

# workers' ACTION

No. 129 Dec. 16, 1978-Jan. 6, 1979 10p

- ■ Labour, break all links with the Shah!
- ■ Stop Arms Sales to Iran!
- ■ Down with the Shah!

Demonstration, Sunday 17th December  
Assemble 1pm, Speakers Corner.

Called by Committee Against  
Repression in Iran

# IRAN: ALL POWER TO THE WORKERS!

## Solidarity! Demonstrate Dec. 17

### Labour's Manifesto - a conference must decide

EVERYONE knows what Jim Callaghan would like the Labour Party Manifesto to say. "I will continue as Prime Minister and the working class will put up with my policies because there is a crisis".

Wedgwood Benn and Labour's Home Policy Committee want something better. They are putting up a mini-battle over having NEC and Conference decisions in the Manifesto, rather than the Cabinet's.

So far it is a very limited battle. As Neil Kinnock MP described it, the Home Policy Committee's draft manifesto is "a trawl through the remnants of the last manifesto" which would make "blancmange look firm and dynamic by comparison".

The document says that inflation and unemployment are the

The promises are more nationalisation; making immigration controls non-racist; import controls, price controls, and planning agreements; abolition of the House of Lords; and a wealth tax. Labour Party conference policies with more bite, like the 35 hour week and opposition to pay curbs, are not there.

But the principle of who decides the Manifesto is important. Certainly the elected NEC has more right to decide than the Cabinet; but a special Labour Party conference should decide on the Manifesto.

CLPs should prepare draft manifestos for that conference — and also prepare to run their own local campaigns on those manifestos, whatever the results of the haggling between the NEC and the Cabinet.

A manifesto in line with the interests of the working class would include:

- No to wage controls!
- No cuts, but improvements in social services!
- End unemployment! Cut the working week, not jobs.
- Expropriate firms threatening sackings.
- Nationalise the banks without compensation
- Not a penny for 'defence'
- Freeze rents and rates
- No to all immigration controls
- Free abortion and contraception on demand
- Troops out of Ireland now
- Support for the black liberation struggles against the racist regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa.



Bakers' pickets in the Midlands. Photo: Second City Photographers.

### BREAD Police go on anti-picket spree. Demand an inquiry

POLICE ACTION against bakers' pickets reached a high point on Tuesday 12th, with a mass arrest in Tewkesbury.

68 workers arrived at 3.45 am in coaches from Swansea and Cardiff. They planned to picket Healings Flour Mill in Tewkesbury, but since support from the South Wales miners had not arrived they decided after a short meeting to go on to Hereford.

They got back on the coaches at 4.15 — and the police swooped. They held the workers on the coaches until 9am, then arrested them on suspicion of causing criminal damage to vans at the flour mill.

The pickets were taken to Cheltenham Police Station and held for interrogation

until 7pm, when five workers, together with the Union regional organiser, Gloria Martin, were charged with causing criminal damage and the rest were released.

The six people charged were released on bail, to appear in court in January.

Under interrogation, workers were pressured by being told that others had already 'confessed'. One picket finally made a statement which served the police as a basis to make their charges. The strikers were also questioned about their political beliefs.

We must make sure that the union organises effective defence for all arrested pickets — and a thorough exposure of the role of the police during the strike.

ON SUNDAY 10th December a huge demonstration — perhaps 1½ million, perhaps 3 million strong — flooded through Tehran.

Permission to hold the march had been agreed with the Government, on condition that the Shah was not condemned by name in its slogans.

The next day there was a bigger and more militant march. Between two and four million people were on the streets. This time 'Death to the Shah' was the main slogan.

There were huge demonstrations in other towns, too. Most were peaceful. In Isfahan, troops fired on the marchers, killing scores. No longer trusting to face-to-face confrontation on the streets, the army shot down demonstrators from helicopters.

The whole Iranian people was on the streets. The Paris daily Le Monde reports: "Women in veils formed big phalanxes..."

"A group of men in civilian dress approached us: 'We are soldiers', said one of them. We looked incredulous, but he showed us his army card and his comrades did likewise".

Meanwhile, strikes have re-started in the oil industry, cutting supplies down to a trickle again. In those factories where workers still turn up, there is little production.

70 tankers are waiting off the Iranian coast. There is a 20 mile tailback of lorries at the Turkish frontier. The Central Bank is on strike, and business is paralysed.

The Shah's hated dictatorship is more and more beleaguered. But he is determined to hang on as long as possible, and Britain and the US — though expressing more and more doubts — are still supporting him.

The workers in Iran must make sure the Shah goes — for good. And when he does go, they must make sure that the bourgeois leaders of the opposition do not steal the workers' victory from them.

Workers' councils — organising the struggle and preparing for the new revolutionary power — are the way to do that. All power to the Iranian workers!

# THE FORCES OF ORDER TRY TO CLAMP DOWN

a 5 page special feature  
**The class struggle**  
in **1978**

## WORKERS' ACTION

No. 105 June 24-July 1, 1978 10p



### 3000 march New organise Defence squads

A demonstration organised by the Young Communist League (YCL) and the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) took place in London on Saturday, June 23. The march was held to protest against the proposed new Defence Bill, which would allow the government to conscript young men into the armed forces. The marchers carried banners and signs, and the demonstration was held in a central London location.

### Tories play Orange card

LAST MONDAY, THE Tories played a very clever card. They announced that they would be introducing a new Bill to give the government the power to conscript young men into the armed forces. This was a move designed to appeal to the Orange Order and other far-right groups, who have long been opposed to conscription. The Tories' move was a clear attempt to divide the working class by appealing to the prejudices of the far right.

### REVEALED FORDS' SECRET OF SUCCESS

- ★ Firm discipline
- ★ Control over stewards
- ★ Tougher foremen and...
- ★ A tame union official

### THE SECRET DOCUMENT

1977 Agreement... The document reveals the secret of Ford's success in maintaining control over the workforce. It details the firm's strategy of using a combination of firm discipline, control over stewards, and a tame union official to suppress any potential for class struggle. The document is a key piece of evidence in understanding the tactics used by Ford to maintain its position as a leading employer in the automotive industry.

In June, Workers' Action published a secret bosses' review of 'Industrial Relations Statistics', leaked to us from inside the Ford Dagenham plant. In a list of 'achievements', Ford recorded — for example — that 'Foundations were laid for the better control of four militant stewards on 'A' shift (Birmingham was fired in January 1978 and Wray terminated at the same time — with minimal disruptive action). From 21st September, however, Ford were faced not with four militant stewards here or there, but with 57,000 striking workers! How will that be recorded in the 1978 'Industrial Relations Statistics'? As the strike began, Workers' Action headlined: 'Ford: the pay curbs stop here'. And the 5% limit was broken. But the Government is still trying to impose it on more vulnerable public sector workers.

## WORKERS' ACTION

No. 118 Sep. 30-Oct. 7, 1978 10p

### Labour Conference WHY IT WON'T BE ALL QUIET IN BLACKPOOL

The Labour Conference in Blackpool is expected to be a major event for the far right. The Tories are expected to play a key role in the conference, and it is anticipated that they will use the occasion to promote their agenda. The conference is seen as a critical moment in the struggle for the soul of the Labour Party, and it is expected that there will be significant divisions over the proposed policies.

## FORDS: THE PAY CURBS STOP HERE

The Ford workers' strike has reached a new stage. The government's attempt to impose a 5% pay limit has been broken, and the workers are demanding a 10% increase. The strike is now in its 10th week, and the workers are showing no signs of weakening. The government's attempt to clamp down on the strike has failed, and the workers are determined to continue their struggle for better pay and conditions.



FASCISTS WITH POLICE ESCORT INVAD... (Caption text is partially obscured and difficult to read)

1978 BEGAN with troops acting as strikebreakers against the firemen, and preparing to act as strikebreakers against the tanker drivers. It ends with the police smashing through bakers' picket lines, and news coming out that nearly half the Metropolitan Police force are trained in use of firearms.

The Labour Government has been leaning more and more heavily on the state machine to keep the class struggle under control. In September, Jack Jones declared that "The real power is very much with the permanent Civil Service official".

As Workers' Action pointed out, "It is not as if the Civil Service bureaucracy is a cage that ministers are screaming to break out of, rattling the bars, calling attention to their captivity". On the contrary: the longer the Government serves, the less scruples the Ministers have about chiming in with the civil service chiefs, the top army and police commanders, the judges... and the bankers and the bosses who stand behind them.

The Labour Ministers have taken to governing capitalism as a way of life. Denis Healey told admiring bankers that he was going to give monetary policy — meaning, basically, unemployment and social spending cuts — its due importance at long last.

## Miners

In the last three months, the Government's single-minded zeal for Capitalist Order has caused some kick-back even among trade union leaders who had backed all the previous 'sacrifices' to get us through the economic crisis. The trade union leaders had gritted their teeth for a final short run through to an October election, and felt cheated when Callaghan put it off.

The NUJ, the bakers, and the T&GWU at Fords have shown more fight than unions have done for a long time.

But the union leaders, too, have been out to suppress militancy in 1978. Unlike the Government, they cannot lean on the police and the army; but they have their own resources of bureaucratic bludgeoning and manipulation.

At the end of 1977 the miners' union executive flatly ignored their members' ballots and conference decisions against incentive schemes, and gave the go-ahead for those schemes on an area basis. They then settled the miners' pay claim for 10%.

## Grunwick

The Post Office workers' union fined union officers involved in the blacking of Grunwick's mail a total of £1400. The Grunwick workers themselves had their strike left to die, and finally killed, by APEX. Strike committee treasurer Jayaben Desai said: "Union, TUC, Labour Government... all of them are the same. It was finished by the leadership".

But the Garners Steak House strikers in London are still solid in a similar fight for union recognition; and workers at Sandersons in Skegness actually won recognition for the TGWU this month, thanks to support from other workers through blacking.

The TGWU was also involved in a major attempted purge, at the Cowley Car Assembly plant of BL. In December of 1977, the workers in that plant elected a new leadership. British Leyland (a nationalised firm) refused to recognise Alan Thornett as a deputy senior steward; and soon the T&G weighed in, with charges against 9 Cowley militants.

The charges went to the regional committee, which referred them back to the district committee. Now the DC has sent them back to the Regional Committee, where they rest for the moment... with the bureaucrats no doubt waiting for a time when they can hammer

through the charges without the outcry aroused in 1977.

In the CPSA, a right wing faction for a left-wing vice-president deposed and the whole National Executive Committee declared invalid... on grounds of electoral irregularities by right wing branches!

But the champion would-be scourge of the Militants in 1978 was Terry Duffy of the AUEW.

At the Labour Party conference in October, there was a big row in the AUEW delegation after Hugh Scanlon (pleading 'confusion') failed to cast the union's block vote for re-selection of MPs. The union had decided to vote for making MPs subject to regular re-selection procedures, but Scanlon's 'confusion' tipped the conference decision against re-selection.

Duffy was furious — not at Scanlon, but at those who complained. "When I'm President, there won't be this sort of arguing" he thundered.

## Duffy

Duffy's dictatorial dreams soon ran into trouble, however. In September the AUEW Executive, backing up a decision by the Birmingham East DC, decided to expel 32 toolmakers at SU Carburetors for the crime of striking for pay parity.

Soon it became clear that the whole of Leyland would be shut down by strike action if the expulsions were enforced. The Executive had to climb down on the threat of expulsion... and the AUEW leaders also climbed down on threats to remove their cards from stewards at BL's Bathgate plant.

Throughout 1978, rank and file workers showed that they were not ready to submit easily to the bosses', the government's and the union leaders' efforts at control.

This came out at the Labour Party conference. With the help of the union block

vote, the 5% limit was condemned.

Even some members of the Cabinet started thinking that it was time to get the old fake-leftism out of the attic again. Wedgwood Benn and his co-thinkers have staged a couple of battles with Callaghan... though 'battle' is too grand a word for the clashes over the European Monetary System (which Callaghan opposed anyway) or over the draft manifesto (which is rather less 'red' than 1974's).

## Tribune

Tribune has shown less sign of life than the Benn faction. "In July we could have thrown out the 5%", cried Dennis Skinner MP at the Tribune Labour Party conference meeting. "We had to call Callaghan's bluff, make clear we could not put up with the 5% in advance, and challenge him to bring down his own government on this issue".

The other Tribune worthies, however, remembered that their revered leader Michael Foot had been the speaker defending the 5% limit in the conference debate... and preferred to mutter about the 'alternative economic strategy' instead.

The mood in the debates on racialism and re-selection, and in some of the fringe meetings, showed that there was also a real left-wing feeling abroad. It had a growing organisational expression in the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory, whose supporters led the argument for defence squads against fascism and against all immigration controls.

The Labour Cabinet think they know how to govern capitalism, using the power of the capitalist state to steamroller any problems. In the process, however, they are beginning (though only beginning, as yet) to lose their ability to govern over the Labour Party and the trade unions.

## ...AND THE STATE TIGHTENS ITS GRIP

— January — Government introduces the 'Suppression of Terrorism Bill' into the House of Lords. This Bill puts into effect Britain's support for the European Anti-Terrorist Convention of January 1977.

The Convention will make it impossible for 'Red Army Faction' militants to seek political asylum in Britain, or Irish Republicans to seek asylum on the Continent.

— APRIL — The printer and editorial staff of the Belfast REPUBLICAN NEWS are arrested. The paper still appears — but it has to be written and produced 'on the run'.

— May — Iris Mills and Ronan Bennett are arrested. Together with four other anarchists, arrested later, they are charged with 'conspiracy to cause explosions with persons known and unknown'.

"These people are part of a group of idealists who would take positive steps to overthrow society", police tell the court. For several months the six are refused bail and held in top-security conditions. Iris Mills, the only woman among the six, is held in a men's prison, in solitary confinement most of the time. At

their remand hearings, a massive show of police force surrounds the court to build up the right 'terrorist scare' atmosphere.

The 'Anti-Terrorist Squad' — responsible for the arrests — does not, however, come up with much evidence. Finally [in November], the 'conspiracy to cause explosions' charge is dropped [leaving only lesser charges] and Iris Mills is granted bail.

— June — Colin Thomas, a BBC documentary director of 16 years' standing, resigns because of changes demanded in programmes he had done on Northern Ireland. And on ITV, screens go blank as technicians refuse to broadcast any alternative in place of a banned 'This Week' programme dealing with the treatment of prisoners in Northern Ireland.

— JULY — A prisoner released from Dartmoor reports that Jake Prescott [who was convicted in the 'Angry Brigade' trial] has been beaten up by warders because of his courageous stand for prisoners' rights — and that, as a result, Prescott has been charged with 'assaulting prison officers'.

More television censorship: a play, 'Willie and the Legion Hall Bombing', is cut by the BBC against the protests of both writer and director.

It is about Willie Gallagher, who is serving a 12 year sentence in Long Kesh after being convicted, in a no-jury court and on the basis of an unsigned confession, of bombing the Strabane British Legion Hall in 1976. At the end of August Willie, facing death, calls off a hunger strike demanding a re-trial. His father, Brendan Gallagher, is still campaigning on Willie's behalf.

— Metropolitan Police Commissioner David McNee says that police regularly break the rules on dealing with suspects — and so the rules should be changed, allowing police for example to hold people for up to 72 hours without bringing charges. "Interesting", says Labour Home Secretary Merlyn Rees.

— A Government White Paper proposes no more than removing some of the absurdities in the present section 2 of the Official Secrets Act. On one point the White Paper is even to the right of the Tories, who do say that secrecy classifications should be arbitrated on by an independent committee.

— In a dawn raid on 16th August, 500 police, with SPG men, riot shields, and bulldozers, evict 160 squatters from Huntley St in Camden — just after Camden Council and the GLC had concluded an agreement on rehousing them.

— SEPTEMBER — Astrid Proll is arrested, to face extradition proceedings by the West German government, who are pursuing her on 'terrorist' charges dating back to 1971.

It looks like there could be a hitch in the extradition. After coming to England in 1974, Proll married a British citizen — and so she is entitled to British citizenship herself. The law does not permit Britain to extradite its own citizens to Germany.

— So... the law is changed, by a quick Order in Council coming into effect on 3rd October.

— OCTOBER — Prisoners at Gartree seize control of the jail in protest against a prisoner getting doxed with drugs against his will.

— NOVEMBER — The 'ABC' trial ends, with token sentences on the three defendants. The trial had started as a warning to inquisitive journalists. It ends as a warning to clumsy secret police men.





- ★ No platform for fascists
- ★ End all immigration controls
- ★ Labour movement assistance for black self defence
- ★ Labour movement organisations to form workers' defence groups
- ★ No call for state bans
- ★ Scrap the 'Sus' laws; oppose police harassment of the black communities
- ★ Fascists out of the unions. Open racists to be purged from all positions in the labour movement.

g hits the head-time rendered by the report of entary SELECT E on Race and Its report is in-t to racialists, extra authority atures of five (including Trib-m Wilson and Syd Bidwell).

ional pogromists of the NF". At a meeting in Brent about racist attacks, the local police boss claimed he only had a cupboard-full of men at his disposal. The meeting, called by the Brent Indian Association, recalled the cupboardful of police available to help Grunwick boss George Ward, and went on to discuss self-defence — one of the major issues of the year in the immigrant communities.

On April 20th in East London, 10-year old Kenneth Singh is battered to death and left lying in a waste area where racist daubings cover the walls. Fran Brodie writes in WA: "Man now travels to the moon ... and this civilised society can still vomit forth undigested barbarism, ignorance and savagery. ... Racist attacks such as the slaying of a little boy with a packet of polo mints and a jelly snake in his pocket become the supreme evidence of racial superiority."

MAY DAY. In Leeds, a traditional May Day rally organised by the Trades Council is disrupted by police because of a ban on marches in the area imposed some

time earlier. Trades Council officials are hauled off.

In London, an amazing 80,000 turned out for the Anti Nazi League's first big carnival. Rock Against Racism, which had been organising longer than the ANL, took much of the credit. But most of the kids marched as well as coming for the music. The liberals most visible at the ANL's beginnings were now overwhelmed by a mass movement of fervent and combative youngsters.

But the next day the National Front marched — unopposed for the first time ever — from the West End to Hoxton. The ANL knew about it, but refused to tell the Carnival crowds, although as we said, "one announcement would have wiped the Front march out of existence". The ANL's timidity was "a recipe for misleading, demoralising and dissipating the thousands of young workers who are now prepared to fight the Front". Our headline RED SUNDAY, BLACK MONDAY expressed our view of the flawed promise of the ANL.

in the LOCAL ELECTIONS later that week, the Front's

In June, a national conference of anti-fascist committees is convened to set up a national organisation. We comment: "The fundamental questions are: what is the minimum adequate basis for a united front campaign against racism and fascism? And what relationship should there be between those fighting for that programme and the ANL?" WA proposes to the conference a 7-point programme (see box) for it to adopt and in turn fight within the Anti-Nazi League for the ANL to adopt. These proposals are respectively ignored and rejected, and the conference founders in confusion and lack of focus.

A GLC ghetto plan for East End Asians is rejected by a mass meeting in Spitalfields. We're going to stay here and fight the NF. WA's comment: "The GLC's proposal to create separate estates for Asian families is no answer to racist violence. While racialism exists on the present scale no area is safe". The real answer was for the labour movement to be prepared to take on the task of building workers' defence squads to go to the aid of the Asian community's self defence.

On June 11th, 150 white youths, many sporting NF badges, rampage down Brick Lane, smashing shop windows. Police arrive after 30 minutes from their nick round the corner, arrest 20, and charge just three.

Two weeks later, an orgy of fascist violence and murder. Ishaque Ali, 45 years old, is throttled with a shoelace in Homerton High Street by three white youths. At the same time, the ANL's offices in Soho are set on fire, causing massive damage. "NF rules OK" is left scrawled on the wall. Later that day, a mini-rampage in Brick Lane is stopped by Bengali youth — several of whom are arrested for their pains.

In July, the ANL stages its first conference. There are 800 delegates but it is well controlled. No comprehensive policy is adopted, nor any democratic structure.

Mid-July sees another mass protest against the East End racist violence. 2,000 socialists and Bengalis join in occupying Brick Lane on the Sunday, and the following day 8000 Bengalis strike. Shops are shut, and Fords Dagenham works is affected. A national demonstration is called for August 20th in Brick Lane to back up the efforts to clear the fascists out of it.

Successive Sundays produce a tug-of-war against the fascists for control of the Lane. But still the thugs are able to do their work. On August 13th, eight young Bengalis returning down the Lane from a meeting are ambushed by two NF gangs. Seven are taken to hospital, the eighths arrested for self-defence...

Trade unionists have been asked to support the big day, August 20th. Len Murray visits Brick Lane to keep matters under control. "The police have a difficult job" he pronounces, and a TUC statement simply advises Asians to join a union.

August 20th: 4,000 turn up and march through Hoxton. The Front shifts to Chapel-Market instead. The Appeal of the Virk

brothers against their jail sentences for self-defence against a white thug attack is heard. Sukvinder Singh's 3 months sentence is reduced to a fine, but his three brothers are left to serve terms of seven, three and two years. 10,000 people sign a petition to the Home Office for their release.

September 24th — the ANL's Carnival Two. 100,000 march from Hyde Park to Brixton to hear Elvis Costello — leaving the National Front to march unopposed to the East End.

Despite a plea from the Asian community to divert the Carnival and stop the NF, Carnival organiser: go ahead, assuring the crowds that Brick Lane is safe from attack. WA, together with Socialist Charter, distributes 20,000 leaflets asking people to join the Brick Lane defenders. 1000 or so turn out to



Sukvinder Singh Virk — his 3 brothers are still in jail

prevent the Nazis marching to the top end of the Lane, but as the defenders disperse, 60 fascists swoop and smash into an Asian shop.

In contrast to the earlier rampage, which was featured on the front pages of the left press, only WA reports this one. The line in Socialist Worker and Socialist Challenge is that the Front march was a provocation intended solely as an attempt to spoil the carnival. So, as WA comments, "the ANL festival continues, unspoiled, while exultant fascists are chasing after black people and socialists just a few miles away".

SW, aware of its shameful action, makes lame excuses about having mismanaged things; SC, blindly besotted by the ANL, actually accuses the Brick Lane defenders of sectarianism and adventurism, complaining that the Bengalis should defend themselves and not expect the ANL "to do the job for them". Trying to stop fascists marching only ends up in a fight with the police, they sneer, dredging up well-worn Stalinist arguments for standing by while fascists march.

In the next month or so, a spate of letters and resolutions comes to the ANL critical of what happened at the Carnival and calling for a new conference to sort out a harder policy and elect a democratic structure. WA reports resolutions from North Staffs CARF, plus Leicester, Moss Side, Wirral and Basingstoke ANL.

Shortly afterwards, the ANL loses some liberal backers disturbed by SKAN — which most sharply expresses the combative element in the ANL.

In Brick Lane, a police 'listening post' is hastily erected, nicknamed the Stockade. The militant youth leaders have been rounded up or warned off, and police are concentrating on collecting information and mending their bridges to the community's elders.

Black workers play a big part in smashing the hated 5% pay limit. Fords, with a high proportion of West Indian and Asian workers (especially in the gruelling foundry shops) busts through the limit; and black workers take the lead in the bakery strike, bearing the brunt of police attacks on their picket lines.

## workers' ACTION

**Bloody Sunday**  
13.00pm SUNDAY JANUARY 29

# BRITAIN OUT OF IRELAND NOW!

FOR THOSE who want to see the British people united against the fascist forces of the Home Office, the British Workers' Party is the only force that can lead the struggle against the fascist forces of the Home Office. The British Workers' Party is the only force that can lead the struggle against the fascist forces of the Home Office. The British Workers' Party is the only force that can lead the struggle against the fascist forces of the Home Office.

Our front page on the 6th anniversary of the 'Bloody Sunday' massacre in Derry.

After ten years of bitter, open conflict, signs of war-weariness began to appear in the British Establishment when the Daily Mirror published an editorial on August 14th: "For more than three centuries" they wrote "Britain and Ireland have been united — but united in a history stained with blood, studded with violence, and pitted with oppression. The time has come for a new start. One that would allow the Irish people to rule themselves."

We commented: "Yes, get the troops out. Get them out without delay, and unconditionally. But also organise solidarity with the Republicans who are fighting for a democratic unification in Ireland, and more especially with the socialists fighting for an Irish Workers' Republic."

The actual policy of the Labour Government was to reduce the Army presence in Northern Ireland somewhat — and to rely more heavily on Special Air Services 'undercover' terror operations and on the Protestant-dominated Northern Ireland police force. But the Irish people fought back against attempts to 'criminalise' them.

Conviction leads to imprisonment in places like H-Block at Long Kesh — where 300 prisoners have been protesting for over two years now against the withdrawal of political ('special category') status. They refuse to wear prison uniform. And so the wardens deny them all prisoners' 'privileges' — cell furniture, exercise, visits etc — and they have only blankets to cover themselves.

Since March the prisoners have stepped up their action by refusing to wash and slop out. The wardens have left them in nightmarishly filthy cells, just coming round every so often to hose down the cells — and their contents, and the prisoners — with a strong disinfectant.

Even Archbishop O Fiach declared that the conditions were unfit for animals. Yet the British government continues its stubborn insistence that Republican prisoners of war are mere 'criminals', not political prisoners.

## Stop the Nazis' march on the East End

The Nazis are marching this afternoon in the East End, to celebrate their 25th anniversary. They're heading on all the streets leading miles away in Brockwell Park.

While thousands of anti-fascists are enjoying the Carnival, the Nazis reckon they will be free to march over the streets around Brick Lane, an area where three people have been murdered by racist thugs.

If the National Front get away with their march today, they will grow stronger. AND THE CARNIVAL WILL LOOK PRETTY SICK!

So if you want to stop the Nazis, join the counter-march called by the Hackney & Tower Hamlets Defence Committee this afternoon.

You'll miss the music, but if Brockwell Park comes to East London, the Nazis will have made the biggest mistake of their lives.

Assemble from 12 noon at the junction of Brick Lane and Bethnal Green.

on? S! The main Bengalis in the ANL September harassed with the groups who were militants. This 'Action' membership on the self into the... the... You are

## NO NAZIS IN LONDON!

# Black Monday

## 80,000 at anti fascist carnival

### FASCISTS MARCH UNOPPOSED IN LONDON

Paul Hoiborrow, ANL leader, prepares for first big outing

## workers' ACTION

No. 101 May 6-13, 1978 10p

# RED SUNDAY

## 80,000 at anti fascist carnival

### Black Monday

#### FASCISTS MARCH UNOPPOSED IN LONDON

Fascists marched through London unopposed on the Monday after the ANL's Sunday Carnival.



Longbridge: the start of a fight back

# CARTER DECLARES WAR



PRESIDENT CARTER has...  
Carter declared war...  
Workers' Action reported...

Carter declared war ... and lost. Workers' Action reported: "America's striking coal-miners have put President Jimmy Carter, supremo of the capitalist 'free world', firmly in his place. Carter issued injunctions ordering the 160,000 strikers to return to work. One hundred obeyed. The other 159,900 said they weren't interested in Carter's laws".

# WORKERS' ACTION

THE FIREMEN'S STRIKE AND THE 10% LIMIT  
Workers' Action public meeting...  
7.45pm, Sunday 4th December, at the 'Roughs', 108a Tottenham Court Rd, London WC1 (Warren St tube)

# IN CASE OF FIRE BREAK PAY LIMIT

In the end Callaghan did save his pay limit. Workers' Action wrote: "The government threw massive resources against the strikers. Every spare soldier who could be found was given four hours' training and sent to fight fires."  
"Some were returned from the Military Detention Barracks, while 5,000 extra American troops were committed to NATO so their British counterparts could be sent scabbing."  
"To beat this effort required massive working class solidarity action. It did not happen. Not because sympathy did not exist, but because it was not organised."  
"In part that was due to the firemen's own inexperience, lack of self-confidence, and failure to see how vital solidarity action was. But the major responsibility lies with the TUC General Council and the leaders of the miners and local authority manual workers' unions - who all shirked a fight against the 10% rule, despite the expressed will of their own membership".

# Leyland under the axe

IN October 1977 Michael Edwardes was appointed boss of British Leyland. His performance in 1978 showed that he had been given a brief to hack BL down to a size where it would be profitable, at least in the short term - and to do that at the expense of thousands of workers' jobs.

On 4th January he told journalists he was cancelling the ten-year BL expansion plan and cutting 12,000 jobs. On 1st February he outlined his plans in more detail to convenors, senior stewards, and union officials. The stunned 'representatives' gave him a standing ovation!

When the Longbridge delegation got back to their factory, they were censured by the plant shop stewards. Convenor Derek Robinson and the Works Committee blandly declared that they would still back the Edwardes Plan.

On Wednesday 15th February, Edwardes announced the first instalment. The Speke No.2 plant was to be closed, with the loss of 3,000 jobs. Robinson and the Combine Committee denounced the closure and withdrew from the 'participation' scheme (only to return two months later when the dust had settled). But when 800 workers at Longbridge struck on 2nd March against demanning, the Works Committee remained firmly on the bosses' side.

In April a Liverpool labour movement conference decided on a militant plan of action against redundancies; the Speke workers voted to fight the closure of their factory; and workers throughout Leyland voted

two-to-one to throw out the bosses' incentive scheme. But there was no action, either from the Liverpool Trades Council or from the Leyland convenors.

After having been stabbed in the back by the AUEW, and gaining only passive support from Robinson and other Leyland convenors, the Speke workers voted to accept redundancy terms on 6th May.

Leyland toolmakers showed a spark of opposition to Edwardes with a 24-hour strike on June 12th. But

Robinson and his cronies stuck to the line of making BL profitable. On 26th June they pushed resolutions condemning wildcat strikes through mass meetings at Longbridge ... and used the occasion to get in a few jibes against 'the Trots'.

A month later the Works Committee came up with its own incentive scheme! At a Longbridge stewards' meeting on 3rd August, they pushed through a proposal that the workers should offer new shift patterns, increased

labour mobility, 'team working' and a free run for work study, in return for a pay rise.

It was now time for Edwardes to step in again. He made it known that, even with Speke closing on May 26th, jobs were not going fast enough for him. 7,000 more would have to be cut before the end of 1978.

At the beginning of October the BL convenors worked out a claim for a 35-hour week and £100 for line workers... and promptly forgot it. Edwardes told them there would be no pay rise at all. Then he softened slightly - BL workers could have 5% if they accepted all the 'strings' - work study, speed-up, job-cuts - that Edwardes had been pushing over the last year.

Edwardes faced down strikes at SU Carburetors, Bathgate and Drews Lane, brandishing threats of more factory closures, while Robinson and the convenors did nothing but denounce 'lunatic leftists'. At the end of November, the leading union representative in BL finally agreed to recommend Edwardes' 'offer' to a ballot of the workforce.

Meanwhile, Edwardes had announced that 500 jobs would go at Speke No.1 and that AEC Southall would be closed. He had bludgeoned the Rover Solihull workers into accepting a night shift... and told a New York audience he wanted to cut another 14,000 jobs in the Leyland Cars Division next year.

If this is sanity, then perhaps the 'lunatic leftists' are more on the ball than Derek Robinson believes.

THE EDWARDES plan - to cut 12,500 jobs in British Leyland - was announced on February 1st. Terry Duffy said "Mr Edwardes has clicked. It's go-go-go for British Leyland".

And the Morning Star: "No shop stewards or staff representatives had any chance to consult on its terms, and to have voted against would have appeared irresponsible".

Newspaper ads showed Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon together with Edwardes: "We may have had our differences in the past, but this is one thing we all agree on - the future viability of British Leyland".

A few months later, Longbridge convenor Derek Robinson said sadly: "If the Edwardes plan is not changed, we shall be eaten alive".

WORKERS' ACTION said: "Those who want to fight the jobs carve-up must realise this: there is no capitalist 'sol-

# SCLV hits a chord in the movement

The Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory, set up in July 1978, aims to organise left-wingers in the labour movement for the general elections. But what about perspectives after the election? Pete Firmin, speaking on behalf of Workers' Action to a meeting in early December of the Socialist Charter group (one of the main groups involved in the SCLV) spelled out our views.

We see the joint work of our two tendencies in the SCLV as extremely important.

The SCLV has shown a large measure of agreement between Socialist Challenge and ourselves, not only on the question of how we think the working class should vote, come the elections, but also on the central issues facing the labour movement at present: on economic issues such as wages and unemployment, and also on racism, women's oppression and other issues.

The response so far has shown that the SCLV has hit a chord in the labour movement. Over the next months, the SCLV can become a serious force in the labour movement, campaigning on the issues of Ireland, racism, in support of struggles against the 5% pay policy, and so on. After the election we will be faced with the question of how we organise the left in and around the Labour Party, if we are not to leave the people



SCLV picketed Transport House

organised by the SCLV in the lurch. We have suggested the formation of a Socialist Labour Alliance.

The level of agreement that the Campaign has shown points also to the need for serious discussion between our two groups. The main points of contention as we see it are on revolutionary strategy, and the tasks and nature of a revolutionary organisation today.

Although we believe that certain aspects of revolutionary theory need to be re-examined, we reject the view which says we have to start from scratch again. We consider that the basic tenets of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky are a sound basis for the practice of revolutionaries today, on the

nature of the bourgeois state, the need for a revolutionary party, and how that party is organised. We have criticised your view that the 'fundamental problem' of the Third International and early Fourth International was that their perspective was based on a short term, blitz-krieg type of struggle for power. We cannot accept this as historically correct, since Lenin and Trotsky both always struggled resolutely against ultra-leftism and developed the tactic of the United Front.

What do you really mean? Are you saying that the revolution itself, the actual seizure of power by the working class, is not a short term struggle; that there is a long-term, evolutionary road to power? The suggestion that you are

moving in this direction is strengthened when one of your comrades writes that "like other orthodox Trotskyists" Workers' Action has "no transitional approach to the State". The comrade doesn't explain what he means, but it sounds very much like the idea that the State can be gradually undermined over a long period, that the capitalist state structure no longer has to be smashed. This contradicts not only the Marxist texts but also historical experience.

Socialist Charter and our tendency both describe themselves as propaganda groups, but behind that definition I think we think there are important differences. Obviously the main emphasis for a small group at present is on propaganda for its ideas, but these ideas only have a relevance insofar as they gain a hearing in the working class. There is no Chinese wall between propaganda and agitation, and people learn more through their participation in struggle than solely from 'propaganda' alone. The ideas and analysis of a group can only develop if they are tried out in practice.

Comrades have talked of us being orthodox Trotskyists. This is both a compliment - and it is meaningless. We see Trotskyism, Leninism and Marxism not as dogmas which always allow us to take a correct position, but as guides in helping us to do so. We see the need to develop their analyses further - but not in a vacuum, not by saying 'let's imagine Marx, Lenin and Trotsky hadn't been born and start again'.

# Turn over a new leaf

## A TIME TO DIE: THE ATTICA PRISON REVOLT

by Tom Wicker, published by Penguin at £1.50

"The ground was cold and wet, with a fine mist coming down. It was like driving cattle. People were crawling over each other, and the troopers were driving them with sticks, saying 'Crawl you mother-fuckers, crawl, crawl'. We'd crawl this way and that, until all of us were in the yard."

That is how a Puerto Rican inmate of New York's Attica jail described the scene after state troopers and armed warders had put down a revolt there in September 1971.

On instructions from Governor Rockefeller — he was at the time holidaying on one of his estates — the troopers stormed the yard where prisoners were holding some warders hostage. They killed nine of the hostages as well as 34 inmates.

Tom Wicker's *A Time to Die: The Attica Prison Revolt* is the minutely detailed eye-witness account of that revolt and how it was crushed. Wicker, a New York Times editor, was a member of the go-between committee that (on the prisoners' demand) spent the period of the revolt at Attica.

Apart from the figures of the Attica revolt itself — the revolutionary black prisoners, the pathetic commissioner, the blood-ravenous and racist warders and the other members of the go-between committee — there is one other main character. It is Wicker himself.

Wicker, the tortured liberal who "believed more in equity than in equality, more in individualism than in solidarity" is an important character in the book. His views, fears, reactions and life-style counterpoint those of the desperate prisoners.

His book also gives an insight into the reality of crime and punishment in capitalist society. Crime, it is clear, is not an exceptional act; nor is the criminal a deviant individual. Crime is built into capitalist society and the criminal is the representative of those lowest and most brutalised layers of society.

Its root is "on the block, in the tenement, in the uncaring schools, among the pushers and the junkies and the hustlers and the hard-eyed cops, in the crowded flats with jobless fathers and overworked mothers, the brothers and sisters hooked on dope, the hopelessness and bitterness — the utter waste of humanity."

Outside the prison walls, in the ghetto, the constant phrase is "We ain't shit" — meaning we are treated as if we aren't even shit as far as the whites are concerned. But in prison, treated to yet more brutal degradation, bottled up and pushed to boiling point by physical containment, the emphasis changes. "We ain't shit" now becomes a protest, an affirmation of humanity and equality — a determination not to be treated like shit any more.

Tom Wicker was there when that determination exploded into revolutionary action.

ANDREW HORNUNG

## PETALS OF BLOOD

By Ngugi wa Thiong'o  
Hemman African  
Writers Series, £1.25

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o is one of Kenya's great novelists. He is a socialist, and defends the tradition of Dedan Kimathi, the leader of the Land and Forest Army (also known as Mau Mau) which fought for Kenya's freedom from British colonial rule. Until 12 Dec. he was jailed by the Kenyatta/Arap Moi regime that built its power on the sacrifices of Dedan's warriors and set out systematically to eradicate them.

Ngugi's latest novel, *Petals of Blood*, is about that betrayal. It documents through the story of the tiny town of Ilmorog the corruption and avarice that made a mockery of the aspirations of Kenya's poor.

Munira is a schoolteacher by profession and a fence-sitter by political inclination. Abdullah owns a small shop where he hobbles about on his one leg giving no clue to his fighting days with the guerillas. Wanja is a prostitute, a plaything of the rich, but full of that energy which should have gone into building a nation free of corruption. And Karega is the ex-student, ex-teacher, ex-tramp whose political radicalisation makes him a target for the employers.

Together they get the villagers of Ilmorog to visit the local capital to seek help for their parched lands. There they see what has become of the struggle for freedom.

The title comes from the plant



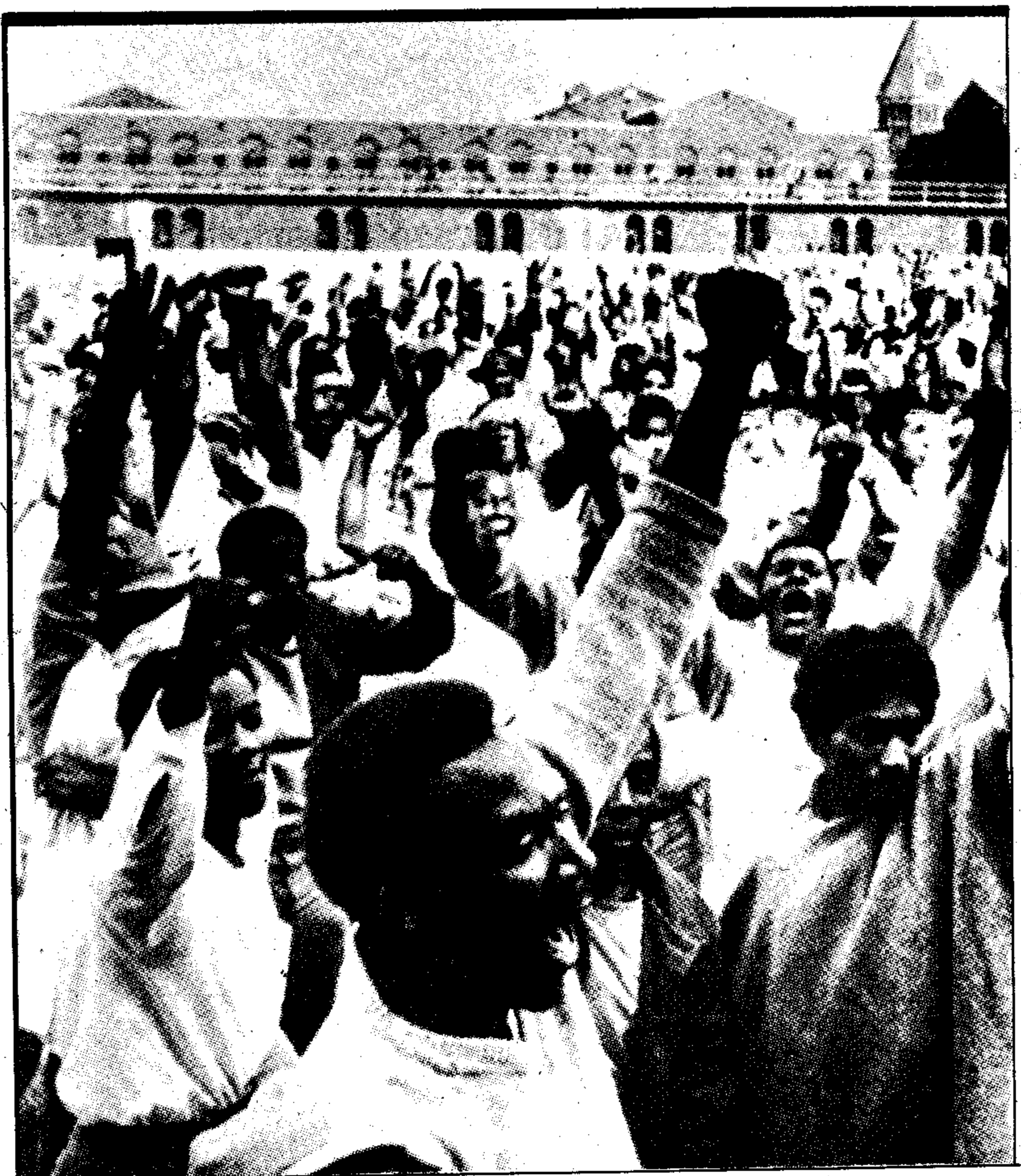
Ngugi — uncorrupted visions

that the villagers use to make theng'eta, a native drink that the British banned.

The spirit of theng'eta causes the drinkers to have visions. But once the Ilmorog villagers revise the brewing of the drink, the big brewers move in, taking over the village that has grown into a town, and bottling their own much diluted brand — just as the freedom fighters' visions were taken over and corrupted for profit.

*Petals of Blood* is not an easy read — and it is made more difficult by the irritating way that Kikuyu expressions are left untranslated and unexplained in the text. But it is well worth reading. It is fiction more accurate and more representative than fact, the modern history of the Kenyan peasants in novel form.

BOB MELVILLE



Spirit of the Attica prison revolt

## THE CHAIRMAN'S NEW CLOTHES

by Simon Leys, published by Motive Books at £2.95

This is the book which smashed the myth of Mao and the Cultural Revolution for good.

"The Cultural Revolution had nothing revolutionary about it except the name, and nothing cultural about it except the initial tactical pretext. It was a power struggle waged at the top between a handful of men behind the smokescreen of a fictitious mass movement."

"As things turned out, the disorder unleashed by this power struggle created a genuinely revolutionary mass current, which developed spontaneously at the grass roots in the form of army mutinies and workers' strikes on a vast scale. These had not been prescribed in the programme, and they were crushed pitilessly."

A three-year diary (1967-69), written as events unfolded, forms the core of the book. Since its original publication in Belgium in 1971 it has stood the test of time remarkably well, and the appendix on the T'ien An Men demonstration in 1976 gives useful background to events taking place in China today.

Leys argues that Mao lost real power between 1959 and 1966. The regime's support from the intellect-

uals and peasants was shattered in the '50s by Mao's mistakes in the Hundred Flowers campaign and the Great Leap Forward. Mao's policies failed to bring about industrialisation and plunged the regime into crisis.

The party hierarchy needed Mao's prestige to cement their unstable rule. But while prominent critics of Mao (like Peng Teh-huai) were purged, real power passed into the hands of Liu Shao-ch'i and Teng Hsiao-ping. Their fear of an open break with Mao later proved to be Mao's trump card when he launched his coup to regain power.

Contesting the belief that Lin Piao controlled the army and was brought in by Mao to stabilise the situation, the book establishes two facts: that many regional commanders loyal to the purged Defence Minister Peng Teh-huai never accepted Lin's authority and defied Peking to the point of mutiny; and that Lin and the secret police were both used by Mao from the beginning to seize control in Peking before launching the Cultural Revolution through the media.

During the disorder, workers in many regions settled accounts with their local managers. Official warnings complained of "the training of combat groups, the occupation and looting of stations, banks and military installations, the interruption of communications" etc. The authorities' impotence is no less astonishing: the mildness of the

sanctions, the indulgence promised to those willing to lay down arms — all this indicates that the authorities are faced with a movement of such breadth and popularity that they cannot and dare not meet it head on or suppress it by force."

The Chairman's New Clothes is not a Marxist book; nor is it an easy introduction to China today. However, it does arm us with facts to shatter illusions in Maoism.

CHEUNG SIU MING



When Mao lost power

## BLOOD ON THE STREETS: a report by Bethnal Green and Stepney Trades Council on Racial Attacks in East London.

Available from  
58 Watney Street,  
London. £1.

In the Autumn of 1977, faced with a rapidly escalating wave of assaults on Asians in the East End, the local Trades Council took the decision to launch its own investigation into the problem. This booklet is the result, and it makes grim reading.

About 110 incidents were examined, and they only scratched the surface. For example, four white youths recently confessed to some 300 attacks on Asians and vagrants in the area: this confession only accounted for seven of the Trades Council's list. The investigators themselves simply gave up after a while, because the pattern was only too obvious and because "our young Bengali interpreters said that they were no longer willing to continue with the exercise" because they could see no point in it.

The report itself is in some ways a model: the problems of housing, education, employment, the police, the media and the trade unions themselves are each separately discussed, and their close connection with the nature and incidence of assaults examined. The failure of the unions to combat racism within their own ranks or to fight discrimination in employment was no doubt one of the most difficult admissions for the Trades Council to make; together with the South East Regional Council of the TUC, they have now resolved to launch a campaign to overcome these weaknesses.

In this venture they deserve the fullest support; but it must be said

that they will also need persistent criticism, if their report is anything to go by.

Throughout the booklet the authors display a systematic tendency to avoid some of the more crucial questions. For example, it is admitted that the Immigration Acts are racist, and therefore a bad thing, but no real attempt is made to go beyond that. This is a serious flaw: action to solve even apparently straightforward problems will soon hit trouble unless an effective campaign against the Immigration Acts is waged.

For example, who is going to join a union if s/he is 'illegal'? The boss will know it, and besides the worker may well be in debt precisely to their boss for the cost of coming to Britain in the first place.

The same predicament obviously applies to housing too.

The worst feature of the report undoubtedly lies in its attitude to the police and the law. On the one hand, the authors point out that Bangladeshis have come to regard the police as their enemies; they show why this attitude prevails, and, despite themselves, prove that the Bangladeshis are right; they demonstrate the futility of relying on the police for protection or even of expecting them to show the fig-leaf of 'neutrality'. Yet much space is spent listing the various laws which the police 'could' use against the fascists, and it is denied that criticism is 'anti-police as such'.

Given the role and the political complexion of the Trades Council, it would have been most surprising if they had faced up to these problems squarely. But their report contains a mine of information for anti-racist militants active in the area, and shows activists elsewhere just how much they also need to find out before they are in a position to make an effective stand against racism and fascism in their area.

## FINDING A VOICE

By Amrit Wilson, published by Virago at £2.50

"Although there are so many differences in their life styles, certain factors really unite Asian women. Firstly their oppression — although they come from so many different parts of the Indian sub-continent and have so many different religions, there is no doubt that as women there is a special kind of oppression which they face."

"The second thing that unites them is racism in Britain, and the third is their exploitation as a class — most of them, even those who were middle-class before, are now working class. What struck me was that all these three things together affected the outlook of these

women and it wasn't possible to separate them."

In this book Amrit Wilson simply lets a number of Asian women talk to her about their lives in Britain, about work, school, marriage and the family; and about isolation in the home — many times more terrible in its completeness than for a white woman, and more devastating for its contrast with life before coming to Britain.

But "women are beginning to perceive that there can be a happier future and ... their anger is growing. How long it will take for a strong movement to emerge is impossible to say. These are the early, early days in a conscious struggle."

The book is a must for anyone active in the anti-racist and/or women's movements. Workers' Action will be carrying a full review in the New Year.

JAMES RYAN

## WHAT WENT WRONG?

By Jeremy Seabrook  
Published by Gollancz  
at £2.95

'Hello, how you doing?'  
'Not so bad. Considering.'  
'Considering what?'  
'Old age and poverty.'

Jeremy Seabrook's book of interviews with old workers talking about 'what went wrong' with the labour movement is interesting and even exciting reading.

Not much thanks to the author, though. His own purple prose takes some wading through, with its horrors of bus-stations and shopping centres from Hackney to Blackburn attempting to lighten his hick sociology in which he tries to prove that it's only the depths of poverty that can give the labour movement 'morality' and a purpose.

But wade on [or skip those bits]. The workers he interviews speak for themselves about working class history, the betrayals that we've seen, and what should be done.

Jessie Stevens, 84, remembers her first involvement in politics ... "they had formed a branch of the Women's Social and Political Union in Glasgow. They asked me if I was interested in the more militant side. They said 'You can drop these [bottles of acid] in pillar boxes'. So I used to walk down the street in my servant's uniform, I'd take the cork from the bottle and put it in the pillar box, and it would begin to smoulder and burn."

An old miner in Nottingham: "I've always thought of myself as a revolutionary rather than a rebel... a revolutionary should be more in-

telligent than a rebel, and more constructive. When I was young we came near to a moment of real change, but now we've receded from it again.

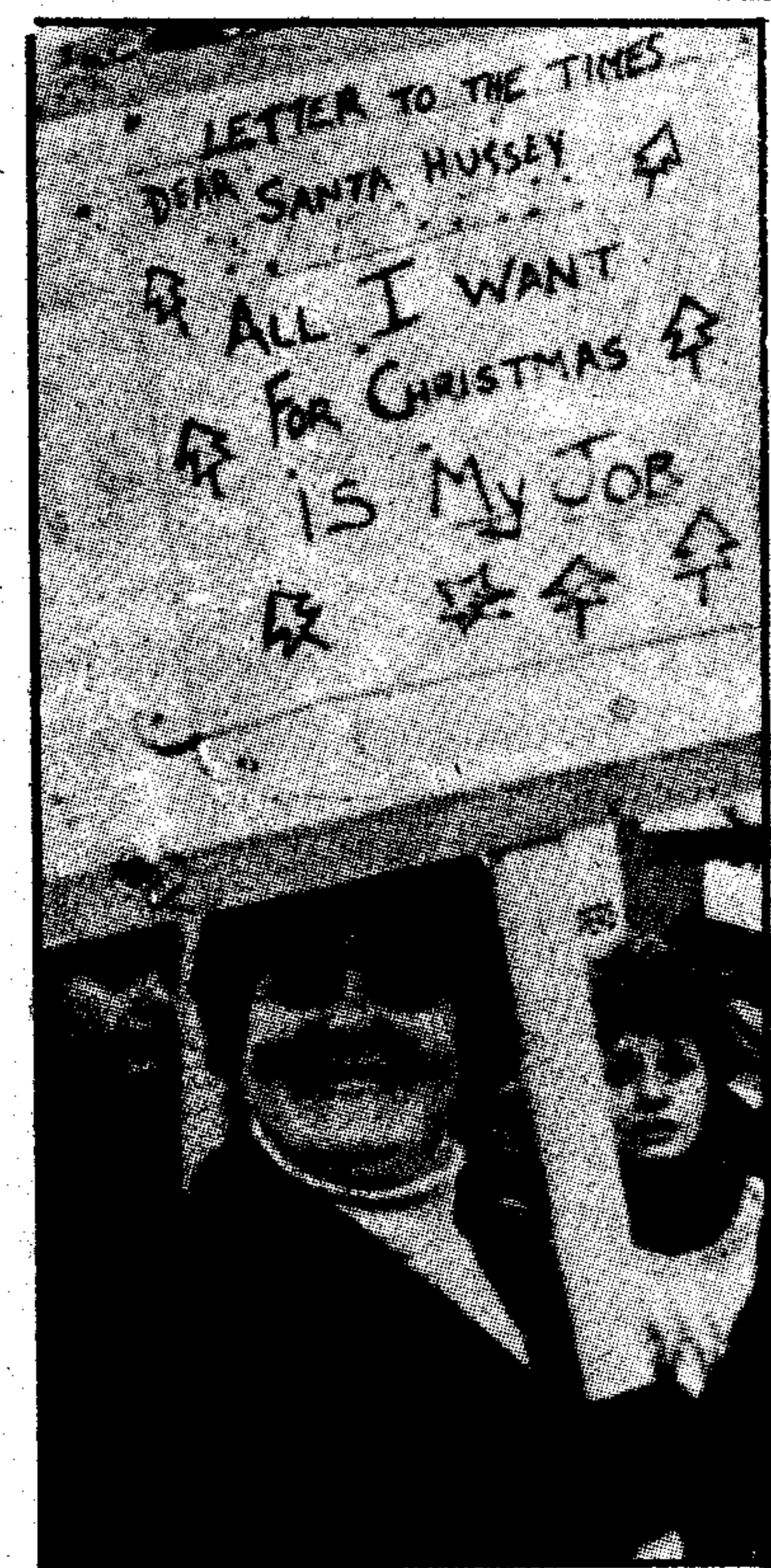
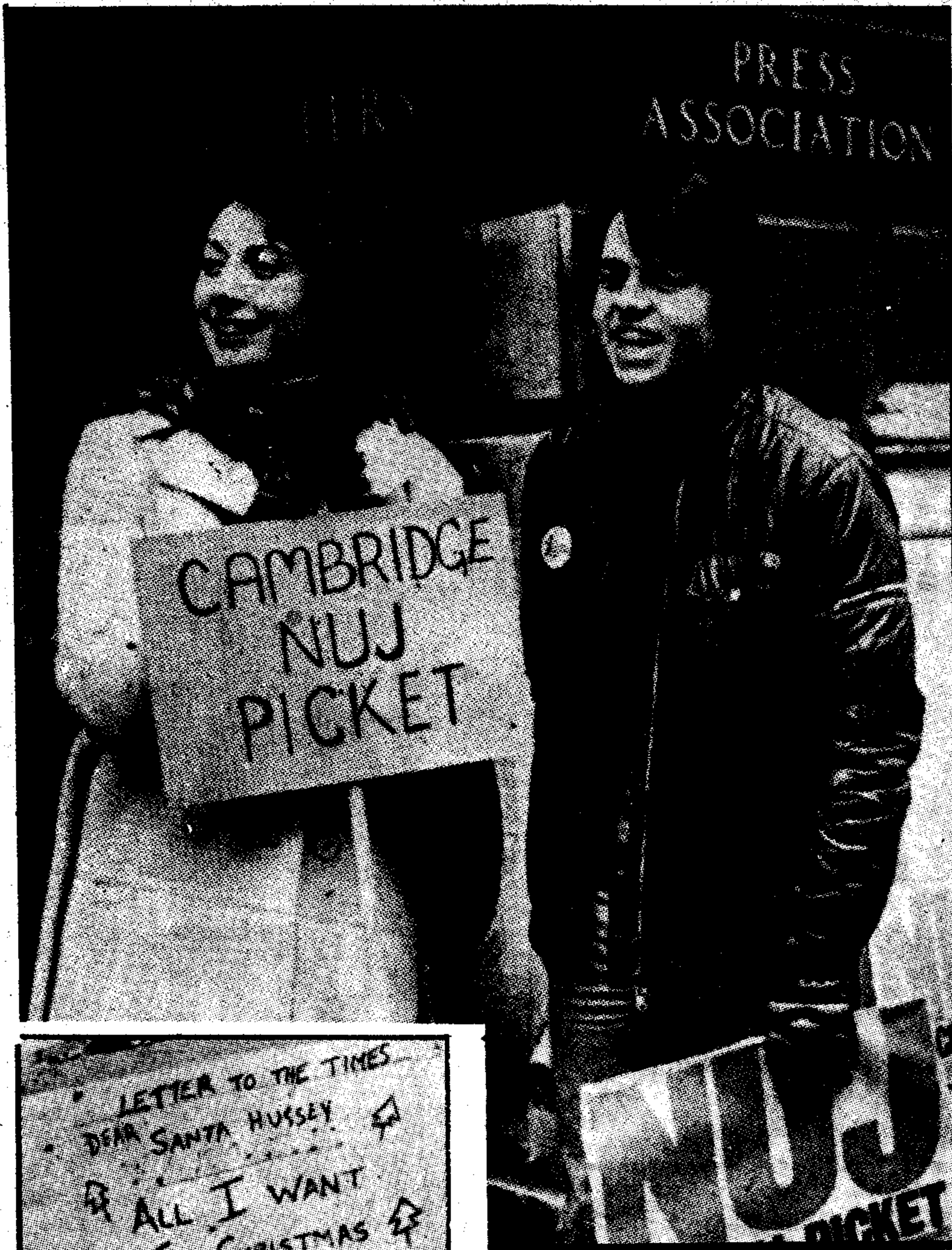
"I can remember during the general strike, we went into the Palais de Danse with our banners. Everybody stopped dancing and cheered. That showed the depth of people's commitment. Imagine doing that now. You wouldn't get past the door."

Seabrook takes these ideas and the dismay at what happened with the Labour government of 1945 to spin out an argument about the collapse of working class militancy and of the struggle for socialism, by contrasting the memories with the 'aimlessness' of unemployed youngsters he interviews. "Some nights we get fed up and we do the ouija board... We did it last night but nothing happened". One kid I know had a chain from his nose to his ear. He got in a fight and somebody grabbed the chain. It tore half his face off". "It's boring. To go anywhere you need a lot of money... What I'd like to do is go somewhere and be somebody. I'd like to be a footballer or a singer."

But such a juxtaposition is cheap and easy, and goes nowhere towards substantiating the author's shallow and impressionistic argument. And its insularity is shown up by the same old miner who remembered the general strike: "We know what we have to lose when we see today's poor, and we do see them every day. They might be on the other side of the world, but they come into your house every night of the week on that thing [he points to the television]. Today's poor are black and hungry."

NIK BARSTOW

THE PICKET line at the Press Association is crucial, because PA provides the basic news service for many papers. Journalists from Cambridge came down to show their support.



BUT THE 'Christmas present' which Times bosses are promising is a notice of dismissal for every worker, on 15th December. The unions are still haggling and dithering. Only united action by the print and media unions, focused round a 'work-in' at the Times, will save these workers' jobs and conditions.

# Workers' ACTION

## Strikers produce their own paper

NINE THOUSAND provincial journalists are on strike for a £20 pay rise. SUE DAVIS, secretary of Cambridge NUJ branch and deputy MoC at the Cambridge Evening News, talked to Workers Action about the strike

On the Cambridge Evening News there is 100% support for the strike among the unionised journalists (72 out of 77). We are maintaining a 24 hour picket. There is a rota worked out so that at least 8 people are there in the day and four at night.

The Evening News has had to reduce the price to newsagents from 8p to 3p because it's so much smaller since the strike.

The scab edition is being produced by the editor, the deputy editor and the 5 non-union journalists, relying mainly on PA and Reuters reports.

There is no real local news coverage in it.

We are producing an alternative newspaper called *Cambridge Brief*, coming out twice a week and paying for itself through advertising. If there's anything over, it goes to the hardship fund.

The paper is eight pages, and has a circulation of 1500. It's being produced by a sympathetic local printer and some shops like W.H. Smiths have agreed to take it.

Cambridge Labour Party has given us the use of its offices and duplicating facilities.

Nationally, NGA members have been instructed not to handle any copy except that coming from the editors of papers in dispute.

Natsopa have told their members not to do anything to undermine the dispute and SOGAT have given similar instructions. London SOGAT chapels have refused to cross picket lines, which is more than the union instruction actually says.

And the T&GWU have ordered newsprint delivery drivers not to cross picket lines.

# Maddox cops out

ON WEDNESDAY 13 December the Bakers' Union executive recommended its members to return to work. A ballot on the latest offer from Rank Hovis McDougall and Associated British Foods had shown a majority of 40 branches to 36 for going back.

The offer amounts to 14% — only 3% more than the 11% offered before the strike started. And the real bite is in the 'strings'.

The unions are to agree to encourage but not force all workers who have left the union to rejoin. In other words, the bosses want to smash the post-entry closed shop.

They also, 'in the interests of

efficiency', insist on:

- The right to adjust manning levels;
- Full mobility of labour;
- The right to review 'unnecessary' breaks;
- The right to stagger shift times;
- The right to divide at will a worker's basic weekly 40 hours into shifts ranging from 4 hours minimum to 10 hours maximum.

In South Wales branch officials were called to a meeting with an executive member and told the details of the offer. They were unanimously against it. In Liverpool, Manchester, London and other big centres there were very

large majorities for going on with the strike.

However, the Bakers' Union Executive gave no advice on the offer at all; it simply abandoned its responsibilities. The General Secretary, Stan Maddox, did say he thought the offer was not enough... but he did nothing to campaign for rejecting it.

It was the rank and file militants who were putting the pressure on the big bakeries by launching pickets of the flour mills. To win the strike, they needed to organise through local strike committees and a national meeting of Bakers' Union shop stewards.

Because of lack of leadership, and lack of positive aid from the TUC, the bakers have won very little.

Militant bakers in Liverpool are insisting that they will not return to work until the closed shop is guaranteed. The closed shop and manning levels will be the key issues in the coming months, as the bosses try to get their own back for the strike.

The militancy that showed itself on the strike picket lines must now be directed to defending union organisation in the bakeries — and to changing the leadership of the Bakers' Union so that the next strike does not meet the same fate as this one.

# THE SHAH'S TORTURERS

IN September, Amnesty International estimated that there were 30 to 40 thousand political prisoners in Iran. Since martial law was declared in September, followed by military government in November, the number has escalated with about 700 arrests daily.

Mme. Marie-France Schmidlin, a French lawyer and a member of a recent delegation to Iran from the International Federation for Human Rights, told an Iran Solidarity Campaign meeting in London on Friday (8th December) what the delegation discovered about the treatment of these prisoners.

On 4th November the delegation questioned the Iranian Minister of Justice. He replied: "I am not able to give the number of political prisoners. Anyway they are in the hands of Military Justice".

Mme Schmidlin called the reports by the Shah's regime of 333 prisoners released on 11th September and 1000 on 25th September a "pack of lies".

Those numbers included people who had been released prior to those dates and some who, having been released, were

then re-arrested.

The Minister of Justice promised further releases on December 10th, Human Rights Day. When asked how many would be released, General Azhari, the head of the present military government, replied — "I have not got time to think of that for the moment. We have urgent and important measures to take. We are taking decisions in favour of the people. The army has always acted on behalf of the people".

Mme. Schmidlin described the level of torture in Iran as "unimaginable — torture has been practised for a long time with a level of refinement and incredible intensity. SAVAK has gone to the lengths of devising a special machine which they have named Apollo: "The prisoner is placed in what resembles a big armchair. His arms are strapped down, with huge weights on the hands to crush them. A metal head mask magnifies the shouts and screams of the prisoner. At the same time he is beaten on the soles of his feet.

"In many prisons, the screams of prisoners being tortured are recorded and used to waken

prisoners periodically during the night."

Marie-France Schmidlin spoke to a woman who was recently released from prison. She had eight children. "Three of her sons have been killed — shot on the street or dead under torture. One daughter has died under torture and another is in prison for life. Her other children are also in prison.

"The mother was arrested and imprisoned for three years during which time she was tortured in an attempt to make her disown the children publicly".

The delegation was not allowed to visit any prisons in Iran. They had asked the Iranian Ambassador in France and were told "it takes six months to organise a visit to a prison in Iran".

Unless you're wanted by SAVAK — in which case they can arrange it in a matter of minutes.

MARY CORBISHLEY

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An earlier Tehran demo. The coach was there for escape if troops attacked