician to start in January. Long term commitment preferred but short term contracts considered. Write giving full details of police and work experience and reasons for wanting the job preferences helpful. Apply to: Red Ladder Theatre, Cebden Ave, Leeds 12 LS 12 5PB. Tel Leeds 792225/9. Closing date 30 Oct.

**OUT NOW!** Workers Power pamphlet on Marxism and the trade unions. Articles on the Minority Movement, the rank and file today, RLU issues, Marxist on the trade unions. Bsp inc postage from BCM, Box 7750, London WC1 0JF from left bookshops.

**ONE-DAY FESTIVAL** of working class writing and publishing. Sat 30 Sept. 1.30pm to 10pm at the Stephenson Rooms, Easton Station. Readings and performances, bookstalls from all over the country. Licensed bar, Adm. free. Organised by the Federation of Writers and Community Publishers. All welcome.

**HANDS OFF IRELAND** No 5 now out. Articles include 1988-75 by A Greene; Who's Tribunal? by Kevin Goller; British Terror, by Ballas; RAC and other articles on the British Life for All Campaign, the International Tribunal on Britain's presence on Ireland, Havana World Youth Festival and James Connolly. Plus reports on PAC 8 July demonstration and trade union activity on Ireland. Special issue 24 pages for 25p (plus 10p p&cc) from RCG Publications Ltd (8C), 49 Ralston Rd, London SE24 0LN.

**THE NATIONAL ABORTION CAMPAIGN** needs a new office worker to coordinate the campaign's work, run the office, organise activities, demos, etc. Office experience useful, commitment to women's liberation essential. Hours: 10-5 with some evening and weekend meetings. Salary approx £180 per month after tax. Please apply in writing giving previous work and other experience to: NAC, 30 Camden Rd, London NW1.

**PADDINGTON Festival Against Racism:** Sat 30 Sept. 12 noon-8pm and 8pm-1am. Rock Against Racism with Mighty Shades, Innosents, Maybays, disco, bar, etc. Day's events: food, stalls, video, theatre, film, children's events, speakers on SUSA Caribbean solidarity, Bronx Lane, Irish women — adm free. A. at the Factory, Chippenham Mews, London W9 (Westbourne Park and Warwick Ave tube). Details from PDAR, 510 Harrow Rd, W9, Tel 369 7437.

**NOTTINGHAM Rock Against Racism:** Gaffs, the Tourists, Trevor Dann, Slip Hazard and the Billzards at the Sandipier on Mon 2 Oct, 8pm-2am. Adm 75p in advance. £1 on door.

**CHARTER NEWSPAPER:** open planning meeting to prepare the launch of the Working Women's Charter Campaign new paper for the unions. Sat 14 Oct. 1pm, Transport House, Marshfield St, Sheffield. Further info: Felicity Jones, tel. Sheffield 377421.



# Missing the point

I FIND John Ross's reply to Steve Skaith (14 September) rather strange. Surely it misses the point to quote, in reply to the question 'can't Trotskyists make mistakes?', an example — black nationalism in the USA — where Trotsky proved to be right! Rather, shouldn't the reply have been 'yes, of course'; Trotskyists, like anyone else, can be wrong.

Examples of this, which I suspect Steve Skaith had in mind, would be the overestimation of the revolutionary situation in post-war Europe, the tactics of the Trotskyists in Italy since 1968, or even the political mistakes made by the IMG! The point is, however, that none of these errors, which can be understood and corrected, lead to the rejection of revolutionary Marxism, Trotskyism, as the best known and historically proven guide to revolutionary political action.

But the tortuous history of the Fourth International in Britain, and the lack of continuity of the IMG, give this problem greater weight here. Might this not show that the Trotskyists still have a lot to learn, even perhaps from the most 'backward' working class and revolutionary movements and traditions, and that questions of tactics and organisation are also important, as well as having the correct programme?

JOHN STRAUTHER [Liverpool]

# Consistency in method

I WAS heartened to read Carl Gardner's letter 'The Ghosts of the Dead' (14 September). Itself a response to John Ross's article 'Crisis of the Far Left in Europe'. It raises a number of important questions that need to be discussed.

Carl takes John to task for uncritically counterposing the 'classical Marxism' of the Fourth International to the political middle put forward by the European 'far left' of the '60s. John is obviously right that, against these other currents, the FI's direct and organic links with the revolutionary practice of Lenin and Trotsky enable us to base ourselves on vital gains in revolutionary theory and strategy, like Lenin's 'theory of organisation'.

The tactics of the united front and transitional demands, for example, are based on the Leninist understanding that to gain the active support of the working class is fundamentally a political task, of winning them decisively away from the ideas they 'spontaneously' arrive at in capitalist society (which take many political forms, including trade unionism and reformism).

We in the FI, however, cannot simply rest on our laurels. We



wrongly believed that a mass working class fightback was on the agenda in 1974-8. Why? — because the Leninist method embodied in the Transitional Programme isn't consistently carried over into all aspects of our work.

This can lead us, as Carl points out, to underestimate the political nature of the relationship between the working class and its reformist leadership, and is expressed occasionally as a species of 'economic determinism' (the worse it gets the better it gets).

Focusing the attention of the working class on 'politics at the level of the state' is absolutely no guarantee of avoiding these errors. To think this is to confuse form with content. It's vital that we recognise precisely what it is we are defending when we defend the Transitional Programme, so that we can develop and apply it to all aspects of our work. This comrade Ross's article failed to do.

LEWIS EMERY [Bristol]

# Shallow sexism

TARIQ ALI is entertaining, if shallow, in his article slamming non-aligned socialists (7 September). Much of his analysis is rightly the subject of debate and anguish for those of us who feel unable at the moment to join a left group.

Ali accuses some non-aligned socialists of being deaf, however, while appearing himself to be blind and oblivious to the struggles of feminism. In a sweeping generalisation, he dismisses the women's movement as a 'cultural' grouping, and the whole article gives off a feeling of unconsciousness, particularly towards its own sexism.

The analysis unforgivably neglects the existence of an independent socialist feminist current. Thousands of socialist women have looked at the present state of affairs on the left and have made a conscious choice to be non-aligned and to be part of this current. In the last year, particularly, socialist feminism has surged forward.

Ali doesn't even mention this phenomenon, nor the reasons why it came into being, in his examination of the motives of non-aligned people. Presumably the non-aligned he is thinking of are mainly men.

GILL HAGUE [Islington]

# Cultural terrorism

IN AN excellent review, Paul Tickell (24 August) explains why and how Allen Jones's graphic works are 'sexist and voyeurist'. He demonstrates how the work fails to provide a coherent critique of the images of female sexuality that are its subject matter.

He shows how the refusal to provide a context ('refuge from history in aestheticism') underpins that failure. He also sees some value in the 'feeble' comment the work makes on the connection between commodity fetishism and women as sex objects.

For this Ann Bond (7 September) calls him 'liberal' and says he sides with 'sexism' and 'art for art's sake'. The Bash Street Kids (same issue) say he accepts 'aestheticism' and, worse, that we should support feminists who 'tear the lithographs to shreds'.

Trotsky, in 1924, defending the revolution on all fronts, is more tentative than these feminists in their assault on the ICA. He too attacked 'liberal' laissez faire in the arts and asserted the need to repress 'poisonous tendencies'. But he was daunted by the difficulty of drawing the line.

The test? 'Can it be reconciled with materialism or can it not? Has this question been decided? Where and when and by whom?'

No such worries trouble the cultural terrorists abroad in England in 1978. But mounting attacks (by the state or others) on political rights and freedoms in bourgeois society is an even more perilous activity than it was in Bolshevik Russia.

Not only may the same attitude be made on the working class (Tameside ban), but when they take the form of the spontaneous militancy espoused by your correspondents they are sure to distract from and substitute for political (as opposed to physical) struggle.

In the face of the organised, physical assault on the working class that is forming the position of 'no platform' has in some circumstances been legitimately raised. And this has been used by many on the left as an excuse to ignore the political struggle against reformism and racism.

Should we extend this tactic and, worse, the accompanying errors to sexism and the arts? No. What the working class require is not the passionate 'expressions of indigna-

tion' on picket lines which the Kids suggest, still less the destruction of offending works, still less the verbal equivalent of foot-stamping from Ann Bond.

They require what Paul Tickell provides, a historical materialist critique of works of art. It is his review which takes forward the struggle against sexism.

JOHN FITZPATRICK (London SW9)

# Appeal for Turkey

I AM writing to you on behalf of Emekci-Der (Tum Emekciler Birlesme Ve Dayanisma Dernegi), which stands for 'Working People's Association for Unity and Solidarity', and which is based in Istanbul, Turkey.

First I would like to say something about the situation in Turkey. As you no doubt know, Turkey is a country made up of two peoples, the Kurds and the Turks, both of whom have been suffering for some time from exploitation and backwardness under the yoke of imperialism and oligarchic dictatorship.

Also, since it is an Islamic society, women in particular have suffered extra discrimination in all facets of their lives. One important section of Emekci-Der is the Emekci-Der Women's Secretariat, which works among working class women. It is trying to encourage women to throw off their old chains, to become aware of the importance of what is happening, and to join the anti-fascist struggle.

As part of this work, in a few months time we will organise a photograph and poster exhibition entitled 'Women and Fascism', and we need the help of our European sisters. Mainly we need photographs of fascist tortures, massacres and barbarities, from both history and the present day. Also photographs and posters of women's demonstrations, or of women struggling against fascism.

We ask you if it is possible for you to send us these types of photographs, or brochures and magazines which include them. Otherwise, perhaps you could recommend to us other organisations which might be able to help us with material of this nature.

Although we cannot offer to pay you in money for these documents, we

can send you copies of our publications when they are ready, or other information about the situation in Turkey if you are interested. Our address is: Emekci-Der, PK 324, Osmanbey, Istanbul, Turkey.

IRFAN CURE [Secretary, Emekci-Der]

# Import controls — you're wrong

YOUR STAND on the question of import controls (7 September) is incorrect. You advance an argument against import controls that does not differ from that of any Tory or Liberal supporter of free trade.

Cheap imports are, naturally, favoured by the purely trading capitalists, and by those capitalists whose products are not directly affected and who see such imports as useful in that they reduce the workers' cost of living, that is, help to keep wages low.

Such 'unfair' competition is opposed by capitalists in the same line of production and by some trade union bureaucrats; but one cannot just shut one's eyes to the opposition from a very large number of workers.

To your argument that quotas only export unemployment, they will give the reply that cheap imports 'only' import unemployment. On the other hand the exporting capitalists oppose quotas, arguing — if we don't buy abroad how can we sell abroad?

It is the task of socialists to make workers understand that such insoluble contradictions are inherent in the capitalist mode of production. Socialists do not stand on the ground of capitalist economics — quotas or no quotas, tariffs or no tariffs, etc. The workers demand a positive alternative.

It is no help to them to say, as you do: 'import controls ... cannot form any part of a socialist alternative to the crisis'. One has to think and argue from the standpoint — what would a truly revolutionary workers government do? And one of its most immediate tasks would be to control all foreign trade.

HUGO DEWAR (Redhill)

# SOCIALIST CHALLENGE EVENTS

## NORTH WEST

**WARRINGTON** Socialist Challenge group meets regularly. Ring Manchester Socialist Challenge offices for details. 061-236 2352.

**GREATER MANCHESTER** Socialist Challenge. School students who support the paper and would like to get involved in anti-fascist activity, please contact Chris (273 5947, day) or Steve (226 4287, evening), or write to 43 Manchester SC Centre, 14 Piccadilly.

**SALFORD** Socialist Challenge supporters can be contacted at the Manchester Socialist Challenge offices. Tel 061-238 2352 or, by writing to Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre, c/o 14 Piccadilly, Manchester with a view to forming a Salford Socialist Challenge group.

**LEIGH** Socialist Challenge group will be holding regular meetings shortly. For details ring Roy on Atherton 85 2830.

## SOUTH MANCHESTER

Socialist Challenge group meets every other Thursday at the Albert Inn off Wilmslow Rd. Help sell Socialist Challenge between 11.30am and 1pm at Mees Side shopping centre or Longsight Market, Dickenson Rd.

## NORTH EAST

**NEWCASTLE** Socialist Challenge local supporters are active! If you want to join them, phone Pete on 105321 2957.

**DURHAM** Socialist Challenge Supporters Group. For details contact: Dave Brown, 2 Planter Cottages, Low Pitlington, Durham.

**MIDDLESBROUGH** Socialist Challenge sales on Saturdays outside entrance to Cleve and Centre 1000 Woolworths, 11am to 1pm. Socialist Challenge is also available from Harrison's (newsagent) in Linthorpe Road.

## LONDON

**HARROW** Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly. Details from Box 50, London N1 2XP.

**WALTHAM FOREST** paper sales every

Saturday, 11am-noon outside the post office, Hoe St, Walthamstow, London E17.

**TOWER HAMLETS** Socialist Challenge Group meets fortnightly. For details phone 247 2717. Next meeting: 'Organising a fightback in the public sector', Thurs 28 Sept, 7.30pm, at Oxford House, Derbyshire St, E2. All Socialist Challenge supporters welcome.

**S.W. LONDON** Socialist Challenge Group meets fortnightly at 8am at Clapham Library, Clapham Common North Side (Clapham Common tube). Next meeting: Wed, 4 Oct: 'Revolutionaries and the Labour Party' (ISGLV speaker).

**HACKNEY** Socialist Challenge Group meets every other Wednesday at 7.30pm in the Billman's pub, Mare Street. Next meeting 4 October.

**WALTHAMSTOW** readers can buy Socialist Challenge regularly from Sheridan's Newsagents, 50 Hoe St, E17.

**LEYTON** readers can buy Socialist Challenge from Patel's Newsagents, 328 Lea Bridge Road, E10.

**LONDON** fund-raising film-show 'Europe After the Rain'. Mick Gold's highly praised documentary on the Socialist movement. Friday 12 Oct, 7.30pm, at London Film Makers Co-op, 42 Gloucester Ave, NW1. Adm. 85p (50p claimants).

**SOUTH WEST** **SOUTHAMPTON** Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday from 10am-1pm above bar, Post Office, Bargate.

**PORTSMOUTH** Socialist Challenge sales, Saturdays, 11.30am-1pm, Commercial Road Precinct.

**BRISTOL** Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday, 11am-1pm in the 'Hole in the Ground', Haymarket.

**YORKSHIRE** **DEWSBURY** Socialist Challenge sales regularly on Saturday mornings in Westgate at the Nat. Westminster Bank, 12.30-2.00pm.

**HUDDERSFIELD** Socialist Challenge meeting, Wed, 4 Oct, 12.30pm, the Polytechnic, Steve Paine on 'What is the SSA'.

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

**YORK** Socialist Challenge is on sale at the York Community Bookshop, 73 Walmgate or from sellers on Thursdays (12.30-1.45) at York University, Vanbrugh College; Saturdays (11.30-3.30) at Cony Street.

## MIDLANDS

For details of activities of local supporters throughout the Midlands contact the Socialist Challenge Centre, 78b Digbeth High Street, Birmingham (021) 643 9208.

**LEAMINGTON** Socialist Challenge Group public meeting. The coming election and the British left. Speaker Tarik Ali. Tues, 10 October, 8pm, Bath Place Community Centre, Leamington.

## SOUTH EAST

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

**COLCHESTER** Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly. For details phone Steve on Wivenhoe 2849.

**BATH** Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday 2pm-3.30pm outside Mac-Fisher's, Ring Bath 2026 or 2097 for further details of activities.

**ISLE OF WIGHT** readers can buy Socialist Challenge from the Co Shop, 44 Union St., Ryde.

## SCOTLAND

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

**EDINBURGH** Socialist Challenge supporters group meets regularly. Phone George at 031-346 0468 for details.

**DUNDEE** Information about Socialist Challenge activities from 84 Queen St, Glasgow. Join in SC sales outside Boots (corner of Reform St) each Saturday, 11am-2pm.



# UNDER REVIEW

Playwright Edward Bond explains why:

# I didn't write 'The Woman' from a woman's 'point of view'

I DID NOT write *The Woman* from a woman's 'point of view'. I think the underprivileged should speak for themselves.

That's one reason why I've always supported the playwrights' ban on South Africa. Black men do not need white men to teach them how to speak.

And women don't need men to do that for them either.

The West has always tried to keep women in intellectual purdah. How little, for example, have women been free to contribute to written culture? In the last few centuries, a few novels and poems.

Yet it is written culture which by feeding on its past is able to evolve into the elaborate interpretation of human beings' relationship to the world which is essential to any social order.

This is the domain of ideas and analysis from which women have been excluded. Instead they have been relegated to 'sensitivity' and 'intuition'.

They have related to the world only through a man-written culture. Only when they speak and write for themselves will they break out of this intellectual purdah.

## NORMAL

Instead of writing from the woman's 'point of view', I tried to treat the women in the play as normal human beings. I showed them capable of facing, understanding and resolving the same moral and political problems as men.

People reach maturity, become more than children or serfs, only by understanding and facing moral problems. Marx pointed out that morality is not an abstraction from

history but works on a class basis. He also points out that moral conduct necessitates action.

It is this action that has created a crisis in the class-based, christian-humanism in which most Westerners were brought up. Morality is no longer a matter of religion but of politics.

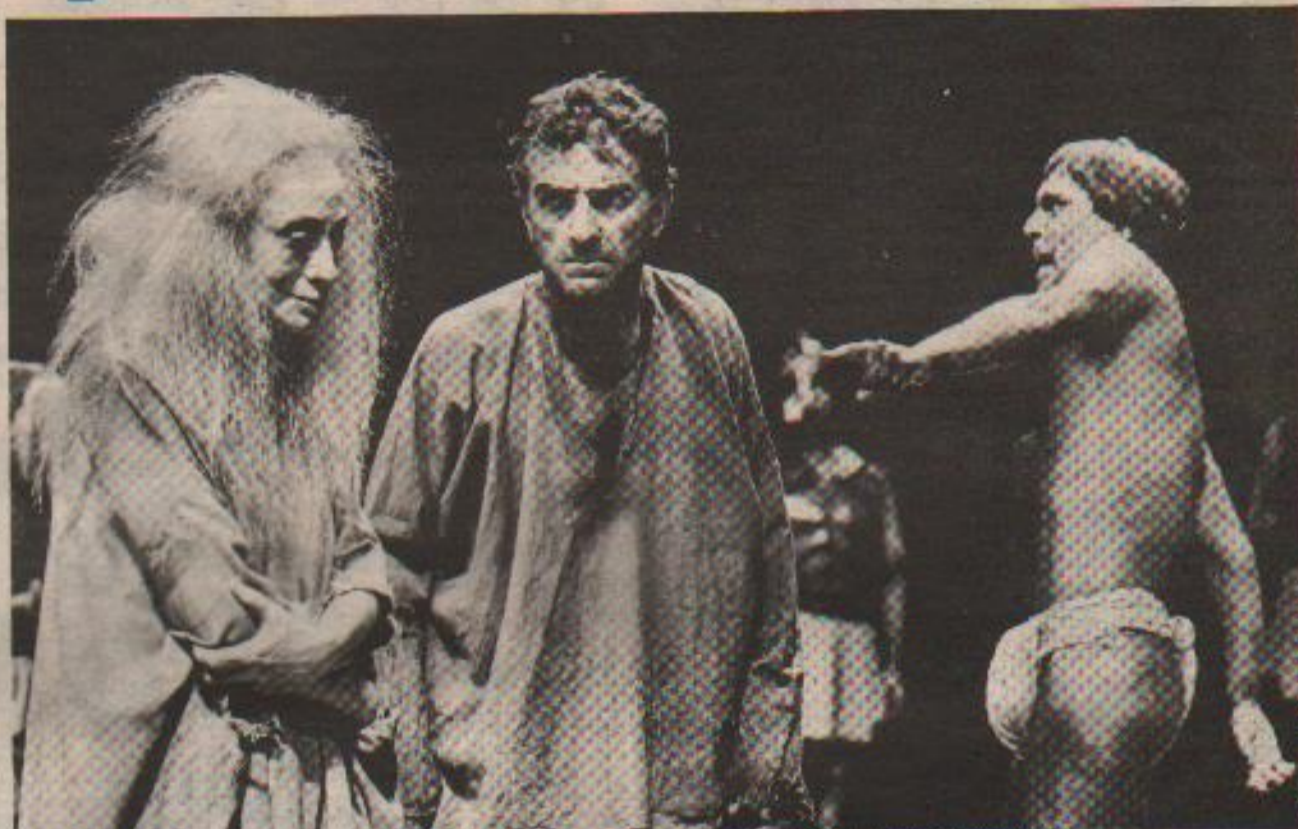
## DILEMMA

It seems to me that any play which has contemporary relevance must confront its protagonists with this new moral dilemma: and the solution to this dilemma — the resolution of the play — can only be stated in terms of political action. There is no other interpretation of morality.

In the last few years I have written three history plays. *The Woman* was the last of these. (The others were *Bingo and The Fool*.) Each of these plays looks at a turning point in history, when the contemporary interpretation of morality became an irrational encumbrance on human development.

These plays show the relationship between social economy and the culture which is produced to relate people and social organisation to that economy.

As technology and economic activity changes, not merely does social structure change but



LEFT to right: Yvonne Bryceland as Hecuba, Paul Freeman as The Dark Man, and Nicky Henson as Heros.

something just as dramatic though not so easily noticeable: human subjectivity, human consciousness, changes.

And this change in human consciousness has further, accumulating social consequences.

Because of its class basis, the structure of society is based on past economic structure — but human consciousness is always changing in response to the present economic structure. And so there is conflict and

crisis — people are quite literally living in a society for which they are not made.

This is the basis of political development.

Culture is not something we inherit from the past, from the Greeks or the early christians. It is the resolution of the conflicts between social and economic structure and human consciousness. It is the use of reason to discern order and evolution in what often seems random or chaotic experience.

This is also incidentally a definition of art. Dramatic art shows the embodiment of reason in human activity. It produces a new image of rational activity and this becomes part of new human consciousness.

## PLAY

Children have to play. We often forget that adults play just as much — or are at least 'played to'. People need not only the narcissistic image of the mirror, but images of themselves and others as members of society.

Consider how much time people spend watching plays and comedy series on TV which show scenes which are supposed to interpret their audiences' lives. People need these images as much as they need ideas and concepts.

The problem is that often the images they are given are irrational. They do not help to create the socialist self-consciousness which is the only rational relationship to the present world.

Of course this can't stop the evolution of history or the development of socialist society. Only the H-bombs could do that, and they are in fact the only alternative to the socialist future.

So we have to create images of socialist consciousness. No doubt in our time these images are transitional. But speaking from the security of middle-age, it seems to me that many of the new young dramatists are creating these images.

That is why the theatre's influence goes far beyond its immediate audience. Its effect ramifies into the media.

The media have difficulty in being rationally innovative. They are controlled by money-interest and are forced to try to keep alive the redundant social-imagery of capitalism and its corresponding forms of morality and human consciousness.

They are the dead teaching the living.

For several reasons the theatre has a precarious freedom from some of the controls that warp other media. That's why parts of our present theatre are politically and culturally so important.

You can't make a revolution in the theatre. That is made in the real world — and only when it is made will people be able to relate rationally to the world. Then we will see the creation of a new human subjectivity.

But equally obvious, I should think, is that the work of every revolution is partly cultural. Not only in providing vivid propaganda on specific issues. But also in creating images, patterns, of the new sort of human being, a new moral

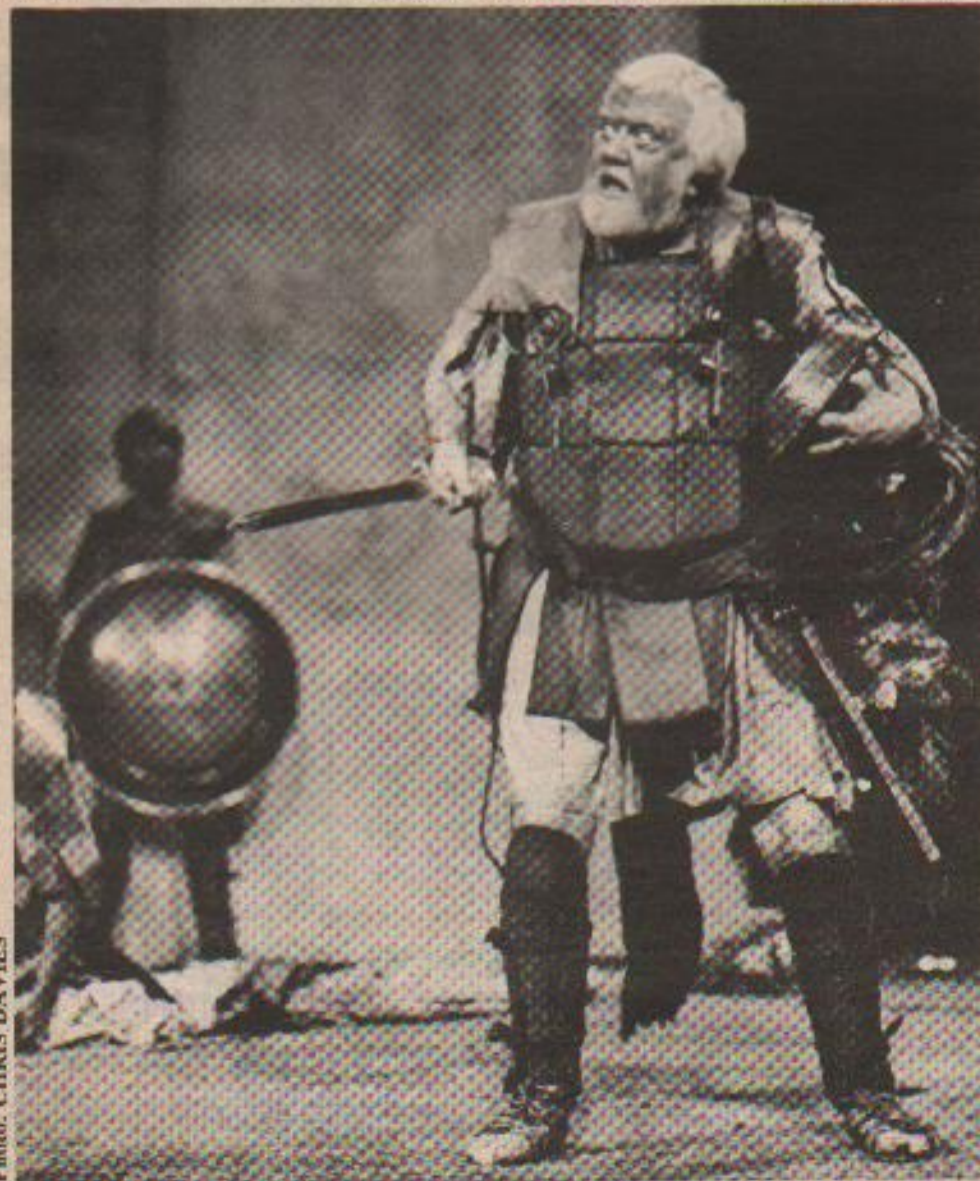
consciousness.

We have to show theory and analysis implicit in human life, in day to day living as well as in crises. We have to create a new human subjectivity appropriate to a changed world. We can start to do that now in the theatre.

*The Woman* is in two parts. The first shows the classical world of beauty and order. This world is still put forward as a moral example. I have shown the violence and squalor on which it is based. I have also shown that it could not be changed by the principles of humanism.

In the second half I have made some of the characters stand for various forces in history. They are not abstractions because I establish their individual humanity in the first half.

But I show them acting out the logical development of history. And hearing in mind that God is a Woman, I have represented history as a woman with a sword under her skirt.



ANDREW CRUICKSHANK as Nestor after the sacking of Troy.

### To see Edward Bond's play 'The Woman'

Take this paper to the National!

The National Theatre is making a special ticket offer for *The Woman* to Socialist Challenge readers. You can book any available seat in advance or on the day at the reduced price of £2.25.

Performances are on the following dates in October: 3, 4 (mat. and eve.), 13, 14 (mat. and eve.), 16. And in November: 10 and 11 (mat. and eve.).

Tickets from the Olivier Theatre box office, South Bank, London SE1. Waterloo tube. Open 10am-8pm. Tel 01-928 2252. Take along this issue of SC for the special offer.

### Birmingham Socialist Challenge Festival

Debates + films + music + stalls

Saturday, 30 September, 11am-11.30pm

Speakers include: TARIQ ALI, ROBIN BLACKBURN, DUNCAN HALLAS (SWP), JON BLOOMFIELD (CP)

Music includes: BELT & BRACES

RED ROCK SHOW

Aston University Students Union

Tickets £1.50 in advance from: 76b Digbeth, B'ham.

Tel 021 641 9209.

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES



# Socialist Challenge

## Were we right to go to Brixton? YES! YES! YES!

THE DECISION of the National Front to stage a fascist parade through the East End last Sunday was an open provocation to the local community and the Anti Nazi League.

In the wake of the NF's announcement came a torrent of advice for the ANL. Divert the Carnival to the East End, argued the Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee.

Every sectarian group in town jumped on the bandwagon to denounce the ANL for not diverting to the East End the forces they themselves could not mobilise in a month of Sundays — not least because they all oppose the ANL.

So did the ANL and Rock Against Racism take the right decision in pressing ahead with the Carnival? MICK GOSLING says yes.

In the eyes of some sectarians the biggest crime of the ANL seems to be that it has won mass support.

Principally through the musical activities of RAR, it has created an electric combination of music and politics which has drawn tens of thousands of working class youth into anti-fascist activity.

The decision to hold Carnival 2 in Brixton was not accidental. After all, it has one of the largest concentrations of West Indians in the country, is but a stone's throw from Lewisham, and has itself been the object of many racist attacks. Both racism and police harassment are rife.

### WELCOMED

But what made Brockwell Park an even better venue for Carnival 2 was the decision of Lambeth Council to underwrite the costs of a simultaneous local carnival. Local Labour leader Ted Knight welcomed the marchers into the park.

Nevertheless, the decision to go ahead with the Carnival was a difficult one. The East End's Brick Lane has been the focus of racist attacks — and of the fight back against them — nationally.

But the question facing the

ANL was not one of mobilising 50,000 anti-fascists against the NF march. It was whether the ANL was prepared to do battle with 5,000 police and the Special Patrol Group on duty to guard the NF march.

### DIVERTED

That would have been the concrete effect of diverting the Carnival — if it was ever to get near the East End.

This is not to say that the ANL should not have sent greater numbers to defend Brick Lane itself. But the problem for the Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee, and for all the sectarian groups, is that they had not decided whether their objective was the defence of Brick Lane or an attack on the NF march.

Consequently they helped to demoralise the anti-fascists who did turn up to defend Brick Lane and did effectively exclude the NF from the most sensitive area of Spitalfields.

Any criticism of the ANL which makes stopping every Nazi march a matter of principle is wide of the mark — not least because it would mean that the NF decides where, when, and on what political terrain we should choose to combat them.



Photo: BOB WORKMAN (Gay News)

In fact an unthought out response to Sunday's NF provocation could have done serious damage to the ANL, and thus actually impeded the building of a mass movement against racism in this country. And such a mass movement is the indispensable basis for self-defence activities in places like Brick Lane.

The savage jail sentences handed down to four East End Asian youths recently for the crime of defending themselves against a gang of racists, without a murmur of protest from the community, show that self-defence cannot be separated from mass mobilisation.

Let us accept that with proper organisation and co-or-

dination more people should have been sent to the East End. But even 5,000 militants could not have altered the concrete problems facing Asians in the East End.

It would have been an extremely important political gesture. But at the end of the day the 5,000 would have gone

home. Who defends Brick Lane when they leave?

The crux of the problem in the East End is that despite the historic demonstrations and strikes on 16 and 17 July, led by the Defence Committee and the Anti Nazi League, the community itself is not yet won as a body to its own defence. This is the only basis for permanent self-defence.

But, as we know, it takes the death of a Gurdip Chagger or Altab Ali to arouse the community as a whole. It is a sad fact that only a few Bengalis were prepared to mobilise against the NF march to Shoreditch on Sunday.

Of course 'sectarians against the ANL', who have been denouncing the ANL since its inception, will exploit the real unease and discontent of last Sunday to their own advantage. But the problems of building a mass anti-fascist and anti-racist movement in this country are more complex than they appear at first sight.

### RADICALISED

The ANL/RAR alliance has radicalised tens of thousands of working class youth. One of the greatest things about Sunday's Carnival was the welcome extended to these young people by the black community of Brixton.

A time will come when these layers will have to be mobilised in force apart from Carnivals against the Nazis. But to have done so on Sunday would have been to fall for the NF provocation, in all likelihood walk into a police trap, and provide ammunition for the bosses' press which had spent the week witch-hunting the SWP.

It was not an easy decision. Brick Lane was on the minds of most of the demonstrators who marched from Hyde Park to Brockwell Park. But it was a necessary decision.

## OUR FUND DRIVE

SEVEN MORE days to go before the end of this quarter's fund drive and this week's total is £1947.21. Although £550 short, we are confident this

amount will arrive at our offices in the next few days.

We have yet to include in the total the money from the determined efforts of Haringey

supporters who organised food and coffee at the Socialist Challenge Symposium.

Nor has the cash been counted from the sale of

T-shirts and our special hessian bags at the ANL Carnival at Brockwell Park.

With these sources of income — and an extra big push from

our readers in the final week — we hope to go over the top!

This week £145.56 came in from the summer lottery. And the winner, who is off on holiday in a few days, has a big stock of books from The Other Bookshop to keep him occupied.

Next week the special Socialist Challenge Christmas raffle will be announced. We won't have any worries this quarter with our supporters disappearing for holidays, so we have extended the prize list.

There's lots in store for the winners, but once again the lottery's success will depend on the efforts of our supporters and readers in helping out with the sale of tickets.

We have many other fund-raising ideas to put into practice in the next quarter. This will help with the paper's finances, but the only long-term solution is a big boost to our sales and subscriptions, and a final push on the bankers' orders.

Each week a few more standing orders arrive in our offices. We can now count on

£312 from this source. Only £138 more to go by Xmas, and we'll have reached our target of £450.

Many thanks to the comrades who faithfully send us their stamps from letters abroad. A supporter in Leicester is sorting through mounds of stamps, and thanks to his efforts the fund drive grows!

Why not consider this effortless way of helping out the paper. Just put into the post to us the corner of your stamped envelopes.

Our thanks this week to:

D Hacker	£10
J Bristol	£10
Harry Wicks	£10
D Griffiths	£5
P Tattersall	50p
Manchester supporters	£2
In memory of All Fleming	£17
Summer lottery	£145.56
M White	£5
J McAllister	£1
Anonymous	£4.50
Leamington readers	£2
Pamela Dean	£2
Total	£214.56

## SUBSCRIBE NOW!

Domestic: 6 months, £5; 12 months, £10

Abroad: Airmail, £16.50. Surface, £10 per annum.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a donation for the Fighting Fund of \_\_\_\_\_

Cheques, POs and Money Orders should be made payable to 'Socialist Challenge'.

Complete and return to:

Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.