

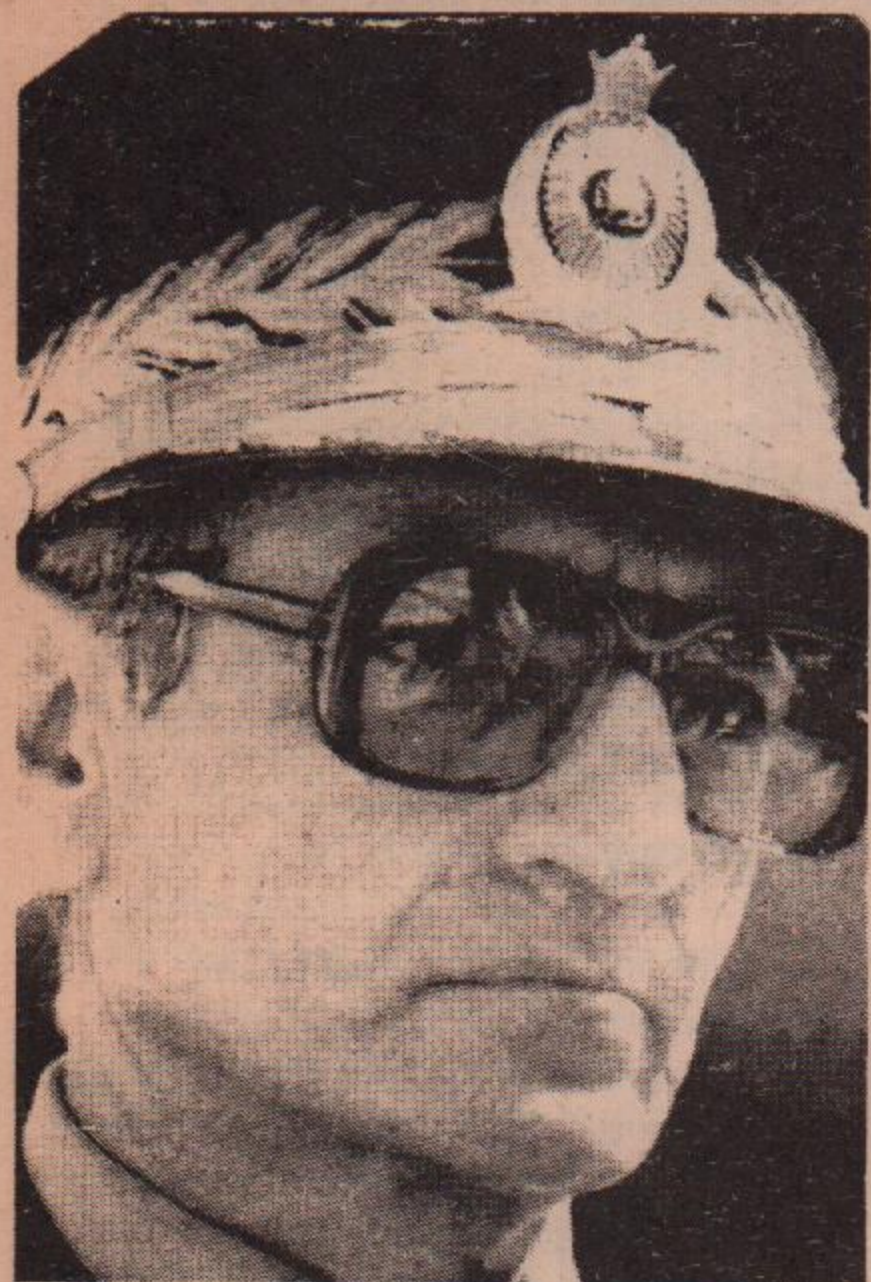
Chartist

SOCIALIST CHARTER MONTHLY NEWS REVIEW

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DECEMBER 1978 No. 73 10p



Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi



Iranian masses take to the streets against the Shah's British-armed forces.

Ford sanctions, denial of political status, support for the Shah —

IN WHOSE INTEREST?

WHETHER CARRYING OUT sanctions against Ford for their 17% wages settlement, continuing to deny political status to Republican prisoners of war or in propping up the Shah of Iran, the role of the Labour Government is the same: the dedicated maintenance of the capitalist system.

Usually the carrying out of these policies is defended as being 'in the national interest', or 'in defence of democracy'. These blinkers which the Labour Government would like the labour movement to wear are beginning to get just a little thin.

Just *whose interest* is actually served by sanctions against Ford for surrendering to the demands of Ford workers after a nine week battle? *Whose interest* is served by the continuing imprisonment of Irish Republicans, in *whose interest* is the maintenance of the rule of the Shah?

SMOKESCREEN

It is on the last of these that the smokescreen of lies and hypocrisy with which the Labour Government needs to surround its operations is rapidly becoming more and more transparent. While even Tory spokesman like Eldon Griffiths have covered themselves for future possibilities by publicly stating that it is Iran we must deal with not any particular Iranian leader such as the Shah, Owen and Callaghan have gone out of their way to take upon themselves the defence of the bloody butcher of Tehran.

With virtually the entire population of Iran outside the few very wealthy members of the ruling clique and the armed forces opposing the Shah, it is tanks and guns, CS gas and riot weapons made in this country, by workers and trade unionists which stand between the Shah and his downfall.

Already thousands have died over the past year in the struggle to remove the Shah. With the imposition of martial law the favourite media myth in this country that the anti-Shah movement is against 'liberalisation' has worn very thin indeed.

The reasons for the Labour Government's support for the Shah are clear: the Shah's regime is the biggest purchaser of British arms; Britain is a major customer for Iranian Oil. Far more than this though, Iran forms a key link in the network of Western Europe's political and military chain against the Soviet Union. The craven but dedicated role of successive British Foreign Secretaries in maintaining

Britain's commitment to NATO has led to support for the Shah.

Joan Maynard correctly observed that "The government appears to think that the Iranian regime is a stabilising force in that part of the world. . . even if it were true it is not the kind of stabilising force which I as a socialist would wish to be supporting."

The Labour Party NEC has issued a press statement which expresses a weak but important dissent from Government policy. This is a step in the right direction but not enough.

FACADE

Against the high moral facade which our sanctimonious Foreign Secretary justifies his support for despotism, for torture, for mass murder, in the defence of international capital, the Labour Party and the Labour Movement must use its strength to come to the aid of our allies in Iran. Blacking and delaying was used against the Pinochet regime in Chile; it can be used to bring about the Shah's downfall.

The number of exiles in foreign countries, students and workers, who fled the Shah's terror, have organised anti-repression campaigns like Campaign Against Repression in Iran (CARI) in this country. As many of these exiles return to play their part in the mass movement it will be the task of the labour movement in countries like Britain to take up the tasks of solidarity.

The events of the last year in Iran have been tremendous but they are just the beginning. Even the coming downfall of the Shah will only begin the process of transforming Iranian society which the mass movement has begun to demand. If the movement is not to go down in defeat — a defeat which would have global implications — they will need the support of the working class movements of all those countries who are backing the Shah. In Britain this means a head-on clash with our Labour Government on this issue and a ruthless exposure of the repressive hypocrisy of David Owen and his kind.

A start can be made by support for the demonstration on December 17th. This will only be a beginning. The record of the British Labour movement on international issues leaves a lot to be desired but workers and trade unionists in this country have a direct interest in, and a direct opportunity to act on this issue and confront the leaders who, at home and abroad, carry out the policies of capitalism while delivering lectures on 'democracy' and 'human rights'.

HOW MUCH LONGER FOR SHAH?

BY GEOFF BENDER

WILL 1979 SEE the fall of Shah Reza Pahlavi, the bloody dictator of Iran? Or will his friends in the United States and in Britain's Foreign Office maintain him in power?

As we go to press, Military rule in Iran approaches its first full month. The Shah's forces are formidable armed and equipped by Britain and the US; 413,000 strong and headed by US-trained General Gholam Reza Azhari, they are now the main barrier standing between the discredited and despised Shah and the wrath of the great majority of the Iranian people. Gholam Reza Azhari now leads the military government of the country while the Shah makes empty pledges of constitutional reforms, of cleaning up corruption and of restoring freedom and democratic rights after a period of military rule. Yet, at 9pm every evening in Tehran, tanks and 100,000 troops police the curfewed streets.

MASSACRED

Since January when the Shah's troops massacred religious demonstrators in the holy city of Qum the people of Iran — Azerbaijanis, Baluchis, Arabs, Kurds and Persians; students, workers, mullahs, professional people, intellectuals, peasants and farmworkers have again and again expressed their hatred and anger for the Pahlavi dynasty. Forty days after the shootings in Qum, on February 18th the people of the Azerbaijani city of Tabriz — which had played a leading role in Iran's two previous periods of revolutionary turmoil — 1906-1912 and 1914-53 — took to the streets to commemorate those murdered in Qum. Finding the mosques locked and guarded by the Shah's forces they marched through the city attacking banks, the headquarters of the Shah's National Resurgence (Rastakhiz) Party, and other public buildings identified with the regime.

In the same city 15 years before, between 6,000 and 10,000 people had been massacred in a two day confrontation. Once again the anger of the people was met with bullets. Figures of dead and wounded are almost impossible to obtain. The city was placed under military rule. The events in Tabriz were followed rapidly by demonstrations and strikes in other cities — Esphahan, Shiraz, Tehran, Mashad, Ahvaz, Qum, Marand, Reza'iyyeh and Babul. The

University of Tehran, the National University and other institutions of higher learning were soon on strike. Within a week Qum was once again under seige by the police and the military.

Using the traditional Moslem three day, seven day and 40 day periods of mourning the movement gathered pace, ebbing and flowing, yet growing steadily more powerful. Soldiers were showered with flowers on some demonstrations, and the regime was forced to use troops from other areas to crush local unrest for fear of fraternisation.

In August the fire took place at the Rex Cinema in Abadan where 600 died as troops prevented people leaving the building or rescuing those trapped inside. Abadan is a city with the largest oil refinery in the world and no shortage of fire fighting equipment. The fire was a massive act of intimidation which the Shah attempted to blame on the Islamic leaders of the mass movement. Yet seven days later the people of Abadan took to the streets, pinning the blame exactly where it belonged: on the Shah. A renewed wave of demonstrations took place in cities across the country. In Qum, the Tehran newspaper *Kayhan* described the march as the biggest ever. Yet even this was as nothing to what was still to come.

On August 27th Prime Minister Jamshid Amouzegar was replaced by Sharif-Emami who formed a "government of national reconciliation". Making what he thought were concessions to the mass movement and announced his willingness to enter negotiations with the leaders of the opposition. The imperial calendar was discarded for the old Islamic one, the ministry of women's affairs was scrapped — token designed to appease the mullahs who had been in the forefront of the mass movement.

cont'd page 6

DEMONSTRATION
Labour break all links with the Shah!

Down with arms sales!

Owen Out!

Assemble: 1.00 pm Speakers Corner.

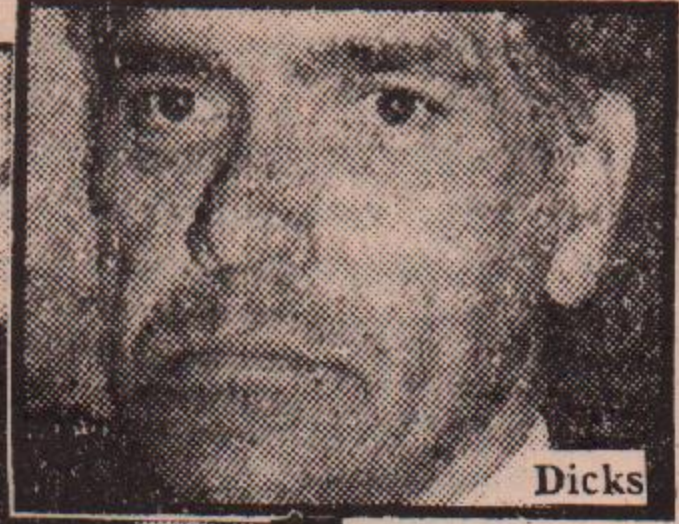
Saturday December 17th.

Organised by C.A.R.I.

Housing and Race in London Racism rules in Hillingdon



Janmohammed and his daughter



Dicks

THE LAST MEETING of the Tory-controlled council in the London Borough of Hillingdon dissolved in chaos when the councillors voted by 46 votes to 16 to lift a ban brought in by the previous Labour council in 1973 preventing the National Front from letting council premises. Police cleared the 150-strong crowd from the public gallery throwing out left wing Labour councillor Bob Lewis along with the protestors.

The decision to lift the ban on the fascists, which was opposed by three Tories including one Asian councillor, as well as by the entire Labour Group, was the latest in a series of hawkish and racist steps taken by the leadership of Hillingdon Council since the Tories seized control last May.

From the beginning, the new council in Hillingdon made it clear they would refuse to house homeless immigrants arriving at Heathrow Airport which is in the borough. The Tory administration also sought confrontation with clerical staff at the Civic Centre when they insisted on bringing in their own secretarial staff. Moves have been made also to close a law centre and to sell off council houses.

INFAMY

But it is on the racial front that Hillingdon's council has achieved infamy. At the centre of events in this respect has been Hillingdon housing chief Terry Dicks who was driven home from the council meeting in the back of a police van.

The crudeness and blatancy of Dicks' racism was highlighted recently in the case of Mohamed Jaffer Janmohammed and his family who were 'dumped' at the Foreign Office after a night in temporary accommodation in Hillingdon. What is probably less well-known is the contrast between the treatment meted out to Janmohammed and his family and that received by White Rhodesian Peter Turvey and his family.

Peter Turvey, his wife and seven children flew into Heathrow from Salisbury where they still own a £30,000 house. Arriving at breakfast time they were installed in a three-room flat in the council's Mead House Hostel, Hayes by lunchtime. A small grant for food and living expenses was also made available to them. Turvey has not disclosed the money he had on arrival.

The contrast with the Janmohammed case could not be starker. Janmohammed had lost much of the family money when after the death of his wife who had Kenyan citizenship he, as a British passport holder, was not granted a permit to continue the family business. After a four year wait for an entry voucher he was broke. The High Commission in Nairobi assured him that this would not affect his entitlement to entry.

On arrival he, his daughter and three sons had between them 190 Kenyan shillings (£13). A genuine mistake was apparently made when their plight was referred to the Hillingdon emergency housing unit — it was reported that they had £190.

However, the rest of the treatment they received was by no means accidental. After a day and night in the airport lounge they arrived at the Hillingdon offices where Janmohammed and his daughter were quizzed for several hours by housing officers. Dicks, who personally handles all requests for housing of homeless people from Heathrow, clearly decided to humiliate this family. Giving them one night's hotel accommodation he sent them to the Foreign Office the next day where a bevy of press photographers and reporters were waiting for them.

Across London, from the Foreign Office to the Passport Office, the family was hounded by press and TV reporters. Even after a hotel was found for them by Shelter Homeless Action Centre, the press followed. On the Wednesday, they left London and, by a circuitous route, went to friends in the North.

Despite Dicks' denial of racism the treatment of this family — whether designed to humiliate them or embarrass the Foreign Office — was racist to the core. Perhaps the only good thing to come out of this case, and the rescinding of the ban on the NF, is in drawing out the connections between racism and the other policies of Tory councils like Hillingdon. Any fightback which doesn't take up the racism which is central to the thinking and policies of the likes of Dicks and the Hillingdon council leaders will not get far.



A15
Humber Bridge

HULL DIARY

HUMBERSIDE HASSLES

WHICH POLITICAL ISSUE has generated most heat in the last four years, if local headlines and correspondence columns are to be believed? I regret to say that it has been local government reform. Specifically, the creation of Humberside out of East Yorkshire and northern Lincolnshire.

120,000 people signed a petition got up by a businessperson from Bridlington (population 27,000). 82% of those questioned in a poll favoured the retention of Yorkshire in the place name. Local councils, umpteen parish councils in the rural areas and even Humberside County Council itself have resolved to continue supporting Lincolnshire and East Yorkshire as postal addresses. Passions run so high that worthy gatherings of stout citizens such as the annual dinner of the Chartered Institute of Transport (i.e. road haulage bosses) are interrupted by "loud heckling" on this subject.

Now at one level this may represent harmless, perhaps rather conservative-minded, eccentricity. But the manner in which local government was "reformed" with the full complicity of successive Conservative and Labour governments has a lot to do with the current preoccupations with more open administration and more devolved centres of local power. In other words, much of the fury over what on the surface is just a change of nameplate on the town hall is motivated by the same kind of grievances and resentment against remote and inaccessible power which built the successful (it seems) campaigns for assemblies in Scotland and Wales.

Take Hull. The nation's fifth city. While being forced to fall in with a

town (Grimsby) with which it has a deep-seated economic rivalry and a region (South Humberside/North Lincolnshire) which forms no natural part of its hinterland whatsoever, at the same time finds itself stripped of some of its most basic social functions: education. As of the last county elections, a Tory shire administers education in one of the most loyal and solid Labour cities.

This is the background to demands by the "Big Nine" non-metropolitan cities, of which Hull is one, for a "restoration" of power long cherished, and even (illogically) for metropolitan status for the county on a par with the wholly urbanised conglomerations of Greater Manchester, Merseyside etc.

Important political points need to be made. The trend towards centralisation of the state and the diminution of the powers of local government ("the local state") has, especially in peripheral areas, met with resistance which is based as much on a muddled striving for greater democracy and accountability as on backward-looking sentiment (although there is undoubtedly an element of the latter bound up in the whole basket of problems). The real and genuine scandal of local government reform must include the creation of such as the area health authorities whose functions have been effectively removed from that limited scope for local sanction and popular pressure through local elections and — as we have seen in the campaigns to save Townend Maternity Home and reverse the health cuts — permit "democratic" scrutiny at one stage further removed from the corrupt and inadequate system of local government they replace.

TOWARDS 'AFFIRMATIVE ACTION'?

SINCE 1971 the debate concerning Council housing and its allocation has grown steadily more vocal each year.

Despite the continuing shortages of decent houses, the ever-growing waiting lists, the cutbacks in expenditure, one outstanding problem has arisen: When there is public housing available — is everyone who is entitled to a tenancy getting a fair deal?

With the massive expansion of public housing in the 1960s, and the growth of ethnic communities in the inner cities, especially London, the evidence of the 1971 National Census showed that many groups were getting a worse deal than the rest, given the shortages, the waiting lists and the cutbacks.

"In *Race and Council Housing in London*, the Ru. nymede Trust found from the 1971 Census data that in accommodation administered by the GLC and several London Boroughs, there was a clear pattern of 'New Commonwealth' tenants being found on the worst housing estates", (*Race and Local Authority Housing*, a report from the London Housing Research Group 1977). The report went on to detail another enquiry by the Labour GLC, *Colour and the Allocation of GLC Housing* and even further evidence from the prestigious Political and Economic Policy Report: *Racial Minorities and Public Housing*.

All in all then the evidence of disproportionate or unequal allocations of housing units to black people and others was clear. This

is clearly the effect of certain actions by public administrators. But what is the cause?

Racism or 'Lower Aspirations'?

Has it been the unconscious actions of the system which have meant that black people get the worst housing? Are white working class people prepared to put up with less rubbish than their black fellow workers? Or is the whole problem an indirect product of racism pervading all public institutions?

The 1976 Race Relations Act. (which has consolidated all previous laws against racialism) abolished the Community Relations Commission and the Race Relations Board, both to be replaced by the *Commission for Racial Equality*. Even the name has suggested the new approach. Section 35 of this law states: 'Housing authorities will be permitted to look at their minority population in terms of special needs which they have to meet: such as those of homeless black people, or the elderly from ethnic minority groups'.

In what has always been a complex problem, the law now combines the concepts of need with social 'dis-advantage'.

Since the Borough elections of May 1978, these issues have come to light again. The Commission for Racial Equality has given notice of an official inquiry into housing allocations of the London Borough of Hackney. Controversy has thus arisen over the reasons for such an inquiry. Are they suggesting that



Hackney has had a 'bias' against certain ethnic groups, or has the effect simply been the result of an

by Mark Douglas

allocation system or procedure in which black people 'self-select' the worst housing. Is it a combination of both factors?

Whose Need?

A recent report by ALARM (the All-Lambeth Anti-Racist Movement) entitled *'Is Lambeth Council Housing Racist?'* said: "Lambeth has over 30,000 occupied council houses while another 17,000 people are waiting to get one. Over the last ten years, as successive councils have tried to deal with this crisis, they have given out their houses in a way which is inherently unfair and discriminatory against black people."

Their words are carefully chosen as they continue: "The Council is supposed to house those in most need — but it doesn't. The reason for this is the Council's priority system. Under this system you are in the lowest category if you are on the Council waiting list". The report goes on to outline the fact that black people accumulate the most on the bottom rung of the priority scale — 4th priority — needing rehousing because of homelessness or are on the waiting list.

Although black people make up 40% of priority housing need they make up only 20% on the priority scales.

ALARM end by calling for:

- * An open points system.
- * Regular monitoring and statistics.
- * No 'priority groups'.
- * More expansion into old housing, and more cash spent on modernising estates.

Whose Records?

It would seem that one reason why the anti-Racist group does not specifically call this policy 'racist' is because along with Camden, Wandsworth and some other boroughs, Lambeth has a policy of keeping *ethnic records*, a device in which constant monitoring can be done and allocation can be seen to operate at least according to some yardstick — albeit in secret!

A policy of filing the racial, ethnic or simple geographic origin of all housing applicants (also employment, education, health etc.), the issue has yet to be resolved for the 1981 Census has not yet been agreed by the Labour movement, although 'progressive opinion' suggests that the keeping of records will eventually prevail for all public authorities. Either way the problem of racism, whether in its conscious or unconscious aspects, and its effects needs more research.

It has been all too easy to attack overt racism in the last ten years, especially when mixed with the neo-Fascists; the origins of racism in imperialist history and its inculcation into the soft machine of late capitalism has been barely touched.

'Affirmative action', American-style, or 'positive discrimination' British style may only be short term responses to the limitations of bourgeois democracy and the first hesitant steps towards socialist planning on a humane and democratic scale.

THE LEFT AND IRELAND PRE-1968

FOR MOST OF the past ten years the political arena in Northern Ireland has not been Parliament or the Conference Hall. Extra-Parliamentary activities—be they Civil Rights marches, the 'Bloody Sunday' murders, the Ulster Workers' Council strikes, or the campaigns in support of internees and Prisoners of War—have been the key to political developments in the northern statelet.

For people in Britain this represents a considerable challenge. British democracy revolves around Parliamentary and Conference debates and elections. Revolutionary traditions, street battles and class conflict are played down or denied—often by labour leaders as much as historians. Given this, it is not surprising that developments in Ireland frequently produce uncomprehending shrugs in Britain.

APPRECIATION

This is not to say that political opinion in the British Labour Movement has no tradition of an appreciation of the 'Irish problem'.

In the early 1960s—when the dominant issue in northern Irish politics was unemployment rather than the very existence of the statelet itself—British politicians, and leaders of political opinion, in the labour movement were able to



SUN LONDON

offer some perspectives.

In December 1960, for example, a telegram was sent to Brookeborough, then Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. The signatories of that telegram called for the release, by Christmas, of all political prisoners (i.e. republicans) being interned by the Stormont Government. Among the signatories were 55 Labour MPs including Tony Benn, Barbara Castle, Tom Driberg and, more surprisingly, John Stonehouse, Ray Gunter, and Richard Marsh. Presumably these worthies signed the telegram as good democrats. In a period when the IRA was inactive and the Northern state was not threatened it was judged safe to make such a call.

POLICE STATE

The *Daily Worker* (paper of the Communist Party of Great Britain at that time), reporting on the sending of the telegram, commented: 'This is an appeal which should be supported by every democrat in Britain. It is British troops which occupy Northern Ireland and prop up the police State on our doorstep.'

When in October 1964 it was suggested that troops be used in action in Belfast the *Daily Worker* commented in an Editorial: 'Instead

of the troops being used, they should be withdrawn from Northern Ireland. They are not there for the benefit of the people of Ireland, but to keep the country divided in the interests of Imperialism. . . They (the Tory government) should be compelled to stop interfering there (Ireland), so that the Irish people can be free to decide their own future.'

Such unequivocal statements will not be found in today's left labour newspapers. Given this it is necessary to understand how the events of the past ten years have affected thinking in Britain. These events also present us with an opportunity to come to a better understanding of what it is that informs political loyalties in the North.

We can see the needs of the Loyalists who would govern the statelet and the motivation for continuing direct intervention by Britain. We can also identify the political features and forces in post-partitioned Ireland that represent a basis for a progressive, socialist future. Conversely we must isolate pro-capitalist tendencies within the Irish political economy. Without all this, prescriptions for the 'Irish problem' will, despite the best of intentions, meet with failure.

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

It is usual to date the present phase of Irish history from the march organised in Derry by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) on October 5 1968. That march was batoned off the streets by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). From that date on any confidence the Catholic minority had in O'Neill's Stormont Government to legislate civil rights reforms began to evaporate.

The date also marked a turn in the tactics of the minority. Following the failure of the IRS's campaign in the late 1950s the minority had turned to 'legal' Parliamentary methods for securing equality of rights and treatment.

They had been encouraged by the succession of Brookeborough by Terence O'Neill as Prime Minister in 1963. O'Neill was seen as a liberal, a man who would not accept the Protestant ascendancy.

TOLERANCE

Whatever O'Neill's own views he did not carry the Unionist Party with him. Certainly he thought that the Catholics ought to show more patience and tolerance—as if they had been shown any in the 40 odd years of the State's existence.

For O'Neill NICRA became a front for communists, republicans, and other undesirable misleaders of the Catholic minority. A version of this view was also shared by the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Whilst the official trade union movement supported the general idea of the civil rights campaign they judged it necessary to 'stand aloof' in order to be 'more objective'.

This indicates a weakness in the Irish trade union movement which has a long history. Given the dominance of Protestant workers in the movement it is difficult for the NIC to attack discrimination against Catholics in any direct way without being accused of defending Republicanism. As NICRA came to be increasingly identified with the

Catholic community so the attitude of the ICTU to NIC became increasingly lukewarm. Effectively, then, the NIC refused to promote working-class unity when unity on basic democratic demands was being sought.

SMASH

Stormont's attempts to smash the un-Parliamentary civil rights movement served to have the opposite effect. Civil Rights marches came to be demonstrations of the lack of democratic rights bestowed upon the Catholic population by the guardians of the Protestant Ascendancy.

By mid-November 1968 the campaign was centred in Derry around the demand 'One man, one vote' which struck at the notoriously gerrymandered councils. O'Neill was not prepared to concede this demand because it would have split his party.

When on November 30 NICRA organised a 5000 strong march in Armagh the marchers were prevented from reaching the town centre by the RUC. The town centre had been occupied by Ian Paisley and his supporters and they had armed themselves. The RUC made no effort to remove the Paisleyites, preferring to halt NICRA's legal march. By capitulating to Paisley, the RUC—and O'Neill—displayed their ultimate loyalties and further strengthened NICRA.

Sensing developments, O'Neill made a televised appeal to the Civil Rights demonstrators: 'Your voice has been heard and clearly heard. Your duty now is to play your part in taking the heat out of the situation.'

Some of the prominent figures in the Civil Rights Movement similarly sensed what was required to test O'Neill and his ability to give anything to the minority.

The People's Democracy—which had been formed in Derry after the October 5 march—planned a four-day march from Belfast to Derry, starting on January 1 1969. In the

words of Michael Farrell, the march organiser, 'the march would be the acid test of the governments intentions.' Either the government would face up to the extreme right of its own Unionist Party and protect the march from the 'harassing and hindering' immediately threatened by Major Bunting (Paisley's right-hand man), or it would be exposed as impotent in the face of sectarian thuggery, and Westminster would be forced to intervene, re-opening the whole Irish question for the first time in 50 years. The march was modelled on the Selma-Montgomery march in Alabama in 1966, which had exposed the racist thuggery of America's Deep South and forced the US government into major reforms.'

AMBUSHES

THE MARCH WAS subject to ambushes by the Loyalists, conspiring with the RUC, at a number of points along its route. On January 4, however, the march reached Derry 'to a rapturous welcome from a huge crowd.' the same evening the RUC Reserve force ran riot through Derry's Catholic Bogside. Afterwards barricades were built and Free Derry was born.

The marchers had made their point and it was not lost on O'Neill: 'The march was, from the start, a foolhardy and irresponsible undertaking. At best those who planned it were careless of the effects which it would have; at worst they embraced with enthusiasm the prospect of adverse publicity causing further damage to the interests of Northern Ireland as a whole.'

'Enough is enough. We have heard sufficient for now about civil rights; let us hear a little about civil responsibility.' In the months that followed the lines of political support were drawn more clearly.

In the election on February 24 there were a number of constituencies with two unionist candidates.

Britain in Ireland WHEEL TURNS

One was pro-O'Neill, the other—a hardline follower of Brian Faulkner—was clearly anti-O'Neill. At that time the majority of all Unionist backbenchers were against the Prime Minister.

The election hardly resolved the battle. The Unionist electorate were evenly divided. Generally speaking O'Neill won the support of the landed gentry, the modern-minded businessman and the professional middle-class. Faulkner was backed by the Protestant workers, farmers and small businessmen.

For the Catholic, anti-unionist, minority developments within the Civil Rights movement were of more import. The movement was getting tougher and more radical. Civil Rights leaders met with some successes in the February elections, successes which were crowned by Bernadette Devlin's election for the Westminster seat of Mid-Ulster in April. Delvin was a member of PD.

As the divisions in northern Irish society hardened it was certain that O'Neill—who tried to establish a middle-ground—would have to go. He resigned on April 28, days after winning Unionist acceptance of the principle 'One Man, One Vote'.

By now, however, the question of mere Parliamentary democracy was being superseded. The whole existence of the Northern state was in question. Michael Farrell sums up the position: 'The Catholic, with new self-confidence, would no longer tolerate second-class citizenship; the Unionist grass roots, kept loyal for nearly fifty years by anti-Catholic propaganda and Protestant privilege, would tolerate no concessions and every escalation of minority agitation only made them more intransigent.'

Throughout the summer of 1969 rioting and violence broke out. The Catholic minority in open rebellion against the Orange state forced that State into acts of self-preservation. The crunch came in August as Loy Loyalists prepared for their annual celebration of Protestant ascendancy—the Apprentice Boys' parade in the largely Catholic Derry. Plans for the march—and its protection by the RUC—came after a year of bans and attacks on Civil Rights marchers.

The parade, predictably enough, precipitated a riot and the Bogside

KEITH SAVAGE examines the counties over the last decade. British circle back to the 1968 efforts to 'U



RUC at work

Catholics were put under seige by the RUC. A Bogside Defence Association had been set up to defend the area—in anticipation of RUC invasions—and it assumed a fiercely Republican character. As the tricolour and Starry Plough flew over the Bogside, morale was boosted by a speech from Dublin by Jack Lynch, leader of the Southern government: 'It is evident also that the Stormont government is no longer in control of the situation. Indeed the present situation is the inevitable outcome of the policies pursued for decades by successive Stormont governments. It is clear also that the Irish government can no longer stand by and see innocent people injured and perhaps worse'. Lynch called for recognition 'that the re-unification of the national territory can provide the only permanent solution for the problem'

It was in these circumstances that the British Home Secretary, James Callaghan, agreed—on August 14—to the intervention, in Derry, of British troops. In an official statement Callaghan declared 'The government of Northern Ireland has informed the United Kingdom Government that as a result of the severe and prolonged rioting in Londonderry (sic) it has no alternative but to ask for the assistance of the troops at present stationed in Northern Ireland to prevent a breakdown of law and order.'



a B-Special.

and 1968-1978 S FULL CIRCLE

crisis of British imperialist rule in the six counties policy, he argues, has now turned full circle to 'sterilise' the situation.



The Ireland Act, 1949, affirms that neither Northern Ireland nor any part of it will in any event cease to be part of the United Kingdom without the consent of the Parliament of Northern Ireland, and the United Kingdom Government reaffirms the pledges previously given that this will remain the position so long as the people of Northern Ireland wish."

In coming to the aid of a civil power unable to maintain 'law and order' the troops could only be used to resolve the situation either by winning the demands made by the Catholic minority, in the face of Loyalist opposition, or defeating the Catholic rebellion.

It was plain from the outset that the policy of British Governments would be to defeat those opposed to the Orange State. For this bloody restoration of 'law and order' the euphemism 'peace-keeping' was coined.

In essence the history of the events in the North from August 1969 through to today has been the war between the minority population and the Loyalists backed by the British state. What is at stake is the continued existence of the Orange State and the Union itself. Consequently the historically determined divisions within the Irish people have been restated. British governments have responded to all developments by endeavouring to pacify Loyalism and to isolate and defeat Republicanism. By attempting to classify Republicanism as an illegitimate political aspiration it follows that the restoration of 'law and order' will be dependent on the defeat of Republican 'criminals'.

This is not to say that British tactics have remained the same throughout the period.

On the purely military front we have seen a move away from the indiscriminate and counter-productive from the British point of view — murders on 'Bloody Sunday' and mass internment. In recent months the army have adopted an increasingly low profile with the tasks of the Special Air Services (SAS) being given priority. Typically the SAS, a highly trained and disciplined unit, operate in a secretive and 'plain clothes' fashion. They have been obliged to admit responsibility for the murder of a number of Irish people — who have invariably been said to have adopted threatening poses thereby justifying their murder.

Internment has been superseded by the apparently democratic procedures culminating in legalised internment in Long Kesh.

Before reaching Long Kesh the average prisoner is likely to have been interrogated by the RUC — probably at Castlereagh detention centre. The tortures used by the RUC to extract confessions have been detailed by Amnesty International. Armed with these confessions the RUC can be confident of a con-

viction before the no-jury Diplock court.

"Guilty criminals" are thence despatched to Long Kesh — in the case of men — and to Armagh jail in the case of women. These judicial procedures do not compare with procedures on mainland Britain. Clearly they are not "normal" legal processes. The "guilty" victims are something more than criminals. Their status is clear to the prisoners themselves — they are Prisoners of War. This is all part of a British attempt to weaken those sections of the Republican movement most capable of organising and leading opposition to British presence.

ATTEMPTS TO make criminals of those in opposition to British presence, and the continued division of Ireland, are accompanied — as we have already suggested — by more selective army operations. Rather than the blanket soaking of Catholic towns and communities, thereby unflinching demonstrating that the British Army is one of occupation, troops are now adopting a lower-profile.

This is not to say that the 'security forces' are being reduced in effect or that gentler methods are to be employed.

On the one hand more particular targets are being chosen, on the other the RUC and the Ulster Defence Regiment are being increasingly utilised and strengthened.

Rather than alienate the Catholic communities wholesale, attempts are being made to isolate and 'criminalise' those at the forefront of the war. Political parties like Provisional Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Socialist Party are obvious targets. Similarly, community groups — both social and political — have been subjected to continuous harassment.

RAIDED

Community advice and information centres, organised in the main by Sinn Fein and the Relatives Action Committee, have been raided and have had files and records seized. In this way the attempts of the alienated minority to organise their lives independently of the Orange state have been disrupted.

Political organisations such as the Workers' Research Unit — which has endeavoured to provide information for militants — have suffered similar treatment.

This specific and discriminate type of activity does not require the 15,000 British troops stationed in the North over the past year. Indeed it has been suggested that the simple anti-Catholic, anti-Republican indoctrination of the average British soldier renders him/her quite unsuited for this level of operation. What is required is a force more highly trained and disciplined, or a force with greater local knowledge. This is where the SAS, RUC and UDR come in.

CHANGES

In recent weeks a series of articles in the Dublin Review *Hibernia* has detailed the changes in the use of security forces in the North.

Plans have been made to reduce the number of British troops to below 3,000. This reduction in number is to be almost immediate. In future the troops will provide military back-up for the RUC and the UDR. The UDR has replaced the Army as the 'first response' force in all but six RUC sub districts. This means that it is called to give military assistance in almost every part of the North.

The UDR is now 8,000 strong and includes, 2,500 full-time soldiers.

As a force the UDR is equipped with normal British Army small arms and Shorland armoured cars.

The RUC for its part is increasingly engaged in 'riot control'.



Angry Civil Rights marchers at the corner of Ogle Street, after their march was stopped by the RUC and Paisleyites.

"The core of the RUC's riot response is the Special Patrol Group — an elite force which has more than 300 hand-picked specially-trained personnel in Belfast, Derry and Armagh. . . Each section is quite separate from the local police structure in a particular area. . ."

"Its equipment, which has been seen thus far, consists of riot helmets and visors, shields, batons, gas masks and plastic bullet guns. In addition to this riot gear the SPG has Walther pistols, pump action shotguns, Sterling sub-machineguns and American M1 carbines" (*Hibernia* 26 October).

The force has been used to baton charge protesters such as those in Andersonstown marching in support of the H-block POWs and against the conditions they are enduring.

MODERNISATION

The RUC itself is now 6,000 strong — double its 1960s strength. In the light of the strengthening and modernisation of the forces of the

RUC and UDR — the very forces which buckled in 1969 prompting massive British Army intervention — it is not surprising that the troops are able to withdraw from the limelight. It can be of no comfort to the Catholic population, however, to know that they are being replaced by a force which draws largely on those that made up the B specials in the 1960s. The Cameron Commission, which had been appointed by O'Neill in January 1969, had described the B special as 'a partisan and para-military force recruited exclusively from Protestants'.

At the same time the Hunt Report — which had been commissioned by Callaghan — recommended the disbandment of the B specials and the disarming of the RUC. The wheel has turned full circle. (The Hunt Report also called for the establishment of the force which was to become the UDR). In this scheme of 'Ulsterisation' the RUC's chief constable, Sir Kenneth Newman, is subordinate to military

control indefinitely. It is worth pointing out that these developments more than accord with promises made by Roy Mason to the Ballylumford Power Workers during the May 1977 Loyalist strike.

In acceding to those workers' demands Mason promised that;

- 1) The RUC would be built to a strength of 6,500.
- 2) The RUC would be provided with more modern weapons, equipment and vehicles.
- 3) The UDR full-time strength would be increased to 1,800 and further increases considered.
- 4) The laws dealing with 'terrorist' offences would be reviewed.
- 5) Increased emphasis would be placed on 'covert techniques' in 'combatting terrorism'.
- 6) The number of security forces involved in SAS-type operations 'has been doubled and this trend will continue'.

We can only comment that promises made to Catholics have not been fulfilled so faithfully.

LABOUR RESPONSE

FOR THE Irish trade union movement these developments present enormous problems. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s they have attempted to establish working-class unity around 'great social issues' such as housing, unemployment and education. They have deliberately avoided defending Catholics as such so as to avoid upsetting Loyalist workers. Rather, they have called for an end to "all forms of political, social, economic, religious and cultural discrimination practised against the vast majority of the people of Northern Ireland".

Unable to face up to the role of the 'security forces' it is not surprising that the majority of the trade union movement has remained irrelevant to the struggles of the Catholic population. One exception has been the Trade Union Campaign Against Repression which is organised throughout the 32 counties.

In the 26 counties it has been actively opposed to the treatment handed out by Lynch's government to militant Republicans and Socialists. Its role in the six counties could become more crucial. Since it is in the Catholic communities that the Army and RUC have been most active it is hardly surprising that TUCAR should find itself active alongside Republican and Nationalist organisations.

CHALLENGE

TUCAR does more than challenge the traditions and prejudices of trade unionists in Ireland. The policy of the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions is also the policy of the Br British TUC, that is support for the Better Life For All Campaign and the call for a Bill of Rights for the people of Northern Ireland.



PAC demonstration

Early in this article we quoted from the *Daily Worker* of 1964. We said that such unequivocal statements are not to be found today. Many people in the British Labour Movement — undoubtedly sincere in their concern for what future exists for the Irish people — would say that such statements are naive and are a gross simplification of the complexity which is Northern Ireland. They would argue that the real events of post-partition Irish history render such simple statements about British Imperialism in Ireland as an inadequate basis for contemporary analysis. By arguing for the need to defeat something called British Imperialism and for the support of all forces which oppose that Imperialism we remove the question of working class unity from the agenda, do we not? After all what about the democratic rights of Protestant workers who are opposed to the re-unification of Ireland?

ATMOSPHERE

It is in this atmosphere that calls have been made for the British Labour Party to organise in the North. It is argued that partition is not a problem in the minds of most workers. If there existed a pro-Union party, that was not tainted by the Orange Lodge connection

then workers, from either side of the sectarian divide, would be attracted to that party. Such a development, it is argued, would mark the beginnings of working-class unity in Northern Ireland. This call to the British Labour Party is a logical extension of approach of the BLFAC with its appeal to common class interests.

This approach conforms well with British Labour Movement traditions of progress and working-class gains. Accordingly it is possible that the call of the Campaign for Labour Representation may get a sympathetic hearing.

Regular readers of the *Chartist* will know we do not give one ounce of support to this call. We have argued that the Republican movement represents a progressive force for the whole of the Irish people and that the struggle for the resolution of the national question, for the rights of the Irish people as a whole to determine their own political future, will mark a step in the direction of a socialist Ireland. The longer Ireland and her people are in any way tied to Britain and British interests the longer the 'troubles' will endure.

Future articles in the *Chartist* will take up developments in the British Labour Movement and the arguments of the Campaign for Labour Representation.

REGULATING THE POOR

IN RECENT MONTHS, social workers up and down the country, led by the hard-pressed workers of east and south London, have been on strike for better wages and for more qualified staff. To many social work is a mysterious job, something to do with helping people who are unable to help themselves. It has to do with 'doing good' — indeed many people, clients included, regard social workers as 'do-gooders', whilst others who may not have obtained what they wished from this last of all possible public resorts, regard social workers only as 'do-badders'.

But what is social work? What were its origins? How did social workers come to have the name of 'do-gooders'? This first of two articles on social work practice looks at the history of one form of public service about which many myths exist.

ORIGINS

Social work as a formal occupation had its origins in the economic and social tensions of the late nineteenth century. Where much of that century is portrayed — and was seen by many contemporaries — as a period of progress, there were economists and social thinkers who recognised, before the mid-century, that there were powerful dangers of stagnation in the economy.

The bourgeoisie's life continued to expand its economic and numerical base, to sponsor new wealth and to increase human manipulation of nature. Working class life, on the other hand, grew more and more oppressive. The bitter depression of 1840-41 was followed in the late 1850's and in the 1860's by workers' riots against their condition in many parts of the country, most worryingly for the middle classes, in London.

Matthew Arnold described the inhabitants of the East End as "those vast, miserable, unmanageable masses of sunken people". Something had to be done to ensure that such "masses" did not get out of hand.

There were, of course, individuals whose consciences were pricked by what they read and in some cases saw of the poverty around them. So out of a combination of social realism in the governing class and social conscience amongst the middle classes grew the various charity organisations that in time created what we know as social work. Central to an understanding of how these organisations functioned is the distinction between the 'deserving' and the 'undeserving' poor.

POOR LAWS

Since Elizabethan times there had existed laws for the regulation of the distribution of charity to paup-

WHOSE WELFARE STATE?

ers (the 'Poor Laws'). Arising themselves out of the need to regulate people in periods of mass unemployment and social upheaval, the poor laws achieved this by providing relief for the care of paupers and by legalising aid so enforcing the practice of making relatives responsible for the poorer members of the family.

By the 1850's, upwards of 10 per cent of the population were genuine paupers. This relief system must be seen for what it was: the bulwark against civil disorder. Witness John Stuart Mill in 1863:

The hatred of the poor for the rich is an evil that is almost inevitable where the law does not guarantee the poor against the extremity of want. The poor man... in England knows that, in the last resort, he has a claim against private property up to the point of bare subsistence; that not even the lowest proletariat is disinherited from his place in the sun. It is to this that I attribute the fact that, in spite of the aristocratic constitution of wealth and social life in England, the proletariat class is seldom hostile, either to the institution of private property or to the classes who enjoy it.

CONDITIONS

Relief arrangements deal with disorder, not simply by giving aid to the displaced poor, but by granting it on condition that they behave in certain ways and, most important, on condition that they work. An excellent contemporary example of this is the operation of the Cohabitation Rule by the 'sex snoopers' of the DHSS.

As the industrial system developed, however, and as it became dependent increasingly upon male labour (as opposed to female and child labour), it became necessary to ensure that those men who were at all physically able to work in factories were encouraged back into the industrial system when for any reason, illness or unemployment, they fell out of it.

From this arose the notion of the 'deserving poor' — those who merited assistance because they could still be of use — against the 'undeserving poor' — those who were of no use to the factory bosses and who could

therefore be ignored. The Poor Law dealt with this latter group by providing relief but by ensuring that such relief did not make this recipient's situation as desirable "as the situation of the independent labourer of the lowest class" (Poor Law Commission, 1834)

In the rural areas especially, the Poor Law provided local employers (e.g. farmers) with cheap labour; relief allowances themselves, often food rather than money, were scaled to market conditions, through they were supposed to be scaled to "bread and children".

DESERVING POOR

The 'deserving poor', on the other hand, were helped rather differently. In 1869 the Charity Organisation Society (COS) was established to coordinate the work of the many charities that existed up and down the country to assist this group especially. The ideas behind these increasingly open combinations of material and moral assistance were those of self help of minimising the interference of the state in the affairs of the individual. The COS believed that "the most serious aspect of poverty was the degradation of the poor man or woman".

The Society argued, however, that indiscriminate charity only made things worse — it demoralised. What was needed instead was a carefully balanced and controlled form of charity, one that would restore a 'man's' self-respect and increase his ability to support himself and his family. The practical aim was to provide the minimal amount of assistance that would enable a man or woman, fallen on hard times, to

JON TAYLOR continues our occasional series on the *Welfare State: Who Benefits*, by examining the growth and contradictions of Social Work.

re-establish themselves and their family.

An identical society was set up in America where similar economic troubles had led the middle class to become apprehensive of social disorder and the ruling class to realise that something positive but not over-generous had to be done.

FACTS GATHERED

In order to provide this minimal amount of assistance, facts about the applicant for help had to be gathered. These facts were seen as providing a social (or sociological) picture of the family. More than that, however, they were thought to provide a scientific basis for charity. The Reverend D.O. Kellogg of the Philadelphia COS wrote: But if charity is a law of love then it gives rise to a system... law is the statement of an order or process, and it is discovered by the human mind through experience. It presupposes observations, classification, generalisation. Charity is a science—the science of social therapeutics.

So we see that what is so often portrayed as the benevolence of the middle class towards the poor should more clearly be seen as an exercise in the efficient and economic management of people through charity. Behind this need to organise the poor by the fear that if the poor were not organised by and harassed to bourgeois society, they would organise themselves against that society in order to demand one of the Poor Law and the charities,

largely by assisting in the assessing of the 'deserving' and the 'undeserving' poor. The COS also sought out those who were cheating the Poor Law Unions; this identification with the Poor Law never made them popular with working people.

CASEWORK

The COS became the Family Welfare Association in 1944. The practical their own making.

The 1927 COS Annual Report was entitled 'Bolshevism and its only true antidote: being the 58th Annual Report of the Council'. The COS attempted in fact to coordinate importance of the COS for social work today is that it developed the idea of 'casework' and therefore of the individual professional 'social worker' who held and investigated such cases.

Today, this professional social worker has almost entirely replaced the 'Lady Bountiful' distributing indiscriminate charity; the central contradiction of such work has thereby — and especially so in recent years — become sharpened. The contradiction, that is, between on the one side the overt (mythical) aim of such work: to assist the poor and needy; on the other the covert (material) aim: to control such people by ensuring that assistance is minimal and conditional upon obedience of certain behavioral norms (e.g. no sex for unsupported mothers).

The second article will examine social work over the years since its origins and today.



marchers in London

campaigning for improved gradings and pay

Social workers still out

DECEMBER IS the fifth month of the strike by Southwark NALGO social workers. It is only now that a new offer has been put forward — the first to be made since the new national offer was thrown out in August. However, these new proposals are particularly divisive — they offer local negotiations, but only on an individual basis. An individual social worker would be able to apply for regarding if she (or he) thought she had a particularly high responsibility or stressful work load.

The proposals were worked out by the National Joint Wages Council. There is some fear that even though they have been thrown out at local level, NALGO nationally, along with non-social worker members of the branch, would force us to accept them.

The whole strike has proved to be

ANN KNIGHT SOUTHWARK NALGO

a long drawn-out affair, with Southwark Council and the social workers playing a 'cat and mouse' game. We have been picketing the Council's depots, and have been supported by the manual workers, particularly in the T & G. But although we have successfully stopped all diesel tankers from crossing the picket lines, the Council have been using diesel oil originally designated for central heating systems in council estates.

Southwark's Labour councillors have shown themselves to be the most intractable of possible employers, refusing any sort of discussion with local NALGO officials. Even though Peckham Labour Party voted in support of us, the councillors said they would not accept directives from the local Labour Party.

NALGO nationally, too, obviously want this strike to end. Throughout the country we have been seen to be a "militant bunch" who are an embarrassment and a thorn in the side of senior local government officers. The NALGO leadership have tried to do as little for us as possible, almost as if they didn't want us in the union at all. If it had hadn't been for the pressure we have managed to exert, they would have given us even less support.

The strikes in Newcastle, Tower Hamlets, and several other London borough's are in danger of being isolated by the NALGO leadership who have refused to sanction strike calls from many other areas. An alliance of all local public sector workers facing similar problems and joint industrial action could provide the necessary muscle to strengthen the social workers strikes for victory.



19th Century — 'deserving' or 'undeserving' poor?

Set-back for 'Murphia' in Islington North

KEITH VENESS, expelled two years ago by the 'Murphia' right-wing who marginally control Islington North CLP, is back in the Labour Party. But not without further hysterical ructions from his opponents.

Veness was expelled two years ago for his fight to expose the way in which the MP Michael O'Halloran, and his supporters, ran the local party through fiddling membership returns, packing meetings, manoeuvres and not a little help from friends in high places: the Catholic Church and Murphy's, the 'lump' building firm.

Twice Veness applied to rejoin the Party and twice he was turned down. The Labour Party NEC this

year opened a full inquiry, yet to report, on the affairs of the Party, and brought in Bill Jones to act as CLP chairman.

In June the NEC ruled Veness should be re-admitted into the Party and it took until the November meeting for this finally to occur. Even after the vote, Jones' ruling that the GMC had accepted Veness's membership was unsuccessfully challenged. But the right-wing were outraged and displayed their respect for Labour democracy by disrupting the meeting until it had to be abandoned.

Clearly, when the NEC inquiry does report reconstitution of the CLP will doubtless be an issue of serious consideration.

Attempted purge in Stockport South

Stockport South CLP is the scene of yet another inter-party battle. Here luckless party activists have been saddled with Callaghan secretary, Tom McNally as their new candidate. Not satisfied with their vote-rigging (see July *Chartist*), the right wing has now taken to purging opponents.

The whole Executive Committee was suspended and the Party President, Alan Mobbs, was removed from the chair at the October GMC. The right-wing had the approval of the Regional Organiser for this draconian move, and it was the Regional Office that actually suspended the EC.

Hotfoot from the NEC came Eric Heffer and Reg Underhill on a peace-making mission. A special GMC was called for November.

where the NEC "mediators" proposed six unity proposals. The left in the Party favoured the proposals - mainly as a recognition of the reality of McNally's selection - hoping the CLP could resume more serious political work.

The hawkish McNally supporters reluctantly dropped their expulsion moves but refused to reinstate the Executive or Chairman, although Heffer had pointed out that they acted in defiance of the Party rules.

Despite these measures, and the threats of violence from some right-wingers which have become a feature of all meetings, the left in the CLP have decided to wait until the AGM before trying to rectify the un-democratic procedures operating in the Party.

ALL THE FROTH and agitation with which the state surrounded the Secrets Trial at the Old Bailey has - for the most part - subsided and Colonels and bureaucrats have slipped back behind their curtain of Official Secrecy.

From behind their screen of murky acts and regulations they will continue to observe, make notes upon and harass those trying to develop a more sane and less brutal society than that provided under late British capitalism.

Aubrey, Berry and Campbell were fined, given their suspended sentences and the British state - especially the Labour Attorney General, Sam Silkin, was made to look rather foolish for a while.

EFFECT

However the effect of this trial and recent events should not be lost on those fighting for a democratic form of social order.

The trial itself was only partially reported in the media as a result of the use of sections of the Act and little of the political nature of the charges filtered through - certainly not in the popular press.

At best the readers of the *Mirror*, *Sun*, *Express* etc., will think that the state seemed to have gone slightly daft - at worst they will concur that 'National Security' must be maintained at all costs.

The callous treatment of Astrid Proll - victim of collaboration between Britain and the West German 'strong state' and a sneering innuendo-littered coverage by the press, at a time when six anarchists have been accused of conspiring to cause explosions (they were arrested six months ago) are all symptomatic of a more visible strong-state going public.

The army and police have played their gun games on a Manchester working class estate as well as on the runways at Heathrow, the police attachment to film and photography sessions at demo's, pickets and meetings goes on apace and those trying to raise the question of Britain's military occupation of the Northern Ireland statelet face a battery of repression.

What has been the response to this process?

Unfortunately it has been a muted one. The Labour government sits impassively on its manifesto commitment to more open government and the repeal of the Official Secrets Act, to be replaced by a Freedom of Information Act. A mutilated compromise, keeping the Acts basically intact, is proffered for the future.

Labour's Home Policy committee will hold an investigation into the workings of the state within the state which is good, but it will not seek to push its nose into those areas stamped decisively 'National Security'.

A few liberal editorials call for reform of the more repressive (and embarrassing) aspects of the law and a few determined groups continue supporting Astrid Proll, the Anarchists, and those caught in the backlash of repression in Ireland.

Meanwhile - apart from these groups, those particularly oppressed groups in society (Women; Blacks, Gays, Irish etc), and the Left - the state maintains its image of massive neutrality.

All the actions detailed before have been done largely with the 'consent' of the working class. Sections have objected certainly,



Astrid Proll



The three defendants join the kids' picket outside the Old Bailey.

MARK RUSHER (IFL)

but through ignorance, an attachment to national security, state and media mystification the masses have remained silent.

All this provides the British state with a hidden power of coercion and surveillance unparalleled in the Western capitalist democracies.

EXPOSURE

Its exposure cannot be left to small and comparatively isolated groups. The veils of the state need to be peeled away at all levels from the dirty tricks department of MI6 down to the possessive of antics of the local council (the local state).

Secrecy about surveillance and harassment by the security agencies and police needs to be challenged at every opportunity. Likewise the workings of the local state - and its relation to the central big brother have to be brought to the attention of working people.

The ballyhoo of the Old Bailey Secrets Trial - very much a state showtrial - lie at the centre of the spectrum of secrecy. At one end of the same spectrum lies the close-mouthed planning committee and uncommunicative council official. At the other is the state assassination squad on the streets of Ireland.

The Labour Party inquiry into some of the secret workings of the state is to be welcomed. However, the surface has only been scratched and the full nature of state secrecy needs to be set in a class context demonstrating how vital this state of affairs is in the maintenance of Capitalist order in contemporary Britain (and the West).

Agee and Hosenball, Berry, Aubrey and Campbell have started tugging away the veil but there's a long way to go.

Jim Barrow.

Chronicle of race hatred

Blood On The Streets is a report by Bethnal Green and Stepney Trades Council on the stream of racial attacks that have occurred in East London over the last few years. The 112 page report details more than 130 attacks including hammer assaults, stabbings, slashed faces, punctured lungs, clubbings, gun shot wounds, people beaten with bricks, sticks and umbrellas or kicked unconscious in broad daylight. It provides background material to the plight of East London's besieged Asians, mainly Bangladeshi's.

It documents the appalling housing conditions in Tower Hamlets and the role of the police and media in aiding or condoning through inaction the assaults on young and old alike by racist thugs and National Front Nazis.

The report contains chapters on education and employment as it affects the Bengali's and chronicles a record of discrimination, harassment and violence against the Asian community in the Brick Lane area only matched by the cynical indifference of most Government and Council politicians and state representatives, epitomised by the studied

legalism of Home Secretary, Merlyn Rees.

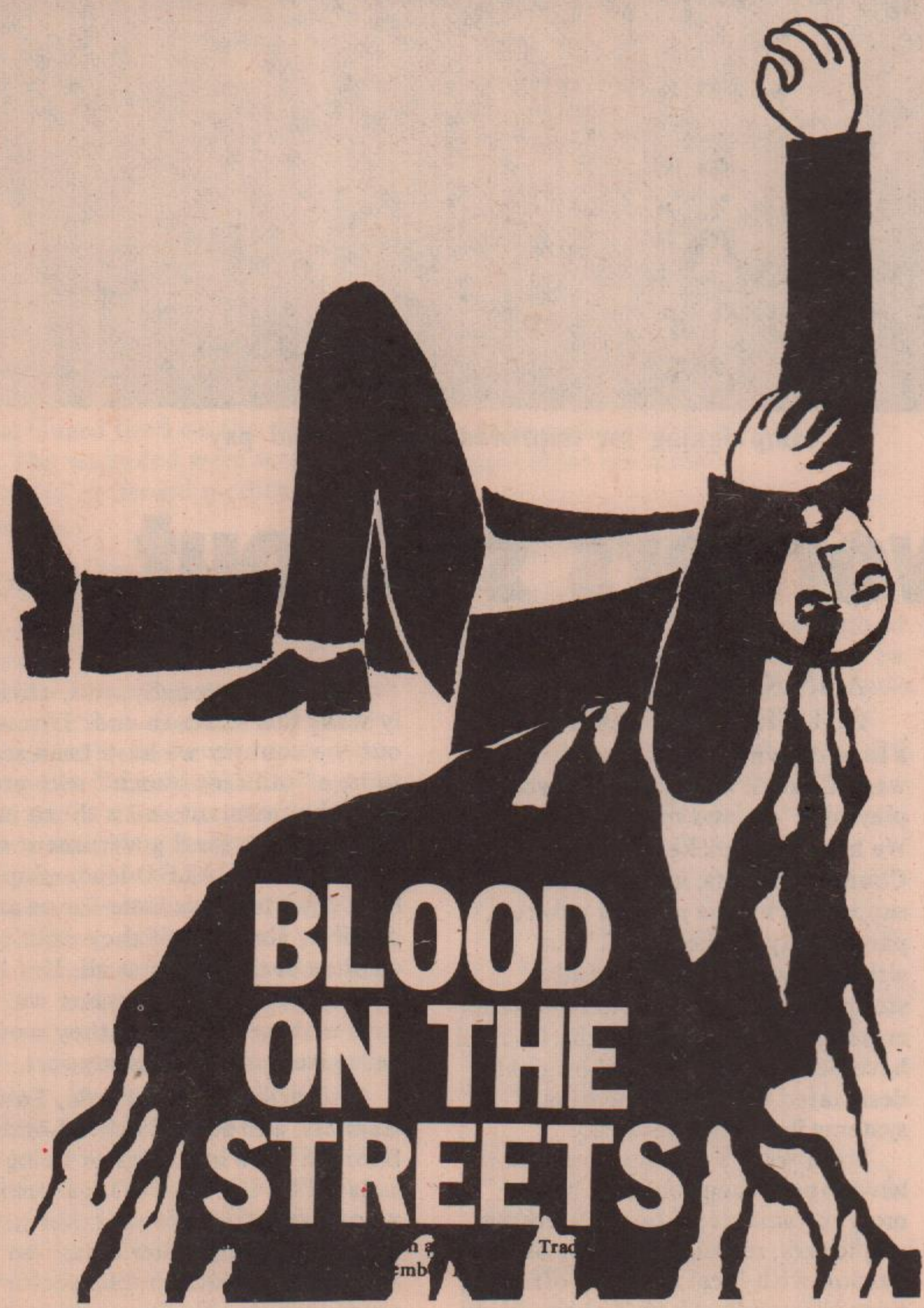
The Chapter on the growth of the anti-racist movement in the Tower Hamlets/Hackney area describes the demonstrations, strikes and pickets which have been organised against these attacks and particularly the strike action against the murders of Altab Ali, Kenith Singh and Ishaque Ali.

The beginnings of militant organisation and self-defence by the Bengali community itself could have been examined in more detail, so too could the political measures necessary to defeat the menace of racism and fascist thuggery.

But despite these weaknesses, the book stand as a damning indictment of our racist state, government and police and a withering testimony against those who tell us that racist violence is exaggerated and can be dealt with by the law and police. Copies of the Report can be obtained from Bethnal Green and Stepney Trades Council, c/o 58 Watney Street, London E.1. Cost: £1.20 plus 20p postage.

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