

# Socialist Challenge

BUILD A SOCIALIST OPPOSITION FOR A UNIFIED REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION

12p

21 July 1977 No. 6

# NO!

# IT'S NOT ON HEALEY



## FOR US

Cuts in Living Standards

10% wage limits

1.5 million unemployed

17.7% inflation

£3.5m cuts in public spending

## FOR THEM

Unlimited Profits 76- 77

Four Big Banks = £700 million

ICI = £540 million

GEC = £278 million

Assoc. British Foods = £80 million

# Why Sid French split



'We haven't left a party, we have joined the main battle'. That was the comment today from Mr. Sid French, Surrey District Secretary of the Communist Party, on the decision of a national meeting to break from the Party and found a new one.

After years of argument, the break has been precipitated by the head long decline of the CP and its leadership's determination to press ahead with the new draft of the British Road to Socialism, which the new party describes as a 'social democratic programme'.

There are probably many employers and other opponents of the working class movement who will see this break as the beginning of the end for British Communism. They are thoroughly mistaken. They have seen the easy days and must now prepare themselves for the beginning of an onslaught unknown since their father's time and growing to be much more powerful than that, said Mr French.

Mr French, who has been named National Secretary of the new party pending an autumn Congress, developed this argument. 'The old party has put more and more distance between itself and the bulk of the world communist parties in an attempt to win popular favour. Far from getting closer to winning a working class revolution in Britain, they are further from any kind of power than ever before. No chance of an MP, for all their electoral work, a handful of local councillors. Morning Star circulation crashing, YCL virtually collapsed. Even the party's traditional trade union base has markedly decreased. On any test, no more than 6 to 8,000 people actively involved in the CP.'

campaigning plans. The chancellor's hope for 10 per cent wages ceiling will be fought, as will mass unemployment. Efforts to reverse public spending cuts will be stepped up. With support for the new Party being particularly strong amongst miners and engineering workers these campaigns will clearly have an effect. The stark contrast between the crisis in the capitalist world and the advances being made in the socialist countries will be a recurring theme.

Some indications of the preparation that has been made for the break is given by the announcement that the first issues of its

weekly paper will be published in time for the TUC at the beginning of September. A chain of 'workers correspondents' exists throughout the country and in the trade unions and their reports will be a particular feature of the publication.

**YOUTH WORK**  
The opponents of the CP leadership have been particularly critical of its youth work for many years and have come close to success in a number of YCL Congresses. With the League's claimed membership down from 6,000 nine years ago to 430 paying dues today, the criticism

is clearly justified. The heavy unemployment amongst youth and the scant attention to training are just two reasons why the future must be changed and the youth mobilised to help to do it. 'The building of effective, organised community youth movement is a primary task', declares the New Party's statement.  
Mr French told the national meeting that the new party would have an initial 65 branches, 'and I mean branches of activists' he added. 'After years in an increasingly disunited CP the united work that is going to put this country on a new course starts today.'

## Complete Text of press release issued by the New Communist Party

### OPEN FORUM

## The meeting in Merton Town Hall was a perilous affair. It reveals The CP nearing a split

The depths of the crisis which is shaking the COMMUNIST PARTY from its roots and the fight to its Executive Committee was left open in Merton Town Hall last Thursday.  
Eight hundred militants packed into the hall to hear Sid French of the CP's Surrey District Committee put the view that the draft 'British Road to Socialism' is an utterly reformist document that should be rejected. DOUG WEPPLER reports.

NEVER EXPECTS TO BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT THE REVOLUTION OF THE PROLETARIAT. IS NOT A CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENT.



**Against new draft**  
At a meeting in Merton Town Hall in South London attended by 800 people on Thursday night Mr Sid French, Surrey district secretary of the Communist Party, spoke against the new draft of 'The British Road to Socialism'. A collection of over 1400 was made.

**SWP approaches CP**

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



### Enlivening The Party!

NEIL AITKEN, one of George Ward's legal advisers, was in a relaxed mood at a select party in London not long ago. Aitken was loudly declaiming his views on the Grunwick strike. These amounted to:  
[a] He thought that if Ward lost, he'd definitely close down the factory. [b] Aitken thought that the police had been too soft on the pickets. They should have 'smashed' them. [c] In order to defend democracy the police should be armed and the press should be censored.  
And in case you're interested Aitken occasionally goes yachting with Ted Heath.

### Trojan horse

IN HIS RECENT well-publicised interview, the former Metropolitan Police boss, Sir Robert Mark, admitted a number of things such as how he had left a great deal of corruption in the CID go unchallenged.  
More interestingly, he told us about a certain horse: 'She is the Brigitte Bardot of the 230 horses that we possess', Sir Robert obligingly informed us, 'and she is trained to simulate death on the word of command in front of a TV camera. This is the way to make sure that the police image which the British people like to have is maintained'.  
What Mark did not say was that many police officers have been trained to do the same thing. Reports of police casualties which adorn the front pages are grossly exaggerated. Even a cop who has a slight bruise is reported as 'wounded'. Since most police victims prefer to go home rather than to hospital, our casualties are never fully reported.

### Can this Gunn be fired?

IANGUNN is one of the old-time greats. He could be an editor in a beleaguered garrison town in the American Wild West, having to contend not only with gangsters in his own town, but with the Indians on its periphery.  
Gunn is editor of a journal called Education Today and Tomorrow (in fact it should be more aptly named Education Yesterday and Today) which is published by the Education Advisory Committee of the Communist Party. As such it has an official status, though clearly it is too outrageous to be seen as reflecting the views of the post-68 intake of CP teachers.  
In reality the journal is totally immune to the 'Eurocommunism' of the CP. It is still fighting old battles against Trotskyism and the 'ultra-left' — it still prints the slanders turned out by Moscow!

But we should be prepared for increasing police violence against demonstrators. Mark also said that he found those who employed 'political violence' to be more dangerous than murderers. Since the regular perpetrators of 'political violence' are the police, we are waiting for Mark to name the guilty people.



It is sexist. The April issue has a pseudonymous article which tries to poke fun at the idea of women's caucuses: 'I have no idea where a woman's left caucuses is, but I expect it has something to do with that marvellous abdominal anatomy'.  
It published articles by Max Morris after the latter's witch-hunting attacks on 'subversives' in The Times and the gutter press. In fact Gunn is an outrageous old reactionary. A relic of the old school of Stalinism.  
He refuses to defend the Tyndale teachers; he frowns upon all rank and file activity. Like his hero, Max Morris, he yearns for the old days ('give me that old-type Stalinism, if it's good enough for Stalin it's good enough for me').  
Why he is still editor of the Communist Party's official journal remains a mystery. Hopefully CP teachers will attempt to either fire Gunn or exercise some control over him. If both prove difficult he could always be exported in a glass case to the Museum of Socialist-Realist Art in Moscow North-east.

**It's a crime**  
IN THESE DAYS of Grunwick fever, standing on the steps of cop shops waiting for arrested sisters and brothers to come out is becoming a full-time occupation — not just for pickets.  
Two comrades were waiting at Paddington Green police station on Monday afternoon, 11 July, when a policeman came in trailing a youth behind him for nicking a motorcycle.  
'You'll have to take him to Harrow Hill', moaned the duty officer. 'We're not dealing with real crime here today because of this Grunwick thing!'

Flashback to Socialist Challenge of 16 June

# OUR POLICIES

Capitalism is in crisis. The leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions offer solutions that are in the interests, not of the workers, but of the capitalist class.  
Socialist Challenge believes that the two vital tasks confronting revolutionary socialists are:  
\* To build broad-based class struggle tendencies in opposition to class-collaborationism in the labour movement. These should be non-exclusive in character grouping together militants holding a wide range of political views.  
\* To begin to fight for the creation of a unified and democratic revolutionary socialist organisation which can, through an application of united front tactics, begin to be seen as an alternative by thousands of workers engaged in struggles.  
Such an organisation should be based on the understanding that:

- 1 The struggle for socialism seeks to unite the fight of the workers against the bosses with that of other oppressed layers of society — women, black people, gays — struggling for their liberation. This socialism can only be achieved by creating new organs of power and defeating with all necessary means the power of the capitalist state.
- 2 Our socialism will be infinitely more democratic than what exists in Britain today, with full rights for all political parties and currents that do not take up arms against the socialist state. The Stalinist models of 'socialism' in the USSR and Eastern Europe have discredited socialism in the eyes of millions of workers throughout the world. We are opposed to them and will offer full support to all those fighting for socialist democracy.
- 3 The interests of workers and capitalists are irreconcilable on a world scale. Capitalism has not only created a world market, it has created world politics. Thus we fight for working class unity on an international scale. This unity will be the long run be decisive in defeating both the imperialist regimes in the West and the brutal dictatorships they sustain in Latin America, Africa and Asia.  
In Britain it implies demanding the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and letting the Irish people determine their own future.
- 4 The Communist Parties in Europe are in crisis. Neither the 'Euro-communist' nor the pro-Moscow wings have any meaningful strategy for the overthrow of the capitalist state. New revolutionary socialist parties are more necessary than ever before. Conditions today are more favourable than over the preceding three decades. But such parties can only be built by rejecting sectarianism and seeing internal democracy not as a luxury but as a vital necessity. This means the right to organise factions and tendencies.

**WANT TO KNOW MORE?**

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

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

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

Send to Socialist Challenge, 328-329 Upper Street, London N1.

# GRUNWICK MUST CLOSE ON 15 AUG

A large advertisement appeared in the Daily Mirror last Friday. It was headed 'Statement agreed by the Officers and Grunwick Strike Committee of APEX'.

The main message was: 'No further demonstrations, marches or large scale picketing will be held during the court of inquiry which would divert attention from the facts that we are submitting ...'

GEOFF BELL reports.

Speaking to members of the Grunwick Strike Committee on the day the advert appeared, it was obvious the statement did not reflect their position.

They are continuing to call for mass picketing during the Scarman hearings; continuing to appeal for trade union delegations to come to the Grunwick factory gates every morning to greet the scabs as they go to work.

The one thing they are not

- ★ For national strike action on 15 August
- ★ Build support committees for the Grunwick day of action
- ★ Organise factory, town and labour movement meetings for Grunwick Strike Committee [phone 01-451 1125]
- ★ No reliance on courts — mass action will stop the scabs

calling for is a repeat of the 11 July day of action.

But this applies only to the remaining two weeks of the Scarman hearing. The Strike Committee is maintaining its call for a repeat of 11 July on 15 August.

## TREMENDOUS

Indeed, Jack Dromey, a member of the Strike Committee and secretary of Brent Trades Council, hopes 23 August will be even bigger than 11 July. 'What is needed', he said, 'is a tremendous mobilisation. We would confidently expect that we will have more people on 15 August than on 11 July.'

Dromey also made it clear that — unlike 11 July — the mass pickets on 15 August will be asked to stay outside the factory

gates throughout the day. 'The call will be for an all-day picket', he said.

The statement in the Daily Mirror — drawn up by APEX general secretary Roy Grantham — did not reflect this attitude. 'All that it means', said Dromey, 'is that there won't be a day of action between now and next week.'

But the statement omitted to mention that the call for 15 August was still being made and that, in the words of Dromey: 'The view on how this dispute will be won — by industrial power — has not changed.'

Others in the front line of the Grunwick strike share this attitude. Kevin Slattery, one of the Grunwick drivers who came out on strike last week, said: 'Mr Ward seems determined to hang on as long as he can, but we'll

hang on even longer.'

The drivers' shop steward, Ossie Lewis, gave his view of the strike. 'They don't want a union inside — there is no doubt about it. We have been told by management that if the union comes in, this place will close.'

But these threats have not dampened the determination of either the Grunwick strikers or their supporters at the Cricklewood sorting office where postal workers have been locked out for refusing to handle Grunwick's mail.

At Cricklewood, UPW branch secretary David Dodd said that for his members the boycott was 'a moral issue'. He added: 'A few weeks ago the TUC told everybody to give the Grunwick strikers and APEX the maximum support. My branch has done exactly that.'

It is now obvious that neither the TUC nor the APEX leadership welcome such militancy. The Daily Mirror advert was clear evidence of the real attitude of the APEX bosses.

It was not inserted to impress the Scarman's of this world who are not inclined to read the Daily Mirror. Rather it was there to attract the attention of the paper's working class readership — the type of people who have turned up on the Grunwick picket throughout the past five weeks.

Grantham's aim was to reduce the mass picket to almost nothing; to spread confusion over 15 August; to give in to the demands of the Government, the Tories and Ward himself that the mass picketing must cease.

## CORRECT

But rather than such picketing tending to — in Grantham's words — 'divert attention' from the dispute, it is the mass picketing which has brought Grunwick to the attention of the mass media, and a court of inquiry. So the Strike Committee is perfectly correct to ask for a maintenance of the mass picket, and to organise another day of action.

In fact its position on 15 August being an all-day picket is an advance on that of 11 July, when after a lot of pressure they decided to disperse and join the TUC march.

But given the view of the APEX leadership, the main burden for organising 15 August lies with rank and file trade unionists up and down the country. The Yorkshire district of the National



Union of Mineworkers is likely to back the call for 15 August, as it did on 11 July, and London printworkers have also indicated their willingness to come out in force any time the strike committee says so.

The workers' movement must now organise behind these moves. Readers of Socialist Challenge are asked:

★ To build broad-based Grunwick strike solidarity committees wherever they work or live.

★ To approach members of every political organisation on the left to build joint activity for 15 August.

★ To urge trade councils to back the next day of mass action. To make arrangements now for coaches and cars for 15 August.



PETER RIGGS

## Moral victory not enough

Lord Chief Justice Widgery ruled last week in favour of the Grunwick strikers, their union APEX, and the conciliation service ACAS. Was this proof that the law is on the side of the workers?

That mass pickets and other forms of solidarity action are unnecessary to win strikes? That instead workers in struggle should rely on the wisdom and generosity of the law?

Amidst all the legal soundings and goings the Labour Government has made no secret where it stands. 'The law is made to be observed. There is no doubt about that,' said Secretary of State for Industry Eric Varley on 12 July, commenting on the Cricklewood affair.

When setting up the court of inquiry on 30 June, Employment Secretary Albert Booth called for the end of mass picketing because it 'might lead to breaches of the law'.

It is likely that Booth, Varley and Rees welcomed last week's High Court judgement. They are not the only ones. Even The Times congratulated Widgery. And the reason this 'top people's paper' did so is very interesting.

## SIGNIFICANT

It assured its readers that 'as far as Grunwick's itself is concerned' the judgement 'has no immediate or dramatic consequences'. So the union did not win very much. But the benefits the judgement gave to the forces of law and order were significant.

Widgery 'has refrained from inflicting on ACAS a judicial stigma which would have gone far towards destroying its credit for impartiality and therefore its usefulness.' The Times announced.

In other words the law must be seen to be impartial or people won't respect it.

The Daily Mirror's editorial on 13 July took up the same theme. It commented: 'The trades unions won a significant battle yesterday ... This victory for industrial democracy contains an

important lesson for the unions: They do not get unfavourable treatment from the courts ...'

'Another welcome move is the promise by Employment Secretary Albert Booth to reform the antiquated laws on picketing. The sooner this is done the better. Perhaps, now, peace order and commonsense will prevail in the bitter Grunwick dispute.'

'There in a nutshell is the value of the Widgery judgement for the ruling class. It can be used to prove the 'law' is impartial, and then the 'law' can be used to take away the right of mass picketing.

So against the 'victory' of the Widgery judgement must be weighed: all the arrests, all the attacks by the police, the threats of legal action to stop the boycott of Grunwick mail, and now the promise of new laws to stop mass picketing.

The more immediate reason why Widgery found in the strikers' favour is contained in the following comment by Arthur Scargill: 'It may be coincidental, but when people are in dispute and putting pressure on, courts of inquiry have a habit of finding much more in their favour than when things have gone back to normal.'

The Grunwick strikers have waited long enough as it is. Widgery changes little, except to present the strikers with a 'moral victory'.

But moral victories are little good when a bus load of scabs drives through the gates of Grunwick protected by the 'law' every day. What is needed in that situation is pickets, thousands of them.

## Union leaders come to Ward's aid again

On Monday 11 July, when thousands were involved in the Grunwick mass picket, postal workers in many areas were discovering post boxes full of Grunwick mail. It had been posted over the weekend by members of the National Association for Freedom.

In Oxford, where NAFF recently set up a local branch, there was a considerable amount of the diverted mail. The Oxford PHG (Postmen Higher Grade) branch of the UPW had previously declared its support for the Cricklewood sorters.

So on 12 July I told local management that my branch would not handle the Grunwick mail. At that time management accepted the situation because the mail was second class.

Then at 5.40 in the evening I received a telephone call from the UPW headquarters telling me to sort the 'blackened' mail. I did nothing about that verbal instruction except to contact the secretary of the postmen's (delivery) branch of the union.

On Wednesday morning no written instructions were received from the UPW headquarters. But

## SABOTAGE!

Tom Jackson and the rest of the executive of the Union of Postal Workers continue to bail out Grunwick boss George Ward by trying to outlaw the boycott of Grunwick mail.

GERRY CASEY, secretary of the Oxford PHG branch of the UPW, describes this sabotage in his area.

the head postmaster immediately ordered my members to sort the Grunwick mail on the basis of telex instructions received from the headquarters of the Post Office.

I had no alternative but to call all my members to an immediate meeting. My branch decided to continue the boycott until it received written instructions from the UPW head office. Unfortunately while our meeting was in progress the postal delivery workers had started sorting Grunwick mail.

Following the meeting the head postmaster launched a bitter attack on the branch and on me, saying I was imposing my will on the branch. He added that the GPO had a file on my activities which included the (false) allegation that I was expelled from the TUC in 1976.

He tried everything to shake me and the branch down. But I rang the UPW head office to convey the branch decision.

They rang me back almost at once, instructing me to lift the boycott on the Tuesday night. On

the morning of Thursday 14 July, a written instruction from the UPW to resume normal working arrived. The head postmaster was also in receipt of the instruction, and he ordered us to sort the Grunwick mail. I refused, telling him I had arranged a meeting of my members at lunchtime when we would discuss the issue.

The postmen's branch secretary, who had not had a single meeting with his members on the boycott, decided not to support our stand. He is a local Justice of the Peace.

The PHG branch continued to refuse to handle the mail until the lunchtime meeting, when contrary to my recommendations the branch voted 13-6 to obey head office instructions.

I feel certain that had other UPW branches and in particular the Oxford postmen's branch held out, the Oxford PHG branch would have continued its boycott.

NAFF has won a temporary, but major triumph, and they must be delighted that the UPW national executive has so many spineless members. It proves once again that workers are let down when their leaders have to put fine words into action.

As Southampton health service crumbles

# NUPE members fight expulsion threat



Moorgreen Hospital for old people. Built in 1837 as a workhouse, its redevelopment grant never appeared because of the cuts, so it has to make do with one lift for 250 beds.

**BOB PENNINGTON** reports on the drastic state of the health service in Southampton and the attack unleashed by the local leadership of the public employees' union against members who are fighting the cuts.

**BECAUSE OF** staff shortages at the Royal South Hants, the hospital sends home at least five patients a week who should be going into the operating theatre.

The nurse from the Royal South Hants Hospital who told me this went on to explain that treatment for varicose veins invariably means a two and often three-year wait. One woman, I was informed, waited two years for a gall-bladder operation. 'Finally, when she got to hospital they sent

her home because they were short of blood.'

I then visited the Moorgreen Hospital for old people. Built in 1837 as a workhouse, it received a redevelopment grant of £400,000 in 1972. It was scheduled for completion by the end of 1975.

By the time the plan was agreed, cuts had made sure that no money was available — so the work was never done. This Dickensian hospital now gets by

with one lift for its 250 beds — and a hope that one day things might get better.

Next to the Moorgreen stands Allington House, built in 1939 and now used by the NHS. It houses old people who are not fit enough to look after themselves but not serious enough to be admitted to a geriatric hospital. This is to be closed, making a total of 150 beds taken out of this kind of accommodation in Southampton in two years.

The ambulance shortage in the city is becoming desperate. Recently, an ambulance carrying a patient with cancer on the brain received an emergency call to go to a woman who had just had an epileptic fit on the street. No other ambulance was available

so they had to break their journey and collect the woman despite having a terminal case.

The Eastleigh Maternity Hospital closed in late 1976. The closures selected presumably demonstrate the health authority's determination to hit the old and young with savage impartiality. But all is not gloom on the health front.

In Chandlers Ford there is the brand new Nuffield private hospital. Getting a bed there is much easier than under the NHS — providing you have the money. The Nuffield, however, believes in collaboration between the public and private sector. It gets its blood from the Southampton General Hospital's transfusion unit and relies on it for pathology and X-ray services.

## EXPULSIONS

**FIVE MEMBERS** of the National Union of Public Employees have been threatened by expulsions from the union. They have been charged under Rule 18 (ii) of NUPE's rule book — 'circulating misleading or false reports about the union' — in the pages of Challenge, a rank and file news-sheet committed to fighting against attacks on health care.

The five have been called on by the branch to cease publication of Challenge and a recommendation for their expulsion has been sent to the Executive Council of the union.

Arthur Hill, secretary of the NUPE Southampton hospitals branch, considers that Challenge is against the members' interests. Commenting on the paper's criticisms of the branch leadership, he says: 'You don't join a club to change the rules.'



ARTHUR HILL

Hill strongly objected to the remarks in Challenge about his handling of a wage claim originally submitted on behalf of the telephonists at Southampton General in 1974, when Hill first appeared on the scene.

'As far as we could see in no way could we up their wages by going on strike', Hill says. 'We are still negotiating on that matter.' All the telephonists left NUPE and joined the Confederation of Health Service Employees (COHSE), bitterly disappointed at the way their pay claims was handled.

Audrey Holmes, formerly a shop steward in NUPE and now a COHSE steward, has no doubt where the blame lies. 'Hill divided one group of workers against another', she told me.

'Both Hill and Sean Hilliard, the full-time officer, kept telling us we couldn't break the Social Contract. As far as we were concerned, our claim was simply about re-grading.'

Steve Rose is the NUPE convenor at Tatchbury Mount hospital. 'What came out of the telephonists' fight', he explains,



STEVE ROSE

'was the demand for more democracy in the union and a fight against the Social Contract and the cuts.

'Our eyes were opened to the fact that we were part of a larger branch which was falling to involve all its members. Meetings were not properly publicised and one man — Arthur Hill — represented us on union committees, at national conference, and did most of the negotiating with management.'

Rose adds: 'Hill hardly ever came to the hospital. Then some new stewards were elected two years ago. An active and democratic sub-branch of NUPE was built up taking up issues affecting our members which were never taken up before.'



AUDREY HOLMES

It was the growing opposition to NUPE's acceptance of the Social Contract and its failure to really act against cuts in the NHS which brought Hilliard into alliance with the branch's right wing.

The witch-hunt in the Southampton hospitals branch shows what is at stake in the fight against cuts and the Social Contract.

## ATTACKS

If it succeeds, the way is open for attacks on all rank and file papers. But the defence that is growing for the five suspended members may well give the right wing some nasty surprises. At Tatchbury Mount, NUPE members have passed a resolution of confidence in shop steward Paul Mitchell with only one vote against. The meeting of over forty members declared: 'We fully support the five members accused, and support the right to organise opposition inside the trade union movement.'

Paul Jenkins, chairperson of the branch and one of the members suspended, says: 'We have had requests for petitions and pledges of support from Bristol, Birmingham and London. On the coaches going to the Grunwick picket we got more signatures, and trades council delegates have promised to raise the issue.'

'We are holding a public meeting in Southampton with speakers from Challenge and Hospital Worker. We want all labour movement papers to contact us and take up our case.'

Socialist Challenge endorses Paul's call for a solidarity campaign. Get in touch with him at: 26 Tennyson Road, Portswood, Southampton. Tel. 0703-551135.

## Lobby Labour against racism

**IF THERE'S** one good thing about the large police presence at Grunwick it is that black youth in North London have been able to walk the streets in safety these last few weeks.

But once Grunwick is over there is little doubt that Home Secretary Merlyn Rees will continue to permit the attacks on black youth to proceed.

The whole policy of the Gov-

ernment on immigration is in direct defiance of official Labour Party policy.

Last year's Labour Party conference agreed a comprehensive policy against racism, including support for black self-defence against racist attacks and for the repeal of the 1968 and 1971 Immigration Acts. This policy has been ignored not only by the Labour Government but by the

Party executive.

Now there are moves to lobby the next conference to insist that the Party and Government implement that policy. An ad-hoc committee has been set up to co-ordinate support from local constituency Labour Parties and anti-racists. The committee can be contacted c/o 12 Orchard Cottages, Hayes, Middlesex.

## R & F respond to teachers' unity appeal

The letter below was received by the London Socialist Teachers Alliance in response to the initiative taken by the STA for a united left slate of candidates in the National Union of Teachers — a position which was overwhelmingly adopted by the Open Conference held earlier this month.

The post referred to in the letter is for the General Secretary of the 15,000-strong Inner London Teachers Association, representing all NUT members in the Inner London Education Authority Area.

Dear Comrades,

London Rank and File have decided to stand only one candidate in the forthcoming ILTA elections instead of the usual three. This will be Chanie Rosenberg for the post of Secretary.

We hope this will make it

possible for there not to be left candidates standing against each other. Despite the fact that there are deep differences between our organisations which make a common platform impossible, we will be asking R&F supporters and voters to vote for left candidates where we are not standing for a position. We hope you will reciprocate in this.

Yours fraternally,  
Richard Noss,  
Chairperson, London Rank and File.

A spokesperson for the Socialist Teachers Alliance said: 'We welcome Rank and File's reply to our suggestion of a united left response in the coming NUT elections. We don't think that the difference between our two organisations are so great as to preclude a common platform.'

'Indeed, we are quite convinced that this is precisely what

the vast majority of left-wing teachers want. We shall therefore be replying to R&F suggesting that we should go beyond the non-aggression pact which they propose, and attempt to unite all the left forces in the union in a joint campaign.'

★ This Monday the appeal of three of the five teachers at William Tyndale School, sacked for going on strike, was turned down by the appeals committee of the Inner London Education Authority.

A decision on the other two teachers — now almost certain to be unfavourable — is expected next week.

An emergency meeting of the Tyndale Defence Committee is being held on 21 July at 7.30pm, Prince Albert, Wharfedale Road, London N1.

## Journalists' leaders scab on strike

**THE LEADERSHIP** of the National Union of Journalists is determined to break the strike in defence of a closed shop by 108 journalists at North of England newspapers in Darlington.

That is the only conclusion that can be drawn from the actions of top officials over the past fortnight.

Ken Morgan, general secretary of the NUJ, told Darlington strike leaders that if the mass picket planned for last Friday went ahead he would disassociate the union from it. Anyone who was arrested would be on their own, he said.

In the light of these astonishing statements from the leadership of their union, the strikers took the weak but understandable decision to substitute a rally for the picket.

Local militants were faced with the heart-breaking task of phoning around the five to six hundred supporters around the

by DAVE CARTER

country who had pledged to turn up on Friday.

Jackie Levitas, NUJ father of the chapel at Durham, told the rally: 'For every one of us, there are five who would have been here. I have had to phone up miners from Bolton and Monkwearmouth to tell them the picket was off.'

Ironically, even the 150 who attended the rally outnumbered previous pickets. A disappointed John Hodgman, regional organiser of the NUJ, told them: 'If Bill Keys and the rest of the TUC print industry's committee don't come up with supportive strike action within the next seven days, we will put a thousand people on these gates in a fortnight's time.'

For further details of the next picket ring the Strike Committee at Darlington 50282.

MARION WEIR and CHRIS BAMBRY report.

## Women occupy strike factory

AFTER nine weeks on strike 130 workers, all but 20 of whom are women, have occupied the Essex International plant in Kilwinning, Ayrshire. The strike started when the company, which produces electrical parts for Ford and Chrysler, introduced a time and motion study without notice.

One woman was told if she wouldn't work to a stopwatch, she could get out. 'Essential tools used by our company', is how Essex describes their stopwatches and timesheets.

A mass meeting unanimously voted to strike till the time and motion study was withdrawn. But once on strike, the workers found two other issues. They were receiving £1.30 to £7.30 less than workers at the sister plant in Derry. In addition, the minimum wage for women was £2 less than the men doing the same job — a clear breach of the Equal Pay Act.

The plant was occupied two weeks ago when it was found that management was moving parts out at night. ACAS, the arbitration service, had already been called in by the Engineering Union, but as the strikers stated: 'Essex won't listen to them.' The strikers now say that they'll hold out as long as Essex can, after all 'they've as much to lose as us now'.

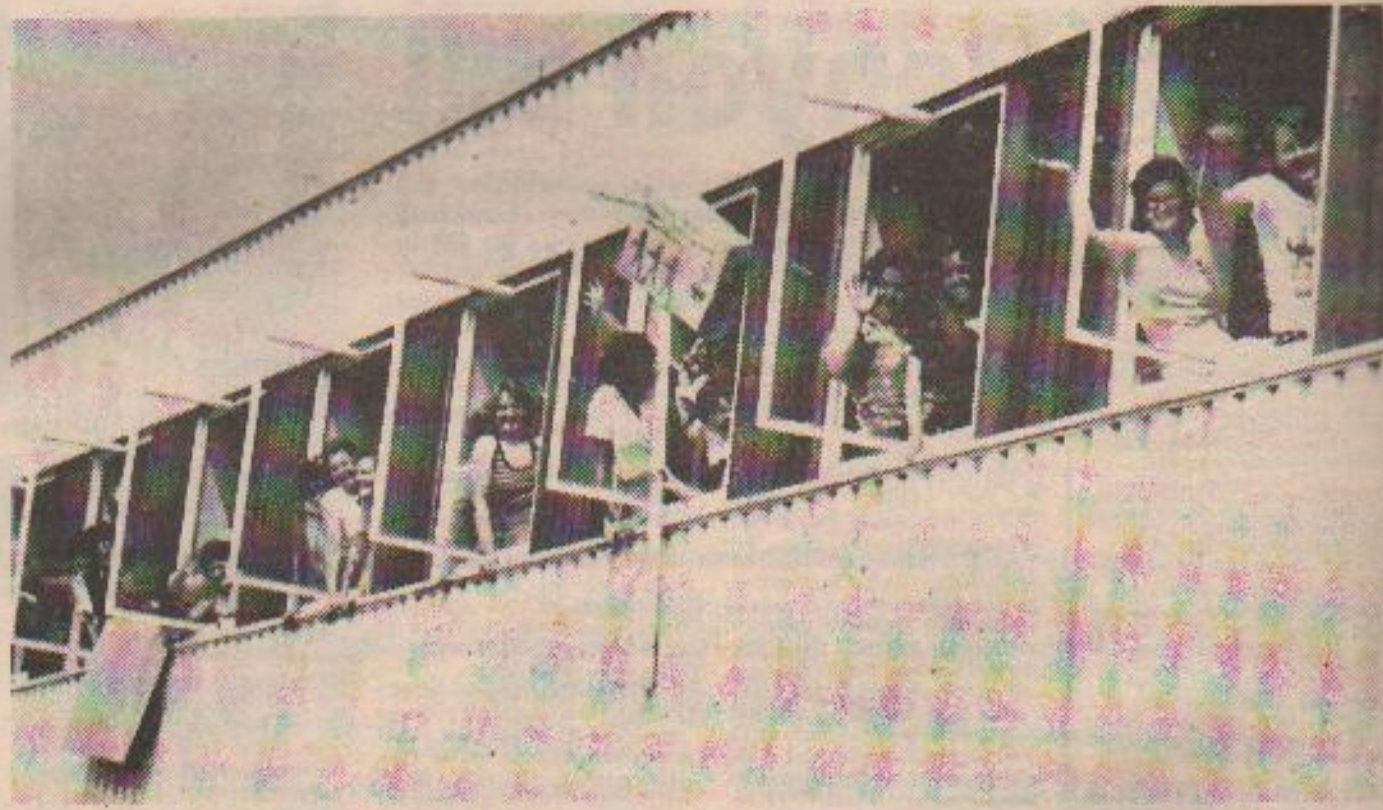
Management has run the factory in a typical multi-national

fashion. In order to boost productivity they put up a board, dominating the production lines, comparing production rates in Kilwinning and Derry. To go to the toilet, women had to ask their foreman. Canteen facilities were described as a 'disgrace', the workforce getting less than half and hour dinner break.

The company's rules stretch to 23 points. Some are titled 'major offences', others 'minor offences'. One of them is that if two workers are standing together that constitutes a meeting!

Already the occupiers have won support. Massey Ferguson in Kilmarnock, just back from a strike sent money from their hardship fund, and the Derry plant is running a boycott. Attempts are being made to get Ford Halewood and Chrysler Linwood to boycott Essex parts.

The AUEW have made the strike official, after some delay, and the local district is paying for babysitting. With the possibility of closure now looming, support is vital. Send donations and messages of support to: Nan Gilmore, 420 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow G2.



## PUBLIC SECTOR CRUNCH

### ★ Manchester

Gillian Frost and Kevin Warner are full-time teachers who face the sack at the council-run Abram Moss Centre for secondary and adult education in Manchester. They are unable to deal with the massive work load that the authorities are trying to place on their doorstep now that 7 of the 15 part-time teachers have been handed their cards.

The effects of the public sector squeeze on the centre will be far reaching. It is a purpose-built education and community complex which teaches — among other courses — basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills to over two hundred adults a year.

Warnings about the council's moves came at Easter, when basic skill teachers were told that only a half of this year's 32 places on the preparatory course will be allowed next year, in spite of a 60-strong waiting list.

The National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education branch at the centre is opposing the sackings and inadequate staffing levels. Now the task is to ensure that there is maximum unity in defending all those opposing the cuts so that individuals are not picked off one at a time. A vital way to do this is by fighting for staffing levels which meet existing needs. This means more teachers, not less.

Further information and messages of support to Jim Logue, Secretary, AMC NATFHE Branch, Abram Moss Centre, Crescent Road, Crumpsall, Manchester.

MARTIN SOLOMON

### ★ Birmingham

THIRTY-FIVE teenagers in Birmingham have occupied an empty shop in Selly Oak in a campaign for premises for a youth club. The group, mostly unemployed school leavers, says: 'We need somewhere we can get together in a friendly atmosphere and discuss our problems with people our own age.'

'We live in a highly populated area with very few places where youngsters can go. But there's lots of property lying empty and unused — that's why we have to occupy a building to get what we need'.

The group call themselves 'Independent Youth' because their basic aim is to organise independent of adult patronage.



Three hospitals stopped work last week to march against the closure of the Glan-Ely old people's rehabilitation centre.

### ★ Cardiff

FIVE HUNDRED health workers and local residents marched in Cardiff last Friday to protest the proposed closure of Glan-Ely hospital. Earlier in the week, their campaign to save this old people's rehabilitation centre notched up a first success when the health authority extended the time set aside for 'public consultation' by one month, to 22 August.

Glan-Ely is the latest victim of the South Glamorgan area health authority's desperate search for cutbacks. The AHA is making threats in all directions — Glan-Ely is only one of four hospitals in the Cardiff area on their current chopping list.

But hospital workers and the community are beginning to see just how devious the health authority is. The district committee of the public employee's union, NUPE, passed a unanimous motion of 'no confidence in the AHA' last month.

Spokee after speaker from the platform and the floor at a meeting held on 11 July condemned the plans.

Bert Durman, 81-year-old chairperson of the South East Wales Pensioners' Association, called the AHA's documents 'deliberately confusing and fictitious.' Speaking on behalf of Cardiff Trades Council, executive member Erica Barnett called for a massive demonstration in support of Glan-Ely, and received applause for her call for 'not the loss of one hospital, not the loss of one bed'.

The packed meeting unanimously passed a resolution pledging total opposition to all health service cuts and calling for all those who share this opposition to join in a South Glamorgan action

committee. A group of workers from various hospitals stayed behind to hammer out the details of this on-going campaign.

Hazel Wright, chairperson of the Glan-Ely Action Committee told me: 'The area needs the geriatric facilities we provide. The councillors on the AHA should tell us what's going on. It's our lives they're playing with.' Hazel, an auxiliary nurse, added that 'the staff's moral was high and they would occupy if necessary to keep the hospital open.'

The campaign against closure is in full swing. Over 21,000 signatures were handed into the Welsh Office on Friday's march. A particularly encouraging sign is that workers from at least three Cardiff hospitals walked out to join the march, leaving emergency cover only. COHSE branches played a leading role.

Further united action of this kind, and the creation of a strong South Glamorgan action committee is the way to defend the health service and defeat the AHA.

Messages of support and donations to: Glan-Ely Action Committee, c/o Ms. Martin, Treasurer, Glan-Ely Hospital, Cardiff.

PAUL SELIGMAN

### ★ Liverpool

FIVE HUNDRED healthworkers' jobs are under threat in Liverpool, but the area health authority is persistent in refusing to fill job vacancies. For the second week running, ancillary workers staged a one-day strike to protest against the AHA's willingness to bow to Government pressure to impose cash limits in the public sector.

Unemployment in Merseyside stands at over 10 per cent. But

not content with 'natural wastage' to cut up the health service, the AHA is already trying to shut down Liverpool's Mill Road Maternity Home.

NUPE's divisional officer, Colin Barnett, has announced plans to occupy if this should occur — only to be confronted with a big attack launched by the health authority against 'the complete lack of understanding' of the need to rationalise obstetric services.

The battle lines are clearly being drawn between Liverpool NUPE and the AHA. Now the unions must demonstrate that the needs of working class women come before any cuts which the Government is trying to enforce.

ROGER SCOTT

### ★ London

WORKERS IN occupation at Hounslow Hospital in West London have appealed for greater support on their picket line as the hospital's closure date draws near.

Pickers are needed to oversee what goes in and out, to collect signatures for the petition demanding that the accident and emergency departments are re-opened, and to hand out the regular news bulletin produced by staff for the public.

Pickets are asked to arrange shifts of one to four hours. Because Hounslow is staging a work-in, the health workers' themselves can only picket out of work hours. Trade union branches and labour movement organisations are asked to adopt resolutions committing members to specific hours on the picket line. The last two weeks of August are vital. Ensure a strong picket is mounted!

\* A new development in the campaign to keep open the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital has been agreed as a result of a seminar on women's health organised by the EGA staff in co-operation with the local community.

The seminar passed a resolution calling for a women's health advisory service to be established at the EGA in co-ordination with local family doctors.

### ★ Bristol

LAST TUESDAY three hundred nursery nurses and other ancillary workers in Bristol lobbied Avon education authority over proposals for cutting 350 jobs. The workers have turned down offers of voluntary redundancy and unqualified part-time work.

In the last three years, the

authority has not touched one penny of the money allotted to them for nursery expansion.

### ★ Birmingham

THE CAMPAIGN to maintain and improve provision for Birmingham's old people has scored a limited victory with the area health authority's statement on Monday that new purpose-built accommodation is on the cards.

Management's statement came in the wake of a public campaign launched to save the Quinton Hall old people's home against closure in a situation where no other provision had been made.

The campaign against closure was launched by NUPE social services branch and backed by Birmingham Trades Council. Staff and residents of the home have been firm in their opposition, and 15,000 signatures were quickly collected to support this stand as soon as closure plans were revealed.

The closure of Quinton Hall comes at a time when over a thousand people, many of them unable to care for themselves, are on waiting lists for places in

homes. The queue for Quinton Hall, which has 170 beds, has doubled over the past two years.

The decision to close the home is just a taste of what is in store for Birmingham if the Tory-controlled social services department gets away with its planned cuts. The £750,000 chopped from the department's budget last year and the £800,000 axed this year are considered as 'too lenient' by the Tories who have forced the head of social services to resign for being 'too soft'.

A joint lobby of the city council by NUPE and building workers from the threatened direct labour department succeeded in persuading Labour councillors to leave the council meeting, which the Tories were then forced to abandon.

The back-down of management can only be attributed to the continuing determination of the NUPE branch to confront the Tory council's onslaught against public spending.

MARTIN TOLMAN, NUPE branch membership secretary and shop steward, CHRIS BIRD, NUPE member.



Three hundred women rallied in Trafalgar Square to view the 'trial' of Labour ministers carried out by Women Against Rape.

# Government could make time for Benyon Bill

## What's Left

Rate: 3p per word. Display: £1.50 per column inch. Deadline: 3pm Saturday before publication.

**MANCHESTER** Meeting to set up Socialist Unity Committee. Speakers include Bert Elliott (Tameside). Discussion on the need for revolutionary socialist candidates in the Greater Manchester area. Monday 25 July, 7.30pm. Unicorn Hotel, Church Street (off Piccadilly Gardens).

**SOCIALIST** in need of accommodation seeks room in house or second person to look for flat in London. Contact Geoff at 01-989 9177, or leave a message with Martin at 01-4073006.

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY** meeting. Defend John McNulty! Thursday 28 July. 8pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

**OUTCOME** Latest issue. No. 4. A sexual liberation magazine produced by gay people. 20p incl. postage from 35 West Road, Lancaster.

**INTERVENTION NUMBER ONE** contains Marxism, Method and Revolution by Ken Tarbock. An analysis of the nature and role of cadres, sects and sectarianism based upon a textual analysis of Gramsci. From Intervention, 539 Battersea Park Road, London SW11. 40p post paid.

**BELT AND BRACES** Roadshow's Great Rock Pantomime *A Day in the Life of the World*. Collegiate Theatre, Ordov Street, London WC1 (01-387 9629) to 23 July at 7.30pm. Half price seats for bookings of 10 or more! And at the Stratford Theatre Royal, London E15 (01-534 0310) 26-30 July, 7.30pm. Late night shows *Not so Green as It's Cabbage*. Collegiate Theatre, 11pm 20-22 July. Stratford Theatre Royal 11pm, 28-29 July.

**TROTSKYIST CURRENT** Awareness and Abstracts Bulletin. No 1 July 1977. Out now. An indexing and abstracting service of Trotskyist literature. The bulletin is composed of two sections. An index of current articles indexed alphabetically and an abstracts section. 20p plus postage from R. Barnes, 21 Kinnoull Mansions, Rowhill Road, London E5 SE8.

### RED BOOKS NEWS

**The Second Congress of the Communist International**

Contains the theses, reports and records of the discussion held at this conference. Issues debated include the role of the CP in the proletarian revolution; participation in parliament; soviets and the trade unions; the agrarian question. (In two vols at £3.50 per vol). New Park Publishers.

**NEW FROM PLUTO PRESS**  
*Catching them Young*, by Bob Dixon

Two volumes: 1. *Sex, race and class in children's fiction*, £1.80; 2. *Political ideas in children's fiction*, £1.80.

These two books examine the ideological basis of children's fiction. In the first volume the author surveys the world of children's fiction for its ruling ideas — its sexism, racism and overwhelmingly middle class bias towards social divisions. In the companion volume, Bob Dixon looks at the type of literature available to children — comics, Blyton, imperial adventures and fantasy/religion books — to show how these ideas are promoted.

**A New World for Women: Stella Browne, Socialist Feminist**, by Sheila Rowbotham, £1.50

Stella Browne was a socialist feminist in the early years of this century. Before the first world war she was involved in campaigns for women's rights to abortion and contraception. She struggled to link the struggle for sexual emancipation with the wider struggle for the interest of the working class, joining the British Communist Party at its foundation.

### SOCIALIST ECONOMISTS

**Capital and Class**, no. 1. £1 + 20p p&P. This is the first issue of the Bulletin of Socialist Economists available publicly. Articles on the capitalist labour process; the effect of worker resistance on capitalist management strategies; Women workers in wartime; Rakovski on Soviet societies.

### COUNTER INFORMATION SERVICES

**CIS Paying for the Crisis**, 60p + 11p p&P. An in depth survey of life under the social contract, how it was sold to the working class; what they got in return; the tax fiddle and what role the trade union bureaucrats played. All useful information for every militant.

Terms: Under £2.50 include 25p for postage and packing; £2.90-£8 add 10% for p&P; over £8 post free unless otherwise stated.

Available from Red Books, 182 Pentonville Road, London N1. Tel: 01-278 9629.

Supporters of William Benyon's anti-abortion Bill suffered a set-back last Friday. They had successfully manoeuvred in the Standing Committee on the Bill to get it to the floor of the Commons. But the lack of parliamentary time meant the Bill could not be debated and voted on. It was a close call.

Pro-abortion Committee members were not helped by the defection of two of their number — Labour MPs Renee Short and Maureen Colquhoun — to 'other business' abroad, nor by the fairly consistent voting of Labour MP Roland Moyle with the opposition.

Moyle's performance was no surprise. On Cabinet instructions he had earlier tried to arrange a compromise deal with the anti-abortionists. In return for getting the Bill through, Benyon and Co were asked to exempt the charity clinics from its provisions, and only reduce the time limit to 22 weeks in pregnancy instead of 20.

The deal failed only because the three women Labour MPs — Audrey Wise, Oonagh Macdonald and Jo Richardson — refused to accept it.

### OPPONENTS

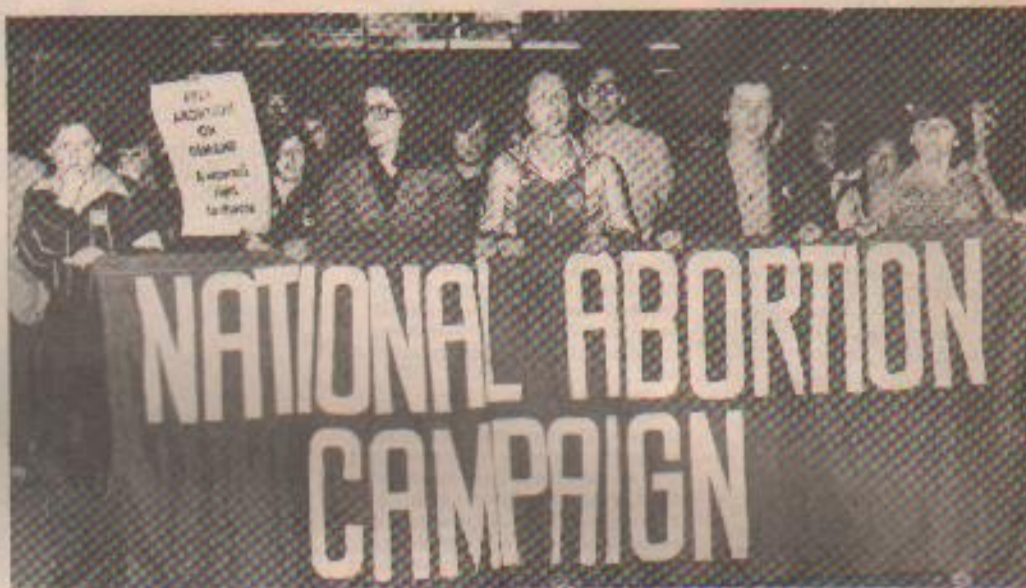
But even had the deal gone through, opponents of abortion have no intention of giving up until abortion is outlawed for almost all women. And their attack on the '67 Act through Benyon's Bill has not yet been defeated just because the Bill did

not get time last week. More than 160 MPs have already put their names to a motion calling for extra time to be made available in this session of Parliament for a debate in the Bill.

In the light of past experience of Labour's promises on the abortion issue, no reliance can be placed on the idea that the Government will not grant this time. Activity must be stepped up in the coming weeks to ensure no more deals or sell outs.

This need for continued activity was the most important message put across at the packed emergency meeting held by the National Abortion Campaign on 15 July. Mary Vreede, speaking for NAC, stressed the need to carry on the fight by mobilising the broad support already won by the campaign.

Publicity actions initiated by NAC women over the past few days had clearly demonstrated the potential extent of this support. Sixty women had turned out at very short notice for an evening vigil outside Parliament, and similar numbers had successfully caught the attention of the press with an occupation of Westminster Roman Catholic



Marchers set off following the emergency meeting - Friday evening in London to map out the next steps in the abortion campaign.

Cathedral. A well-planned interruption by NAC members in the audience of the David Frost TV debate on abortion on 14 July prompted Frost to sound out the opinions of the ordinary members of the public present. They voted by an impressive majority in support of a woman's right to choose.

The forthcoming events planned by NAC include a demonstration in Birmingham on 29 October to protest at the lack of health service facilities in the Midlands; a 'caravan' with theatre group and publicity material touring the country earlier in that month; and regional day schools to discuss positive legislation throughout the autumn.

All attention should now be turned to the picket of the executive meeting of the Labour Party called by NAC on Wednesday, 28 July. It will focus attention on the role of the Labour Government which has consistently allowed Labour MPs to follow the dictates of their own consciences on every vital vote over the past two years.

It has accepted wholesale the restrictive recommendations of the Select Committee without even a vote, and despite Labour Party and TUC conference decisions for free abortion on request, MPs have been left to impose their viewpoints on women. At the same time the

Government has savagely cut health service expenditure, reducing even the limited abortion facilities which exist today.

No time for Benyon's Bill in the Commons! That should be the message that local campaigns loudly proclaim. If coupled with intensive campaigning activity for a woman's right to choose, then the pro-choice movement will be in the strongest position to bury not only Benyon's Bill but all present and future attempts to restrict women's abortion rights.

*Picket Transport House in Smith Square on Wednesday, 27 July at 8am. No time for Benyon's Bill! Impose a three-line whip on Labour MPs on abortion votes!*

Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

# Socialist feminism under debate

**THE LAST** in a series of four one-day conferences organised by the London socialist feminists was held on 10 July. It attracted over 200 women to discuss the meaning and implication of socialist feminism, and it provided a clear indication of the changes taking place in the Women's Liberation Movement. **KAREN MARGOLIS** explains.

The major concern of the day was the organisation of the socialist feminist current. While we found it difficult to define socialist feminism precisely, there was strong support for breaking down the isolation of socialist feminists by developing theory and practice collectively. Some argued in terms of the failure of the Women's Liberation Movement to organise effectively and build support, and there was a strong emphasis on

looking outwards to the social and political changes around us.

Organisationally, some women obviously saw the socialist current as an alternative both to the left and the WLM. Others, including members of the International Marxist Group, argued that the socialist current should be a tendency within the WLM, seeking alliances with anti-capitalist forces and trying to win the women's movement to support for the socialist struggle. A third view was that the socialist current should be a very loose network for conferences, using the existing WLM channels of communication rather than setting up its own.

Since this was the first time many of us had debated these positions collectively, it seemed premature to take decisions, and the plenary session agreed that they should be discussed in local groups in preparation for the national socialist feminist conference next year.

The scope of the workshops, too, precluded the emergence of definitive lines in the space of a few hours: we simply skimmed the surface of issues like feminism and the revolutionary party, the economic crisis, and the nature of the state. But I felt that the discussions were seriously attempting to come to grips with difficult and important questions; 'everyone is here', as one sister put it, 'because of the contradictions posed by being feminists and socialists'.

### AUTONOMOUS

It emerged during the day that these contradictions are experienced mostly at the level of practice, and the Grunwick strike was cited frequently as an issue of the kind concerning socialist

feminists — on the picket line many of us had encountered sexism as well as solidarity, and we had seen how the high proportion of women workers at the factory had been neglected as a central feature of the struggle.

But while they remain critical of the existing socialist movement and convinced of the necessity for an autonomous women's movement, a significant number of feminists proposed support for the building of a revolutionary party, on the basis that this will assist the creation of socialism as a precondition for women's liberation.

In every workshop there was the feeling that the development of a theory and practice of socialist feminism is at a very early stage. As one woman pointed out, many of us did not have sufficient knowledge on which to base conclusions. The plenary session decided to organise a series of educational meetings: 'an idiot's guide to

economics', pleaded one woman.

Psychoanalysis, low pay/equal pay, abortion struggles internationally and ideology and the state were among the other topics suggested. The workshop on the state decided to hold a teach-in later this month. The plenary also supported the decision by the workshop on Grunwick to march as a contingent under the banner 'Women Against Racism and Fascism' on 11 July.

The series of London workshops has been useful in drawing London socialist feminists together and mapping out a terrain and theory of practice.

This augurs well for the building of a strong, united socialist current within the Women's Liberation Movement.

*A planning meeting for next January's national socialist feminist conference is to be held on Saturday 23 July at 1pm. 14 Piccadilly, Manchester.*



# Screening out sexism

**DELEGATES TO** the Musicians Union's biennial conference last week overwhelmingly passed a major resolution against sexual discrimination in the industry, reports Central London branch delegate **LINDSAY COOPER**.

The conference voted to press symphony orchestras — the major sector of non-casual musical employment — to introduce screened auditions for a year's trial period, so that the gender of those auditioning is not disclosed.

The union's anti-discrimination policy dates back to 1955, but despite equal pay in all branches of the profession, equal opportunities are non-existent. Only 9.8 per cent of the union's members are women.

Since orchestral players are trained for the most part by music colleges, it is easier to discover the fate of trained women than those involved in jazz and popular music. Half the students in London's music colleges are women, but only 11 per cent of full-time orchestral players! And

only one woman is employed by the notoriously discriminatory London Symphony Orchestra.

Screened auditions are already standard practice in at least nine major US orchestras and in the Concertgebouw Orchestra in Holland. All players audition behind screens and the best few play again in full view, by which time they have already demonstrated their general skill and suitability for the job.

Proposing the motion at the conference, Jenny Fisher from Central London branch described how unproductive the two meetings between the branch committee and orchestra managers and board representatives had been: 'Their attitude was simply a stone-walling one: "How can we be discriminating?" they said. "It's illegal!"'

Elisabeth Hambledon, former secretary of the Working Women's Charter Campaign, emphasised that screened auditions would prevent discrimination not only on grounds of sex,

but also of race, age and partial disablement. Many women, she said, simply don't apply for jobs because they know how discriminatory the present selectors are.

Encouragingly few voices were raised against the motion, although a Midlands delegate argued that orchestras would only change their selection methods to get around the screened procedure, and a Birmingham member retorted conference of the higher proportion of women employed in regional orchestras — which is hardly surprising since the pay and competition for work are far lower than in London.

After a long debate on three motions dealing with the Social Contract, the conference concluded by weakly resolving not to be associated with further pay restraint unless there is a promise of Government price control. An emergency motion to support the Grunwick strikers was passed and a collection made for the strike committee.

# The state of the press



JONATHAN HAMMOND ON THE Royal Commission Report and the Journalists' union

THE ROYAL Commission on the Press, set up in 1974 by Harold Wilson, has come to dreadfully predictable conclusions.

Its £730,000 cost has not only produced such illuminating gems as that *The Times* and the *Daily Telegraph* devote more space to editorial matter than the *Daily Mirror* and the *Sun*, but also claims that stories of right-wing bias in the media are greatly exaggerated — borne out of course by the meticulously fair and balanced media coverage of Granwick.

The minority report, signed by General and Municipal Workers Union leader David Bassett and *Daily Mirror* industrial correspondent Geoffrey Goodman, has equally predictably been slated by Fleet Street — particularly in respect of the call for the setting up of a National Printing Corporation, with sufficient funds to help small groups gain access to print facilities.

This is an idea advocated by many NUJ militants for years because — although undoubtedly

reformist — it would start to make a reality of 'press freedom', at the moment the almost exclusive preserve of five or six newspaper groups in London and the provinces, overwhelmingly Tory in their politics.

The Commission's findings on the closed shop and the related issue of 'press freedom' are of most significance to rank-and-file National Union of Journalists members. In its carefully worded draft, the Commission's members evince no enthusiasm for the present NUJ policy of backing chapels which want 100 per cent post-entry shops.

## MINORITY

A 'vocal and widely-publicised minority of (NUJ) members' are rapped over the knuckles for using 'highly coloured language' in pursuit of their 'aim to change society and the role of newspapers within it'. Nevertheless, the Commission reluctantly recognises that a situation where the NUJ was the only union not allowed to form closed shops

would be anomalous, recommending two 'safeguards' — in my view unacceptable — to the NUJ.

The first is that no member should be in any way disciplined for writing according to his or her conscience. This means that journalists producing racist, sexist, or anti-trade union copy could continue to do so with impunity. Under the union's code of conduct, the editor of the *Newham Recorder* has just been fined £15 for racist reporting, and complaints against other members are pending.

The second 'safeguard' is that the union must accept into membership any journalist, irrespective of what they write. If this had been enforced in 1975, for instance, the NUJ would have been compelled to admit into membership David McCalden, then of *Spearhead*, and his National Front journalistic colleagues on that paper. In the event, McCalden's application was rejected by Magazine Branch and this decision narrowly upheld by the national executive.

The publication of the report comes at an interesting time for the NUJ. There has just been an election for a new general secretary to replace Ken Morgan, about to join the Press Council, which the Royal Commission is anxious to see strengthened. Ken Ashton, generally considered to be the most right-wing of the candidates to succeed Morgan, scored a convincing win in the postal ballot.

He was helped by the enthusiastic campaigning of arch-reactionary Bernard Levin in *The Times*, who implored his NU readers, not just once but three times, to vote for Ashton and four other candidates in descending order of preference (on the single transferable vote system), to keep out the 'left' and 'extremist' Michael Bower — a Tribuneite whose main crime, in Levin's eyes, appeared to be that he opposed Levin's conception of 'press freedom'. This, of course, entails using acres of *The Times* to promote his candidates in various union elections.

A right-wing backlash, master-minded by Levin and a few sycophantic cronies in the NUJ's London Freelance Branch, has undoubtedly taken place within the union in the last few months, making the need for a genuine rank-and-file movement, particularly in the lower-paid areas of magazine, book and provincial newspaper journalism, all the more urgent. Up until now, *Journalists' Charter* — the NUJ rank-and-file grouping — has failed to fulfil its potential in this respect.

## EFFECTIVE

It has been wonderfully effective in organising around the union's annual conference, but of curiously little account during the rest of the year, despite the energy and dynamism of its former secretary, Aidan White, now an executive member. This has been because of sectarian divisions between members who might be expected to form its nucleus.

There are those, led by White, who would like to see the Charter become a democratic, broad-based alliance of rank-and-file NUJ militants — both those with and without a specific political allegiance. However, Charter's origins die hard. There are others in the Charter, hard-core Socialist Workers Party members (though it is certainly not true to say that all or even most NUJ members share this outlook), who, whatever ideals they may pay lip service to, really want the Charter to be an outpost of the SWP in the NUJ, with a few non-aligned militants and fellow-travellers tacked on to lend it a surface respectability.

Until this contradiction is resolved, it is hard to see how Charter can really make much progress in relation to its potential constituency. The SWP's attitude to it is not dissimilar to the one enjoyed by the International Marxist Group in relation to *Socialist Challenge*: that is, it remains to be seen whether it can really take a back seat if the balance of forces demand it.

\* Jonathan Hammond is a member of the NUJ's national executive, representing the Magazine and Books branches.

The Open Forum column is open to contributions from the socialist movement. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of Socialist Challenge.

# Gays under attack

'If a man also lie with mankind as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death.' That is what the Bible has to say on the subject of homosexuality. It is also the favourite text of Anita Bryant, the anti-gay rights campaigner in the USA.

Like Anita Bryant, Mary Whitehouse says that she does not oppose gays. Like Anita Bryant, Whitehouse, by her campaign against *Gay News* through the Courts, is spearheading a campaign in favour of the morality of the family which, on the way threatens to strip gay people of their democratic right to pursue their lives without discrimination.

Whitehouse and the *Gay News* trial represents only the most publicised attacks on gays in this country. Hidden from public view has been the series of harassments that gays have encountered from the state.

...Bradford police, after a series of raids, have boasted that they have enough evidence to bring charges against a thousand gay people.

...Cornwall has seen a wave of police prosecutions against gay men.

...In the North of Ireland, the Royal Ulster Constabulary have seized over a thousand documents in a wave of anti-gay activity, all the more dangerous since under the laws pertaining to the Six Counties and Scotland, homosexuality remains totally illegal.

Discrimination against homosexuals at work has little chance of being rectified through industrial relations machinery as the dismissal of the appeal of Louise Boychuk, sacked for wearing a 'Lesbians Ignite' badge, has recently emphasised.

Further more, the Whitehouse trial has itself acted as a focus for the escalating individual physical attacks suffered by gay people. The scene of particularly vicious assaults in recent weeks has been the Women's Disco held in South London.

The labour movement should add its weight to the defence of *Gay News*, to defend all labour movement papers which put

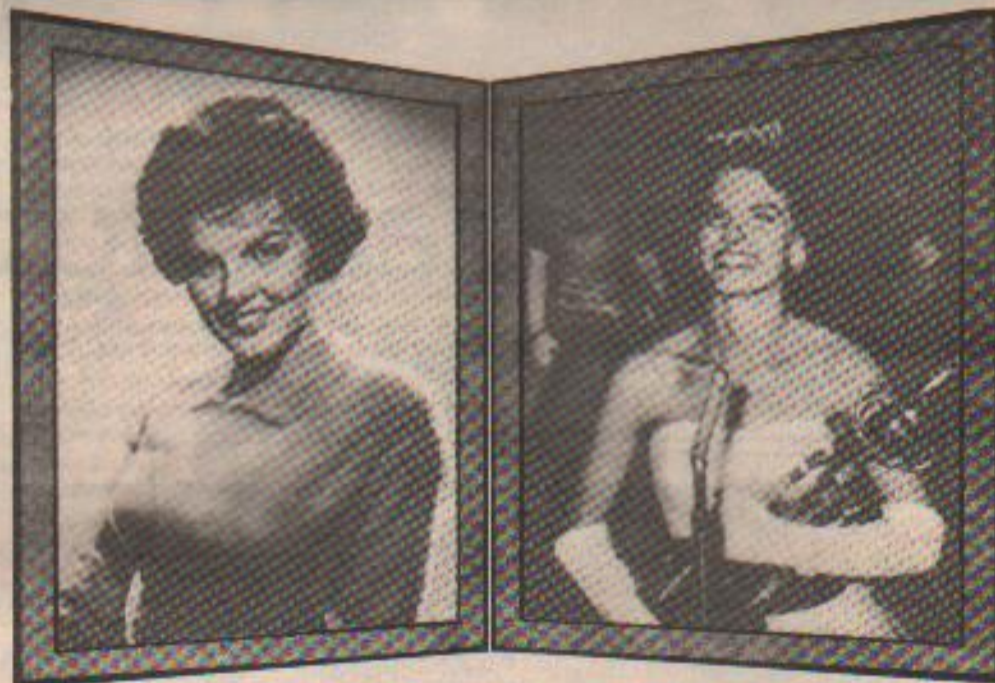
forward the views of the oppressed.

But a more positive approach is also needed. Anita Bryant's campaign was met with the largest

mobilisations in the USA since the anti-war demonstrations. During a week of international action, massive demonstrations took place in France, Spain and Italy.

In Britain, the gay movement is beginning to reorganise and discuss strategy. Resisting the offensive in favour of the virtues of the family and the capitalist order

means building the widest support for *Gay News*. It also means giving every aid to the building of movements for gay and women's liberation.



Snapshots of Anita Bryant's better-known faces in America — as Hollywood star and as Miss Oklahoma.



by TARIQ ALI

LAST WEEK *Socialist Challenge* was forced to publish in supplement form the controversial poem from *Gay News*. The poem was published in this form after our printers had blanked out the poem.

Contrary to earlier reports, we now understand that it was management and not the print workers who made this decision to censor, on legal advice.

Nevertheless, the whole question of censorship and press freedom raises a number of important questions — for instance, in what way can printworkers make their views known on the papers on which they work.

In our opinion the method utilised by the Cuban printers after the revolution — but while the press was still controlled by private capitalists — offers a correct example for all printworkers. When reactionary Cuban editors wrote fanatically anti-Castro editorials, the printers inserted 'tails' just below putting their views forward. As the revolutionary process developed, the 'tails' became the 'leaders'.

We are in a very different situation, but the method should be the same. It prevents emotive charges of censorship and threats to press freedom, and at the same time strengthens our case in contrast to that of the unfree press. If the editor refuses to print the 'tail', only then should material be blanked out with an explanation of what happened.

# 'An ideology that dares not show its face'

MR. JOHN SMYTH, the prosecution counsel in the *Gay News* trial informed the jury that it was up to them 'to set the standard for the last quarter of the twentieth century and perhaps beyond...'

MARIAN SHAPIRO and SIMON WATNEY ask which 'standard' and in whose interest?

Mary Whitehouse, Hon. General Secretary of the National

Viewers and Listeners Association, has claimed that she would have prosecuted any paper which published a poem like James Kirkup's *The Love that Dares to Speak its Name*. The fact that she has not (yet) initiated proceedings against the publishers of John Donne and St. Teresa of Avila, whose poetry describes relationships with Christ in an equally erotic manner, or the socialist papers which have reprinted the poem, suggests otherwise.

It should be obvious that the

real subject underlying the trial was homosexuality. The recourse to the archaic law of blasphemous libel is just a legalistic sleight of hand by some of the most reactionary forces in this country. It also reflects their recent failure to manipulate the ludicrous obscenity laws in this country.

After the trial Whitehouse announced: 'A line has at last been drawn and a limit set'. Judge King-Hamilton's refusal to allow any theological or literary defence witnesses and

Mr. Smyth's lurid pandering to anti-homosexual prejudice makes it clear that this 'line' simply defines the defences of bourgeois ideology.

The *Gay News* trial had no more to do with blasphemy than that of a Palestinian named J. Christ, on the same charge, some 1977 years ago. In both cases religious puritanism was the ideological expression of political realities.

Not the least of the verdict's implications is that it sets a precedent — other actions

against *Gay News* are already pending — to silence any voice which is understood to challenge 'Christianity', interpreted simply as the world-view of the middle classes.

Behind all the familiar appeals to 'normality', male homosexuality is being attacked in that it challenges the values of that most basic unit of capitalist production — the family.

As always, the love that dares not speak its name draws out an ideology that dares not show its face.

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# 10p.c. norm, 12 month rule, cash limits A THREE FRONT OFFENSIVE

by JOHN ROSS

WHEN DENIS HEALEY rose to speak in the House of Commons last Friday there was a general expectation of a relaxation of the policies which have sent living standards plummeting. As he spoke, Enoch Powell nodded his head furiously in agreement. The package is a wolf in sheep's clothing. An offensive on three fronts.

## 1. 10 PER CENT LIMIT

THE TEN per cent norm is for average earnings, this means that the proposed increase on basic rates is only five per cent. Subtract from that the effects of an expected rate of inflation of fifteen per cent and the end product is a wage cut of between five to ten per cent.

## 2. 12 MONTH RULE

THE EFFECTS of this wage cut bid will be heavier if the TUC and Government enforce a gap of twelve months between wage claims. Many workers will not receive rises until well into 1978 when inflation will have slashed living standards further. The second intention behind the rule is to divide up the working class struggle.

They are trying to separate carworker from carworker, docker from docker and white collar local government worker from manual workers. For example manual municipal workers have their claim in November, but white collar workers not until July 1978.

## 3. CASH LIMITS

THE CORNERSTONE of the whole policy is the 'cash-limits system' in the public sector.

These limits are the amount of cash any council, nationalised industry or government department are allocated by the government, irrespective of any increased need in services, increased costs and so on. This is how Labour have already imposed £3,500m cuts in this year alone.

This is how they are going to try and use it in the future. The CBI demands that there are no increases over ten per cent for public sector workers. The Liberals will announce they will vote to bring down the Government if there are any settlements over that figure. The new Tory councils and the nationalised industry bosses are backed up by the cash limits system.

Any public sector workers who start to fight will be told that there is no money. They will claim that if anything more than the ten per cent norm is paid then thousands will have to be sacked and services further cut. The system is planned to defeat and isolate the seven million workers in the public sector.

Government expenditure will also be used to police the private sector through the vast buying power that the state possesses in industry. The plan is to place orders with firms that 'hold the line' on wage increases and withhold them from those who meet union claims.

A second method, more indirect but extremely powerful, is through strict government restriction on the money supply as advocated by Thatcher and Sir Keith Joseph. The idea is that claims over ten per cent would cause such a shortage of credit that firms would cut back their ordering, lay off workers and ultimately cause a rise in unemployment.

## THE GRAND PLAN

BY COMBINING control of the money supply, cash limits and the use of government buying and price powers Healey aims to tie together the whole of the ruling class power into a single bloc. Through the use of the twelve month rule and the refusal of the TUC to wage a united struggle Healey aims that the working class will only be able to fight as individual groups.

In a struggle between a united ruling class and a divided working class the CBI and the government calculate that the labour movement will be defeated and cuts in living standards imposed.

The Government has rejected any socialist way out of the present crisis. In consequence it was forced to 'make capitalism work' through the slashing attacks on living standards imposed by the wage controls, cuts, and unemployment of Phases 1 and 2. This led inevitably to electoral disaster and the loss of the Labour majority in Parliament.

Desperately seeking to avoid the consequences of his policies, Callaghan turned to the alliance with the Liberals. The continuation of pro-capitalist strategy entailed by the Lib-Lab Pact means still greater electoral disasters such as those at Ashfield and Saffron Walden.

Healey's budget is another step on the same suicidal course. The rigid enforcement of the 10 per cent wage controls and public spending cuts accepted by the Government and imposed as a condition for continuing the Pact by the Liberals means a head-on confrontation with the unions. This will make the Government yet more unpopular.

The Liberals, Tories, Ulster Unionists and all the rest can



## Wage claims to come

**AUGUST**  
Public sector: 28,000 British Steel staff.

Private sector: 40,000 in heating, ventilating and domestic engineering; 33,000 plumbers in England and Wales; 8,000 Kodak workers.

**SEPTEMBER**  
Public sector: 116,000 police; 30,000 dockworkers.

Private sector: 80,000 in clothing manufacture; 5,000 manual workers in the British Sugar Corporation; 3,200 manual workers in British Oxygen (gases division); 4,500 brewery workers.

**OCTOBER**  
Public sector: 20,000 BBC monthly paid staff; 35,000 university teachers; 17,500 university technicians; 4,500 manual workers in the UK Atomic Energy Authority.

Private sector: 65,000 manual workers and 14,500 staff at Ford; 12,500 manual workers at Metal Box; 5,600 manual workers at British Nuclear Fuels.

**NOVEMBER**  
Public sector: 1,063,000 local authority manual and craft workers in England and Wales; 30,000 firemen;

22,000 manual workers and craftsmen in British Road Services; 15,000 Leyland car workers at Longbridge; 250,000 miners

**DECEMBER**  
Public sector: 238,000 ancillary workers in the NHS; 38,000 manual and craft workers in the water service.

**JANUARY**  
Public sector: 220,000 Post Office manual workers; 116,500 British Steel manual workers; 50,000 British Airways manual workers; 43,000 car supply workers; 10,000 maintenance workers in the NHS; 24,000 bus workers.

Private sector: 257,000 agricultural workers; 38,000 merchant seamen; 40,000 electrical contract workers; 45,000 in biscuit manufacture; 60,000 rubber manual workers; manual workers at Dursop, Shell UK and Swan Hunter.

**FEBRUARY**  
Public sector: 30,000 electricity supply technical staff; 25,000 British Leyland workers in Oxford.

**MARCH**  
Public sector: 106,000 manual workers in electricity

supply;

**APRIL**  
Public sector: 500,000 civil servants; 65,000 Post Office clerical and executive; 565,000 teachers; 420,000 nurses and midwives in NHS; 66,000 administrative and clerical in NHS; 180,000 British Rail workers; 30,000 London Transport workers.

Private sector: 183,000 printing workers; 27,000 Vauxhall car workers; 20,000 in vehicle body building; 65,000 in ceramic industry.

**MAY**  
Public sector: 500,000 electricity supply staff.

Private sector: 1,500,000 covered by the national engineering agreement; 146,000 in retail distribution; 75,000 in shipbuilding and repairing.

**JUNE**  
Private sector: 600,000 building workers; 175,000 civil engineers.

**JULY**  
Public sector: 320,000 staff in local government; 60,000 staff in gas supply; 24,000 in water services; 176,000 industrial workers in the Civil Service.

choose their moment until the peak of unpopularity of the Government and then turn Labour out of office. To be jeered by the miners and applauded by the CBI is Callaghan's policy.

But it is the miners and the rest of the working class and not the employers who represent the interests of the labour movement and provide votes for Labour against the Tories.

Healey's statement and the Lib-Lab agreement is a suicide pact which Callaghan is asking the labour movement to share with the Government.

## FIGHTING BACK

THERE IS no way the Labour Government can be kept in office by accepting its present course and swallowing Healey's package. That road leads only to slashing living standards, the return of the Tories, and the consolidation of the control of Callaghan,

Healey and their supporters over the labour movement.

But there is another road. Fighting the 10 per cent norm and the 12 month rule. Defending living standards through wage claims designed to compensate for Phases 1 and 2 and protected by automatic cost of living increases. Unifying the struggles against Phase Three. Fighting for a £50 minimum wage. Abolishing the cash limits system and replacing it with automatic cost of living increases in public expenditure to compensate for inflation. Fighting for the Right to Work. These are the beginning of the road to defending the working class, defeating the Tories, and changing the policies and leadership of the labour movement.

A united struggle to fight Phase Three, a united struggle to defeat Callaghan and Healey, a united struggle for a socialist alternative; that is the task in the coming months.



# SOCIAL CONTRACT '77

# The 5 per cent wage cut

Jan

• £32 a week council worker James Ford sacked and fined for stealing 50p bag of coke from his employers. He had been unable to pay the bill for his electric heating and had wanted to warm the house for his son when he came out of hospital.

• Countess of Lichfield, daughter of the Duke of Westminster, decides to end living with her father in order to put 'independence before economy'. Buys Kensington house for £100,000 out of father's estimated £300 million fortune.

• Price rises running at 17 per cent a year. Real take home wages fall to 5 per cent below January 1974 levels. Profits in July-September 1976 revealed to have been 27 per cent higher than the year earlier.

Feb

• A couple squatting with their baby in a South London prefab are to be evicted, as the house had been bought for conversion to a chicken coop. The heads of the firm say that a chicken coop was the only thing it was fit for.

• A facelift worth £1,000 carried out by a top Harley Street surgeon is offered as the top prize in a raffle for high society guests at a ball at the Dorchester Hotel.

• Price rises at 16 per cent. Real wages fall to 6 per cent below January 1974. CBI calls for doubling of profits by 1979.

Mar

• Opening of first £1 million flat in Europe. It is a 17 bedroom, 11 bathroom penthouse apartment overlooking Hyde Park developed by Trafalgar House Investments.

• A 67-year-old woman living alone on social security jailed for 3 months for stealing food valued at £1.42.

• Inflation at 17 per cent. Unemployment at 1,348,000. ICI announces increase in profit in 1976 of 68 per cent to £540 million. Cuts in public spending of £3,500 million announced for 1977-78.

Apr

• Shaun James Christian Welbore Ellis Agar, sixth earl of Normanton, presides over eviction of his sacked gamekeeper, with his wife and three children, from the Earl's tied cottage. Reported as the whole operation was so 'tedious' that the Earl could 'hardly stifle a yawn'.

• Former Life Guards major who robbed one bank of £17,500 and arrested while robbing another is given a suspended sentence by Judge Mervyn Griffith-Jones.

• Inflation 18 per cent. Real wages still 6 per cent below January 1974. GKN reports 40 per cent profit increase. Industry revealed to have slashed investment by a fifth since 1974.

May

• Lord Roseberry totals the amount received from the sale of his stately home. Receipts come to over £7 million.

• Woman who pleaded with the electricity board not to cut off her supplies got no electricity, and her baby died from the cold. The electricity board prosecuted the woman for attempting to reconnect the electricity supply herself.

• Rate of price increases 17 per cent. Unemployment 1,342,000. Value of shares rises by £1,800 million in one day's speculation.

Jun

• Letter to the Sun: 'Two weeks ago my husband took me to the supermarket and told me to get anything I wanted. I had a ball buying the things I love but could no longer afford, like coffee, cream and hairsprays. And he paid for it all. Afterwards he told me he had saved his overtime money for months to give me a good time'.

• Helicopter trip to watch the Derby arranged. Spectators paid £150 each for a 7 minute flight, smoked salmon and roast beef lunch, bottle of champagne and hire of morning coat and top hat.

• Inflation up to 18 per cent. Company profits average 31 per cent higher than a year earlier. Wages fall to a level of 1973.

Jul

• Chancellor Healey appeals to unions to accept 7 per cent cut in living standards by agreeing to a 10 per cent norm while inflation is still rising.

• Press appeals to unions to accept the controls as in the national interest.

• Dockers submit demand for 20 per cent united pay increase.

• Price rises 18 per cent. Distillers Group profits rise 43 per cent in a year to £134 million.

Aug

?

Facts from Labour Research

## What makes Healey run?

LETTERED collective bargaining from 1 August'. That of the transport workers' conference has led to a chorus of gleeful and gloomy in the mass media. Gleeful at the dismantling of the Labour Government. Gloomy at the prospect of a wages explosion led by the miners and car workers.

N MOHUN traces out the path to Healey's announcement next week.

present media outburst is a continuation of the sustained propaganda campaign that led to the signing of the Social Contract. The campaign maintained that price increases lead to inflation and therefore workers, organised through their trade unions, should blame for the crisis. The years of self-imposed wage restraint by the unions have since been forgotten. What has been the

So it's not surprising that total spending in the shops in April was at its lowest level for nearly five years. Prices have soared. At the beginning of 1977 food prices were rising at nine per cent above the general level of price increases, fuel by eight per cent above and housing by nearly eleven per cent above. The first result of the Social Contract was to decimate living standards.

### PROFITS

The second result is increasing profits. In 1976 company profits rose by 25 per cent.

Marxists should not be surprised by this. Capitalism is about profit-making. Profits are best increased by raising productivity, either by using more machines or fewer workers. Since it is workers



and not machines who create the profits, the result is a fall in profitability. When these falls become so large that capitalists stop investing a crisis occurs. How do they try to overcome this crisis?

They must increase profitability. But this can only happen if capitalist industries are reorganised so that inefficient firms are driven into bankruptcies and the more efficient enabled to in-

crease the scale of their operations.

In the nineteenth century, the lack of investment in a crisis led to unemployment. The existence of large numbers of unemployed enabled capitalists to reduce the wages of those who still had jobs. So investment became more profitable again.

The process of reorganisation could get underway. With the

restoration of accumulation, wages could be allowed to rise again — until the next crisis.

Today things are somewhat different. The trade unions are stronger. The state plays an active role in the economy, by acting as a catalyst to the role that the market played on its own in the nineteenth century.

The state engineers the fall in wages by letting prices rise faster than wages and by creating unemployment through cutting its own expenditure. Together with state intervention in industry through the National Enterprise Board, this fall in wages provides the impetus to capitalist reorganisation.

### IMPORTANT

That's why the Social Contract was so important to the Government. If it can't be renewed, then the Government will have to operate a tough public sector incomes policy and encourage private sector employers to refuse 'excessive' pay claims.

Profitability is not yet high enough in Britain. The Bank of England argued in its last Quarterly Bulletin, that profits in the commercial and industrial sector were 'clearly below that required as a reasonable basis for investment', and that, unless profits were significantly increased, investment is 'unlikely to be adequate to sustain a satisfactory rate of growth'.

No-one can say that we have not been warned of the offensive to come.

HEALEY proposed a wage increase average of 10 per cent with a promise that inflation will be in single figures by next summer. Inflation is at present 18 per cent. This makes an annual inflation rate of 13-14 per cent. Therefore, even on Healey's figures his controls would mean living standards would fall by 3-4 per cent.

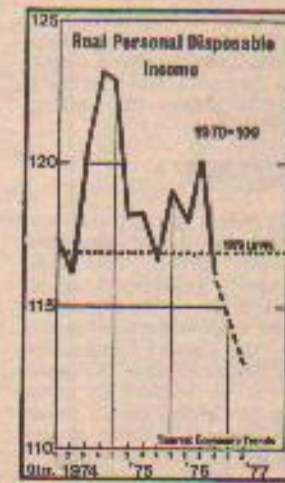
In fact no serious economic commentator believes that inflation will be below 10 per cent by next summer — any more than Healey kept his promise to get it below 10 per cent in Phase 2. This means an annual average rate of 15 per cent or more when the starting level is 18 per cent as at present. In reality, therefore, Healey proposes a 5 per cent cut in living standards on top of the 5 per cent already suffered under Phases 1 and 2.

For many groups of workers the cut in living standards would be worse than 5 per cent. A 10 per cent average increase in earnings, which is Healey's target, only means 6-7 per cent on basic rates with the rest made up by overtime, and some groups of workers getting more than 10 per cent. For low paid workers, or those without opportunity for overtime, bonus schemes and the like will not even get a 10 per cent increase. For these workers the cut in living standards could be as much as 7 per cent.

The Healey 'handouts' on prices are praised by the Labour left. They aren't even worth the paper they are written on. The 1½p milk subsidy is made up for by the 1p on a large loaf and the 3p on a pound of cheese which the removal of Government support will mean.

The increases on family benefits are also a simple Government fraud. Frank Field of the Child Poverty Action Group has shown that a family of four on average earnings would get an extra £2.10 a child. But it would lose £1.09 in child tax allowance, plus an extra £1 in increased school meal charges. The net gain to the average family will be 1p. A family with 3 children would actually be 15p a week worse off as a result of the changes.

All Healey's proposals amount to is a demand for a minimum 5 per cent cut in working class living standards to meet the CBI's announced goal of doubling profits by 1979.



## Chinese bureaucracy loses some international friends

## Bettelheim's resignation letter

'It is impossible to put any confidence in leaders who deceive the people while carrying out the elimination of those with whom they are in disagreement.'

CHARLES BETTELHEIM, one of the most prominent intellectual supporters of the Chinese Communist Party, explains why he resigned as president of the Franco-Chinese Friendship Society.

THE accusation of an attempted coup d'état levelled at the 'four' can in no way be considered convincing; as a general rule it is those who have effectively carried out a coup d'état who declare that those whom they have eliminated wanted to seize power by force (...)

The way in which the 'criticisms' of the four have been made and are being conducted has nothing in common with the teachings of Mao. One cannot find any Marxist analysis in what has been published, merely labels and slanders, the low level of which clearly betrays the inability of the present leadership of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to elaborate a serious critique of the points which would have formed the political line of the four (...)

In the last few months' papers it has been said that the four led a decadent and corrupt bourgeois life. It is said that Wang Hong-wen is a typical representative of the new bourgeoisie. Further it is affirmed that the four have clung obstinately to the positions of landed proprietors and the bourgeoisie, that they are leaders 100 per cent committed to the

capitalist road.

They are presented as sworn enemies of the CCP, the working class, the entire people and the Chinese nation; they are said to be guilty of contact with foreign powers, servility to foreigners, the import of goods useful to the activities of their secret agents and the importing of luxury articles. Equally they are said to have purposely squandered state funds to harm socialist accumulation, and to have praised material incentives. They are also presented as Kuomintang agents.

If such accusations corresponded to reality, this could only raise the most serious doubts on the composition of the CCP leadership and the vigilance of Mao Tse-tung himself. Under such conditions one could also conclude that all or part of today's leadership will one day reveal themselves to be Kuomintang agents capable of 'collusion with the enemy'.

If, as I believe, these accusations do not correspond to the truth, it is impossible to put any confidence in leaders who deceive the people while carrying out the elimination of those with whom they are in disagreement, not by clearly stating the basis



Mao's successors are criticised for 'revising' his politics, but present policy was all formulated under his guidance.

for such disagreements, but by resorting to slander.

In these conditions, one can only conclude that the fidelity proclaimed to the political line formulated by Mao Tse-tung is a smokescreen designed to camouflage a completely different line. In fact, a study of the texts published in China in the last few months, together with what one knows of the actual course of events there, has led me to the conclusion that it is actually a revisionist line which has carried the day. The critique of Teng has been abandoned, while calls abound giving primacy to pro-

duction over revolution.

Discipline and order are praised, while there is no longer any question of the right to preserve one's opinion, without speaking of the right and the duty to rebel against a bourgeois political line.

The questions posed by the position of women during the socialist transition are simply not recognised. The struggle against bourgeois rights is practically no longer mentioned. The problem of the existence of the bourgeoisie in the heart of the party is conjured away. The call to the class struggle is replaced by the call to 'struggle against the four'

(...)

On the international plane, the struggle against the two superpowers has progressively been replaced by the struggle against social imperialism alone. (...) The interventions of the Americans and their allies in the lives of other peoples are often considered 'positive'. That, for example, was how the events in Zaire were treated.

However, when the two imperialist bandits confront each other there is no place for any support to one side or the other. (...) In fact these practices play into the hands of social imperialism. (...)

Experience has shown how the present leadership of the Chinese Communist Party uses international acclaim to try and increase its prestige in the eyes of the Chinese masses. Therefore, to give one's approval to the political line presently in command in China, or even to strike an attitude which might appear to be approving, is to render no service at all to the Chinese people, nor to those struggling for socialism in China.

4 July 1977

## Damage to Catalonia

Some years ago the Franco regime celebrated its silver jubilee. The then Minister of Information, Manuel Fraga, had boardings erected throughout Catalonia proclaiming '25 years of peace' in Catalan. An old peasant saw the slogan, so the story goes, and asked, 'Is this a film which is coming to Barcelona?' 'No', came the reply, 'it's a comedy from Madrid'.

But not all the comic relief comes from Madrid. A few days before last month's election the Catalan Left, the electoral slate supported by the PTE, the largest of the far left parties, organised a march of 300,000 people up the mountain of Montjuich in Barcelona and down again.

Not for self-determination, not to demand elections to a sovereign Catalan assembly with powers to redraw the constitution, but to demand the return of the President of the Generalitat — the Catalan Government-in-exile.

Bizarre as it may seem, the gentleman in question, Josep Tarradellas, was to play a major part in the central Government's attempt to resolve the Catalan problem.

## SUCCESSSES

Even before the electoral results were known, the signs were that some sort of deal over autonomous government could be worked out. On the evening of 15 June a spokesperson for the PSUC, the Catalan Communist Party, explained that the need now was 'to re-establish unity among all Catalan forces; those of the centre-left, those of the centre and those of the right'.

When the extent of the workers' parties' electoral successes in

Catalonia became known, Joan Reventos, leader of the Catalan Socialists, called for a meeting of all Catalan deputies (including

by RICHARD CARVER

the two from Fraga's party) to discuss autonomy, while PSUC general secretary Gregorio Lopez Raimundo explained that: 'We are in a strong position to negotiate, but we don't want to launch ourselves on an adventure and have to engage in an eventual test of strength on the streets.'

Of course no-one wanted that! So, after a quiet word with Reventos, Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez got in touch with Tarradellas, who had declared that he could never set foot on Catalan soil until autonomy was restored. Suarez saved him that embarrassment by fixing a venue in Madrid, thus making contact with the last official representative of the Republic of the 1930s after the largely unnoticed harakiri of the central Government-in-exile last month.

Tarradellas is a museum piece, but the meeting had more than a purely archaeological significance. Tarradellas was chosen because of the unexpected electoral reverse for the Catalan Democratic Pact, the main Catalan bourgeois platform.

No doubt Suarez would have felt happier talking to the Pact's

leader, Jordi Pujol, a banker so 'moderate' that he once moved even Fraga to declare: 'I am a convinced regionalist'.

But Tarradellas' virtue lay in a political appeal which crossed class lines. The working class parties had made the demand for the return of the old right winger a centrepiece of their electoral campaign. Now, after the Catalan electorate's overwhelming rejection of bourgeois nationalism, Tarradellas, paradoxically, was the man to talk to.

The talks were followed by the announcement of a 'provisional Catalan administration', pending the restoration of autonomy statutes, presumably with the same limited powers as their 1930s forebears.

Tarradellas, now tactfully returned to his French exile, could hardly restrain his enthusiasm. Pujol, true to his philosophy of 'if there's a bandwagon I'll jump on it', fell over himself to support 'the work of recovery of the institutions of the Generalitat'.

Only the PSUC, which had not been consulted at all, was a little put out. 'This provisional body', commented one of its leaders, 'will not return to Catalonia the autonomous freedoms snatched away by force of arms in 1939.'

This too misses the point. The central issue is not 'autonomy' or 'provisional administration', but whether the form of government is to be determined in Madrid or Barcelona.

All the bourgeois nationalist parties, the mass working class parties and the centrists plump for the former. For Catalan capitalism a degree of administrative independence must be tempered by the maintenance of the central authority of the Spanish state to protect its interests.

For the workers' parties their Catalan electoral success was positively embarrassing. On the showing of 15 June an autonomous government would be firmly under their control, putting them on a potential collision course with Madrid. That would hardly fit in with their detente with Suarez on a national level.

Madrid will be pleased enough, for this is little more than a dress rehearsal for the stiffer confrontation when the issue of Basque autonomy comes up.

Most of the 300,000 who marched up Montjuich would say that Catalonia's relation to Spain must be determined in Barcelona, not Madrid. But, as long as their parties are content to provide the soldiers for a geriatric Grand Old Duke of York, things are unlikely to change.

SPAIN'S spectacular twenty per cent devaluation last week aroused great enthusiasm in the British press. In fact the stimulation of tourist trade — the ostensible object of their praise — is unlikely to work itself through before next year. The main point of the move is to stimulate exports.

The other major aspect of the economic package was a more stringent policy of direct taxation. This is meant, at least in part, as an incentive to the leaders of the working class parties to accept strict pay control in an austerity package expected within the next few weeks.

But one of the effects of devaluation will be to stimulate domestic prices of imported goods, so workers will need even further pay rises to keep pace with inflation.

## Albania takes its distance

by GUSFAGAN

THE Albanian Communist Party, in its official organ *Zeri i Popullit*, has for the first time launched a public attack on the foreign policy of the Maoist bureaucracy.

It criticises the Chinese failure to distinguish between 'authentic anti-imperialist and revolutionary forces on the one hand, and the pro-imperialist and reactionary fascists' on the other. 'According to this theory', it argues, 'the people and the revolutionaries should even unify with reactionary regimes and forces in the third world and give them support. In other words, they are to renounce revolution.'

But the line attacked by the Albanians is not a product of the new Chinese leadership under Hua Kuo-feng but of the old Maoist bureaucracy itself. Initially the Maoist line, elaborated by Teng Hsiao-ping after the fall from power and mysterious death of Lin Biao, called for an alliance of the third world with the secondary imperialisms (Canada, Europe) against the super powers.

But in recent years Maoist policy has shifted towards an open alliance with American imperialism against the 'more dangerous' of the super powers, the Soviet Union.

The explanation for the Albanian statement is to be found in the way Chinese foreign policy conflicts with the national interests of the Albanian bureaucracy. The Chinese support the strengthening of NATO, which is a direct threat to Albania.

More recently the Peking reactionaries have called for a build-up of the French nuclear forces, calling it a 'sacred right of France' and praising it as the fruit of 'the political line of independence pursued by General de Gaulle'.

The Albanians have a long-standing dispute with Yugoslavia about borders and, alongside China, fought vigorously against the Moscow rapprochement with the 'Titoist revisionist'. Now the Maoists are making a similar rapprochement with Belgrade, as evidenced by an official invitation to Tito to visit Peking.

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**Socialist Challenge**



The Italian far left and the crisis

## Lotta Continua 'Living with an earthquake'

IN THE DAILY press of the Italian left there is hardly an article on the far left groups that does not go into extensive detail about their acute political and organisational crisis.

A series of events have confirmed both the existence and deep-going nature of the crisis. These include the mass resignations of women members of Lotta Continua [the Struggle Continues] and the PdUP [Party of Proletarian Unity], the Lotta Continua congress last September and the multiple splits recently suffered by the PdUP and Avanguardia Operaia [Workers Vanguard].

For the British left this has more than an academic interest. Many of the problems raised — work in the mass organisations of the working class, the question of the 'left government' — are hotly debated here as well, albeit in a different form.

ANNA LIBERA begins a four week series on the strategies of the far left since the 20 June elections last year — elections which gave the Communist Party its largest ever share of the vote and saw a drop in the far left's poll. A final article will discuss the lessons of the Italian experience for Britain.

AT THE close of a stormy congress, Adriano Sofri called on his comrades to 'learn to live with an earthquake'. In his own colourful way, he was expressing the choice that the leadership of Lotta Continua had made: not to confront the centrifugal forces that had become visible during the congress — from the women to the worker comrades and from the youth to the marshals — but to allow them to run their course, while at the same time sending all the most experienced cadres out to rebuild Lotta Continua 'from the ground up'.

Evoking the need for the leading group to get back in touch with the masses, he said: 'Of course, people will tell me that Beethoven was deaf, and yet he managed to compose magnificent symphonies. But Beethoven was a genius!'

The choice was meant to be well calculated; in view of Lotta Continua's present situation, it would appear that the risks were grossly underestimated.

Today Lotta Continua no longer exists as an organisation. Last June in Turin, where it at one time had 1,000 members, the

LC comrades considered it a victory to get fifty persons to a meeting. Sofri, who had chosen to reintegrate himself into the ranks in the working class stronghold of Turin, got kicked out a few months later by the 'workerist workers'. In the other large cities similar things have happened.

This is not to deny that many activists in the student, youth and women's movements still identify themselves as members of Lotta Continua. But, in essence, this has more to do with sentimental attachment to the organisation that best represented the various 'movements' over the past eight years than political conviction.

Paradoxically, sales of the daily newspaper, which had dropped to a low of 6,000 copies at the beginning of the school year, jumped fantastically to 20,000 copies during the student upsurge of the last two months. However, as 'the voice of the movement', its lifespan will be only as long as that of the movement, to which it has explicitly refused to give any political leadership.

Having concluded that the PCI had been transformed once and for all into an arm of the government and the social order and the unions into 'appendages



of the state apparatus', the leadership of Lotta Continua went back to their original aim, which they had never departed from theoretically, of building a new workers movement.

Sofri came close to contradicting himself when he confessed, during one of the long self-criticism sessions at the congress: 'The fact is that while I myself have always been a stern critic of Lenin's theory of the "external" vanguard, I have never in my life managed to be part of the "internal" vanguard of anything.' While Sofri could afford to make jokes about it, for many members of the organisation this realisation was the starting point for demoralisation and inactivity.

What really happened in Italy during the autumn of austerity did not actually correspond in the least to the picture that the Lotta Continua leadership had drawn. In an atmosphere permeated with a wait-and-see attitude, there was no eruption of 'working class autonomy' when workers returned to work in September.

And when labour opposition did begin to surface in a consistent way this spring, it did so above all and primarily within the framework of its organisations — unions and councils, a stinging rebuff to Sofri's theories. This was enough to disorient more than a few activists.

As for 'integration into the movements', this was carried out to the letter where these movements existed, to the point of dismembering Lotta Continua as an organisation.

tempts to conceive of the relationship with the workers as a relationship with the institutions of the workers movement, even when these institutions appear in the guise of the "trade union left", the FLM (Metalworkers Federation) or the plant councils.

However, this does not mean that the movement should not seek relations with the autonomous vanguard of the working class. This is why we must combat these theories, that appear to be the opposite side of the coin of revisionist talk about "two societies", which, considering the "socially conscious worker" (i.e. the unemployed, the youth, and so on) as the mass vanguard of the proletariat in the crisis, then tend to identify the factory worker with the institutional representatives of the workers movement, and so come to the conclusion that the worker-mass can only be won to revolutionary struggle on an individual basis.

### 'MOVEMENT-ITIS'

While correctly debunking the theories about the integration of the working class into the system, the reporter puts forward no other perspective than that of ties with the fictitious 'autonomous' structures, giving the membership absolutely no means of understanding the roots of the working class's attachment to its mass organisations, and of understanding phenomena such as the assembly of opposition plant councils at the Lirico theatre in Milan, the better to intervene in it.

Apparently the LC leadership has realised, somewhat belatedly, the suicidal consequences for their organisation of the choice made at Rimini.

The above mentioned report to the Central Committee ended by saying: 'I think that the "movement-itis" of so many comrades in Lotta Continua reflects this need to continue the congress, this correct understanding that the nucleus of a revolutionary party can only be rebuilt from within the movement; but it also reflects an unresolved dilemma over how to pose the problem of political intervention, of leadership, of the role of the vanguard, and an often passive, fatalistic expectation that the movement is capable of offering solutions to these problems.'

But this conclusion has the ring of a cry in the wilderness. To be sure, the 'Lotta Continua current' will continue to exist, as long as there is no major political downturn; but in the present political conjuncture, to be able to envision the reconstruction of the organisation would mean having to swim against the stream.

### WOMEN

The women who had refused representation on the organisation's leadership bodies at the Rimini congress all went off into the women's movement. When the student movement erupted, members and former members of Lotta Continua took part in it in massive numbers, embracing its apolitical character and 'anti-organisation' orientation with a purely suicidal logic.

This reached such a point that the leading core of LC, which expresses its views in the newspaper from time to time, was forced to intervene and explain that it was important not to confuse the autonomy of the movement with a prohibition against political organisations putting forward their own point of view. But this appeal had little impact, even among those students who identified with LC.

The report presented to the last LC Central Committee meeting tried to warn the student movement and beyond it, the LC current, about this danger: 'The movement has defended its own independence, against all at-

## IN BRIEF

**EUROCOMMUNISM:** Santiago Carrillo, the general secretary of the Spanish Communist Party, said last week that Alexander Dubcek was a Eurocommunist without knowing it. 'There is very little chance that Russian tanks will ever reach Spain to quash a possible Spanish experiment of the same kind, and in any case, if they did the Spanish people would be ready to fight them', he added. The same day the Soviet Union denied that there was a serious rift between Moscow and the West European Communist Parties.

**POLAND:** The Polish Party leader, Edward Gierek, last week stressed the need 'to improve the working of the representative organs, gradually widen the powers of the local authorities and develop self-government.'

**CZECHOSLOVAKIA:** The Charter 77 human rights group has launched a protest against discrimination against intellectuals. It names 130 writers whose work is not published in Czechoslovakia for political reasons and adds that there are many others in the same position.

**SOUTH AFRICA:** France last week concluded a ten-year contract to buy 1,000 tons of natural uranium from South Africa. Government officials are reluctant to comment on the deal. But not as reluctant as the West German authorities which have just carried out a massive increase in export credits to South Africa, apparently without informing the relevant Ministers. Namibian liberation leader Sam Nujoma also has evidence of German arms sales to South Africa.

**SOUTH AMERICA:** The Labour Party National Executive Committee has put out a statement calling for the extension of financial sanctions against Chile and Argentina. The Government is reportedly divided over whether to go ahead with a loan to the Bolivian state mining company after a National Union of Mineworkers' delegation report on miners' conditions and repression in Bolivia.

**PERU:** Ten people are reported to have died in widespread protests against the Government's austerity package. The policy, which is to meet the conditions for an IMF loan, includes spending cuts and astronomical price rises. The unions have called a 24-hour general strike for 19 July.

**ETHIOPIA:** A spokesperson for the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front in Paris claims that the current Ethiopian offensive against Eritrea is being spearheaded by Israeli-trained commandos.

**MALTA:** Dom Mintoff's Government is heading for an all-out confrontation with the unions, after his attempts to outlaw certain forms of industrial action by public sector workers.

**EGYPT:** The Government has produced a draft law which would introduce the death penalty for Muslims who renounce the Islamic faith and fail to repent within 30 days.

**USA:** Three men have been killed in fighting at San Quentin jail after organised Nazi groups attacked Black Muslim prisoners.

**USA/SOUTH KOREA:** The ethics committee of the House of Representatives has found that 115 Congress members have received favours from South Korea since 1970. They include the Republican leader and Whip, the Democratic Speaker and his predecessor and Morris Udall, who ran for the party's presidential nomination last year.





Not someone you'd like to bump into on a dark night. This American is one of the 1,800 foreign mercenaries in the Rhodesian army, including 500 British. 'I am here because this is the only worthwhile war going on at present', says one mercenary. 'Besides, it's communism we are fighting here'.

# Zimbabwe: Racists on the run

**JULIUS KARANJA** concludes his look at the internal crisis of the Rhodesian regime.

One of the major strategies of the Smith regime to try and 'contain' the spread of guerrilla bases inside the country has been the erection of 'consolidated' or 'protected villages' (a strategy well tried by the Americans in Vietnam) which are guarded by the 'Guard Force'.

Some 300,000 Africans have been torn away from their homes to be imprisoned in such camps. Needless to say these have become a major target for the activities of the nationalists, and the Guard Forces are constantly under attack from the guerrilla operating in these areas. In one case, in the Sengwe Tribal Trust Lands, the entire population of one such village, together with its Guard Force, disappeared without trace!

State expenditure on defence has shot up to £92 million for this year, an increase of some 20 per cent over last year's figure.

The Government has difficulty finding spare parts for its military hardware, particularly for the Alouette helicopters. In the heightening political crises that have gripped southern Africa, it is finding it harder to find open sources of military equipment, though South Africa has recently pledged a supply of Mirage jet fighters (suitably stamped 'assembled in South Africa').

The death toll on the Rhodesian troops has increased enormously: while in the whole of 1976 some 180 Rhodesian troops were killed, the first four months of 1977 saw 130 deaths! While the influx of white mercenaries continues to grow (some 1,200 mercenaries operate in Rhodesia, at least 500 of them from Britain), this is no way compensates for the net emigration figure which is on the increase: in 1976 there was a net loss of 7,072 whites from Rhodesia; by May this year, the net loss was 3,587 whites!

White males up to the age of 34 are now liable to call up and it is estimated that Rhodesian armed forces (including the police forces and reservists) total some 50,000 (including some 4,000 blacks); but at any given moment, only one half of this

number can be mobilised.

The call-up system, the net emigration and the death toll have substantial effects on the economy since they act as a drain on the labour force. Furthermore, they have a demoralising effect on the remaining white population, who, on top of the strains of military service and fears for their livelihood, are faced with a declining services sector as teachers and medical staff emigrate. In 1976 some 850 'professionals' left, including teachers, doctors, midwives, nurses and accountants.

The regime's crisis was reflected in the recent budget which included a sales tax of 15 per cent and a 10 per cent surcharge on income tax, together with a pay freeze to offset increased military expenditure. This has contributed to the rise in inflation particularly for the black population. This now stands at 20 per cent, compared to an inflation rate for the whites of 13 per cent.

Already there are signs that the African trade unions will be fighting for wage increases of 50-70 per cent combined with a national minimum wage. The entrance of this sector of the population into struggle will radically deepen the crisis of the regime, and begin to lend a new character to the struggles for national liberation: they will also prove a test of the real character of the nationalist leaders.

The eleventh paragraph of Nigel Ward's interview with Emmanuel Farjoun last week should have read: 'The Labour Party had lost control both politically and over the economy ...' The word 'lost' was inadvertently omitted!

main leaders of the JVP, was sentenced to life imprisonment. We are reliably informed that both he and Lionel Bopage are suffering from ailments for which doctors have prescribed treatment only available in civilian hospitals and have asked that they be moved from the prison hospital.

The Government is refusing on the grounds that it would be a 'public security' risk. In addition the quality of the food they receive in jail has deteriorated markedly.

These measures against the JVP and in particular at its most valued leaders come at a time marked by an unprecedented wave of strikes involving hospital, railway and other workers, demanding the release of the political prisoners.

We are appealing for support for the demands which the most progressive sections of the working class are making in the face of many odds:

- \*Release all political prisoners;
- \*Repeal all repressive laws;
- \*Hands off the JVP.

allowed the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), proscribed since 1971, to re-register itself as a political party.

Out of about 20,000 people arrested in 1971, no more than a few hundred have been brought to trial. The majority have been released but are kept under constant surveillance. Today there are just under 200 JVP political prisoners.

Rohan Wijeweera, one of the



GINIPUPURA, SRI LANKA

## Free Sri Lanka prisoners

THIS WEEK sees elections in Sri Lanka after the break up of the United Front Government, made up of the bourgeois Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the former Trotskyist LSSP and the Communist Party.

When Parliament was suspended, the State of Emergency under which the Government has ruled since the mass upsurge of 1971 lapsed, as it had to be ratified monthly in Parliament. This

## Orange bigots on the march

At a meeting attended by Ian Paisley in celebration of the victory of King William III at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 the chairperson of the Independent Orange Order threatened disloyalty to the British crown.

He said that if Prince Charles married Princess Marie-Astrid of Luxembourg as suggested in the gutter press, the Independent Orange Order would not give allegiance to Charles. The reason is that the woman in question is a 'papist'.

But 12 July has a more serious side to it. **RON DALY** in Belfast reports on the celebrations there and from Glasgow **MARTIN O'LEARY** records what happened in Scotland.

On 12 July each year, Orangemen from all over the North of Ireland take to the roads to celebrate William, Prince of Orange's victory over the Jacobite Army. This year was the 287th anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne but the Orangemen were not so much celebrating King Billy's victory as the best of the Laming drums as Gaunting their supremacy over the North's minority Catholic community.

A trend which ran through the speeches this year was a call for unity in Loyalist ranks and claims that the Orange Order was still alive and well. Vanguard leader William Craig said it was absurd to have five Unionist parties and that unless unity was achieved things would continue to get worse rather than better. And the 'Grand Master of Ireland', Rev. Martin Smyth, referred to 'unscrupulous manipulators' who were attacking the

Orange Order and leading to its splintering.

A medieval tone was added by Cecil Harvey of the UUUM who called for loyal Orange people to oppose any change in the laws relating to divorce and homosexuality which would respectively 'give licence to the sin of adultery' and 'make legal the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah'.

Ian Paisley graced a meeting of the Independent Orange Order where he attacked 'the continued breaking of the Fourth Commandment which set aside Sunday as the Lord's Day'. He has of course other interests than preventing the children of Larne from having their dip at the baths — such as the province being 'betrayed by a Lundy leadership in Church and State'. Lundy was the Protestant leader who opened the gates of Derry to the Catholic army in 1689!

His cynicism reached new depths when he declared that: 'While calling for civil and religious liberty for ourselves, we are equally determined that our Roman Catholic countrymen

## Turkey: Back in the frying pan

From a correspondent

FOR THE Turkish people it was a case of out of the frying pan into the fire, and back into the frying pan again.

They rejected the right-wing coalition led by Suleyman Demirel at the 5 June election in favour of the Republican People's Party, a centre group led by Bulent Ecevit. Then, on 3 July, Ecevit lost his first vote of confidence in the National Assembly.

Ecevit, who three weeks previously had described Demirel as a fascist, proposed a coalition

with the latter's Justice Party — an overture which was not surprisingly rejected. Demirel is now reconstituting his previous coalition with the crypto-fascist National Action Party.

The usual pattern of Turkish politics would have allowed the inoffensive Ecevit a fair period of minority government. In the past his way of dealing with the workers' movement — co-optation rather than suppression — might have been preferred to Demirel's policy of repression.

But the election was carried out in an atmosphere of threatened military intervention with the

National Action Party commandos acting to provoke street fighting and bring about a coup.

The bulk of the ruling class considered that an Ecevit Government, with its promised liberalisation and clamp-down on rightist paramilitaries, could only stimulate the growth of the banned workers' parties and the DISK, an independent trade union federation with mass support.

But the ejection of Ecevit will not resolve that problem. Already union leaders have threatened a general strike against any Demirel Government.



Members of the Ulster Defence Association. The UDA's 'Supreme Commander' in Scotland claims his members are involved in large scale gun running to the Six Counties.

attacks on Catholic churches and pubs have been current in the Glasgow area for some time now. At a time when the National Front is making a big effort to establish itself in Scotland and revive its old alliance with the Orange Lodge the danger is starkly obvious.

No-one can any longer regard the walk as a quaint historical left-over.

An important new publication on Ireland has just been produced by the Troops Out Move-

ment. Called simply 'Irish News-Sheet', it is the first in a series which gives a detailed chronology of events in Ireland. This issue covers events from November 1976 to June 1977 and as well sections on 'British state strategy', 'Loyalist activity', and 'Resistance in the north'. There are also chapters on the media and 'The fight back in Britain'.

The news sheet is nearly 30 pages long and is available from Troops Out, c/o 2a St Pauls Rd, London N1. It costs 50p including postage.

# The National Front is a Nazi Front

**T**he equivalence of the growth of the National Front with the rise of pre-war European Fascism — in particular, with German National Socialism — is such an automatic article of faith on the revolutionary left, and such a prominent slogan on the reformist left, that there's a danger of assuming that this idea does not need to be fought for within the labour movement.

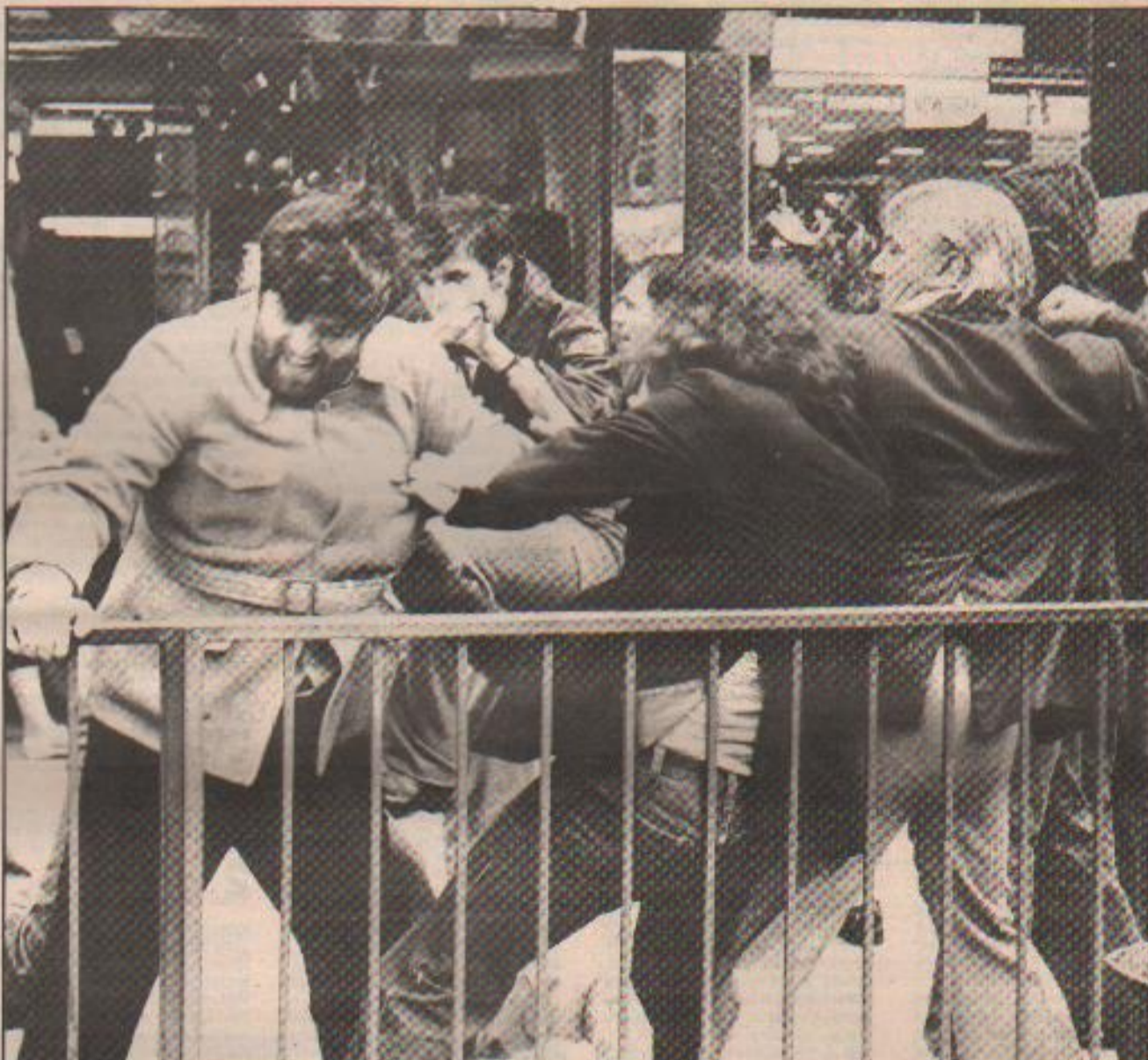
I recently had a play of mine, which argued for this apparently non-controversial perspective, at a theatre in London. The play, called *Destiny*, was reviewed, as these things are, in many social-democratic publications; and also, as these things often aren't, by the political columnist of the *Guardian*, the Professor of Politics at Birkbeck College London, and the Editor of the *New Statesman*.

What these and many other commentators agreed was that the thesis of equivalence, as a matter of historical fact, was not only incorrect, but, further, that the holding of such an idea was evidence of a rather rank wickedness or mental retardation. I was described, somewhat to my surprise as 'dishonest', 'immature', 'adolescent', 'fatuous', 'doty', 'naive' and 'paranoid'. Now, one could observe that this device — accusing people with whom one disagrees of criminal or lunatic tendencies — is, in a harmless form, the same tactic as that employed to silence dissent in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; but that is not the point. One could also argue that the reason for this vehemence, from the social democrats at least, may be that these gentlemen realise that if the National Front are fascists, then they face the possible destruction of their professions and their party, and they might have to do something about it; but that isn't really the point either. The point, it seems to me, is that the slogan 'National Front, Nazi Front' needs to be fought for, that there is an ideological battle in the labour movement to be won.

**DISGUST**

And the reason for that is far from academic. There's no doubt, of course, that all good social-democrats and true regard the NF with genuine disgust, and it's probable that some of them would fight with some rigour against them, whether or not they think that the NF has anything to do with pre-war fascism, on the grounds of the Front's stated policies. But why it is so vital to identify the NF not just as nasty people, nor even as racist militants alone, but as out-and-out fascists, is precisely in order to expose those policies which they do not state, and which they in fact specifically deny, at least in public, and which can best be exposed by looking at the experience of the 1920s and 1930s. These unstated policies include, to take but one small example, the destruction of the labour movement, root and branch, in the interests of and often in direct collusion with the employing classes of society. Without this perspective, the

David Edgar, whose play *Destiny* excited a lively debate in the national press, argues that a serious analysis of British fascism is vital for the labour movement.



National Front thugs attacking a supporter of the Lewis-ham 24 last month, as he held grimly on to the railings. There have been a series of violent attacks by the fascists on the South London campaign in defence of the 24 young black people who have been arrested on trumped up police charges.

Now the NF, National Party, and British Movement have found a new basis for unity, announcing the 'biggest ever rally' to be held in South London on 13 August. Two ministers and a Labour MP have called for a ban on the NF march. Anti-fascists up and down the country should start preparing now for a massive counter-march.

Front not only looks quantitatively a great deal less dangerous (at least if you're a white social-democrat), but also it becomes a qualitatively different beast. If the NF is viewed only as a channel for despairing poor white racism, or as a repository for the working class protest vote equivalent to the Liberals for the middle class, or as a genuine if unpleasant populist movement against the establishment (all of which views are held by Mr. Martin Walker of the *Guardian* in his book *The National Front* and elsewhere), then it is, of course, a very different phenomenon from a potential mass counter-revolutionary shockforce operating in alliance with the ruling class against the proletariat.

Particularly, if the NF's anti-establishment rhetoric is believed and its class function misunderstood, then the obvious logical extension is for those opposed to the NF to place happy and confident reliance on the forces of the establishment — from the Press to Parliament to the Police

— to control them if they get out of hand. Moreover, the acceptance of the NF at their face value may well excite the liberal-left middle class to oppose their racist populism; but it leaves the despairing lower-middle and unorganised or unemployed working class wide open to their demagogery.

**EXPOSURE**

The factual, detailed and painstaking exposure of NF demagogery, and thus of their ideological equivalence with pre-war fascism, seems to me an urgent task. It isn't easy, as demagogery is by definition saying one thing and meaning another (cf. A. Hitler in *Mein Kampf*: 'The trade unions cannot be dispensed with'). Luckily, with the NF we need not (and should not) rely any more solely on pictures of Tyndall and Webster decked out in stormtrooper uniforms in the early 1960s, or on aged quotations about *Mein Kampf* and 'well-oiled Nazi

machines'). We can turn, instead, to Tyndall writing in March 1976 that 'There is a Jewish conspiracy for world power as outlined in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion', and to the NF journal *Spearhead's* assertion (in June/July 1976) that the Nazi death camps were no more than 'a tissue of lies... manufactured from the persistent propaganda of the World Jewish Congress'. And, even more clearly, we can point to Jim Merrick (Bradford NF activist and candidate) and his open admission to the *New Statesman* last July: 'I don't object a bit if you call me a fascist. This country needs a right-wing dictatorship'.

It's even possible to detect, beneath all the rhetoric about being in favour of the trade union movement, something of the NF's real plans. Tyndall admitted in September 1974 that 'our aim is to take over the trade unions', and the October 1976 edition of *National Front News* said the following: 'The National Front is not

against profits... But profit is not all: we must make industry stable by putting an end to industrial unrest. We will counter the extreme left-wing influence in unions by introducing a compulsory secret postal ballot and by instituting the principle of one union for one industry' (my emphasis).

And all the NF's talk of the pensioners and the kiddies didn't stop the NF Deputy Chairman, on 26 February this year, remarking: 'A Welfare State in Britain is a Farewell State... The Welfare State which abandoned and exorcised capitalism has turned Britain into the international pauper of the world'.

**DEMAGOGERY**

But even beyond what they openly come out with, we must take care to expose the NF's most public and therefore disguised demagogery when it drops through the letter-box. One example is the NF's attack on the GLC Municipal Housing Debt,

which played second fiddle only to immigration in their May election propaganda. The fact is that this campaign against property interest has at its roots the classic thesis that there is a division between good, healthy, wealth-producing national capitalism on the one hand, and evil, parasitical, debt-creating, 'international finance' on the other. This absurd division of capitalism allows the fascists to divert the anti-capitalist grievances of their potential supporters into an attack on the supposed financial 'parasite', that parasite in turn being racially identified as the Jewish financial conspirator. Thus what sounds like a piece of pseudo-radical populism is in fact much more; it is hidden propaganda for the central core of the Nazi ideological vision of the world. Only by understanding and exposing this cynical hijack of 'left-wing' rhetoric for what it is, can we understand and expose the underlying class function of Fascism.

**IDEOLOGY**

It also appears to me that we must be careful about noting precisely how fascist ideology operates, in our anti-Fascist propaganda. To give, again, one example: it is just not true that the NF are blaming the blacks in the same way as the National Socialists blamed the Jews (in fact the theory runs that International Jewish Finance deliberately promoted immigration in order to destroy the genetic integrity of the nation from within).

It is also important, I think, that the left takes seriously the many factors which do set Britain apart from Europe in the 1930s (notably the vastly increased capacity of the State to intervene and the greater interdependence of the national economies), not least because these factors may well lead British Fascism, while remaining nonetheless Fascist, to mutate as spectacularly as Fascism mutated between Mussolini's seizure of power and Hitler's ten years later. And there's room, I think, for much more sophistication in our analysis of the historic relationship between Fascism and a ruling class whose long-term interests it serves but whose short-term activities it has often frustrated and, in political terms, suppressed.

It is still true that Fascism is a mass movement led by the petit-bourgeoisie whose historic function is to destroy, in power or on the road to it, the independent labour movement and the interests of the big bourgeoisie. It's still true that Fascism is always a danger in times of capitalist crisis.

But there are substantial sections of the active labour movement — mostly but not all on its right — who don't believe it is true. There are substantial sections of the working class, above and beyond those who sympathise and vote for the NF, who don't connect the respectable populists of the NF with the jackbooted barbarians of the Third Reich. The practice of opposition to the NF, physically on the streets or in electoral interventions, must always be allied, it seems to me, with a continuous and rigorous theoretical analysis of historical and contemporary Fascism, and with sustained and comprehensive exposure of their propaganda for what it truly is.

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)



# Grunwick-

## whys and wherefores

### Socialist Challenge EVENTS

**NORTH EAST**  
**DARLINGTON** Fortnightly Forums. Next meeting Tuesday 2 August, Public Library, Darlington.

**NORTH WEST**  
 For details of activities in the NW write or ring the Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre, Third Floor, 14 Piccadilly, Manchester 1. 061-236 2362.  
 Open Tuesday 8-8pm, Thursday 8-8pm, Saturday 10-10pm. Room available for meetings. Duplicating services.

**MANCHESTER** Series of educational for readers.  
**Thursday 21 July.** 'Which Road to Socialism - The Debate in the CP'.  
**Thursday 4 August.** 'The Crisis in the Family'.  
**Thursday 16 August.** 'Racism'.  
**Thursday 1 September.** 'Need for a Revolutionary Party'.  
 All at the Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre at 7.30pm.

**LEEDS** Readers meet fortnightly. Next meeting, Tuesday 26 July, 8pm Leeds Trades Club, Seville Mount, Leeds 7. Eurocommunism and the Crisis in the CP. For more information contact 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds.

**PRESTON** Supporters Group. Thursday 28 July at Windsor Castle pub (nr bus station), 7.30pm.

**MIDLANDS**  
 For details of activities of local supporters contact Socialist Challenge Centre, 76b Digbeth High Street, Birmingham. (021-643 9206).

**WOLVERHAMPTON** Discussion Group: 'What is Marxist Economics?' Tuesday 26 July, 7.30pm at the Vine Hotel, Broad Street, Wolverhampton.

**SCOTLAND**  
 For information on Socialist Challenge contact Scottish Socialist Socialist Challenge bookshop, 84 Queen Street, Glasgow (Tel: 041-221 7481). Open weekdays 10-4. Late closing Thursday 6.00pm. Wide range of FI publications.

**WEST & WALES**  
**CARDIFF** Forum: 'Racism'. Speaker: A Cardiff Race Relations officer. Friday 22 July, Rhymney Hotel, Adam Street, Cardiff (opposite prison).

**LONDON**  
 For details of activities ring 01-263 3081, 10-5pm.

**SOUTHALL** Supporters group meets fortnightly. For details phone 01-573 5096.

**HACKNEY** Public Meeting on Eastern Europe. Speaker Oliver Macdonald (Labour Focus on Eastern Europe). Britannia pub, Mare Street, Hackney (next to Town Hall). Tuesday 26 July, 7.30pm.

**HOME COUNTIES**  
**READING** Readers meeting. Every Thursday evening, 7.30pm, 68 Amity Road, Reading.

**SOUTHAMPTON** Readers meet fortnightly on Thursday in the Anchor pub, East Street from Thursday 28 July. For further details phone Paul at 0703-551132.

**YORKSHIRE**  
**YORK** Readers group meeting. 'Consciousness raising and revolutionary organisation'. Sunday 24 July, 7.30pm. Spread Eagle pub, Walmgate, York. Meeting every fortnight on Sundays at 7.30pm.

**SHEFFIELD** readers meet fortnightly. Next meeting Thursday 26 July, 7.30pm, the Lion Hotel, 3 Nursery Street (off the Wicker), Sheffield.

### faulty performance

YOUR HEADLINE about Grunwick, '11 July: A Dress Rehearsal for tomorrow', was far more telling than the article beneath it. Let us carry the analogy a little further. After a dress rehearsal, the cast sit down to discuss their performance so that they do not repeat their mistakes on the first night. Our performance on 11 July was far from perfect; yet I looked in vain for *Socialist Challenge's* critical assessment of this particular dress rehearsal.

Of course, all of us present felt the power and excitement which you expressed so well; this is clearly the stuff of which labour movement myths are made. But surely the events at Grunwick that day are a potent confirmation that without leadership, communication, and information we cannot harness the potential of a mass picket. Most of us had no intention of following the TUC - Scargill's declaration that we were staying at the factory was enthusiastically endorsed. But at the crucial moment we felt victim to disorganisation and rumour. (We should note that 'planned rumours' are a feature of military/police psychological warfare.) We had no means of dialogue with the strike committee, no way of knowing who was making decisions or whose

### get the target right

THE 11 JULY mass picket showed the potential strength of the working class in fighting back against reactionary forces and the hold of the trade union bureaucracy. I know a lot of comrades came away from the picket feeling disappointed and even betrayed that the picket had been called off for a march around North-west London.

I think that it is important that our frustration and anger is directed clearly at those forces who were responsible for that: the TUC and APEX leadership who are only too keen to diffuse the struggle when it appears to be out of their control. But to direct abuse at the strike committee (including calling the secretary a 'scab') as some people did on the picket is to misunderstand the difficulties and pressures

word to trust. 'Relying on our own strength' is not enough. Nor is it enough to denounce the TUC. We must start thinking constructively how to establish independent communication and collective decision-making in the mass picket. The revolutionary left should have had stewards moving through the crowds persuading people not to join the demonstration, and passing on information about events in other sections of the picket. Delegations to the strike committee should have been organised to persuade them to stand firm and resist pressure from the TUC and the APEX officials.

Going further, perhaps we could borrow from the US anti-Vietnam demonstrations and learn how to use mobile radio communication on mass pickets. And, despite the victory over the mounted police on 11 July, we still have a lot to learn about police riot control tactics - and how to counter them.

Learning from experiences such as Grunwick is an essential part of our struggle. While drawing most of the right conclusions about the way the strike should be won, *Socialist Challenge* has neglected the detailed tactics of mass picketing, and is thereby failing to synthesise an important aspect of our experiences. Huge numbers constitute the basis for victory, but they cannot work magic: only careful organisation can ensure that we win.

**KAREN MARGOLIS [London]**

that the strikers, who have been on the picket line for eleven months, have faced, particularly in constantly opposing APEX restrictions on mass picketing. It is not just a moral question: attacking the strike committee can result in isolating them from the rank and file support and pushing them into the hands of the bureaucracy.

There were problems on that mass picket: the stewarding was negligible and often left in the hands of unknown individuals. It must also be said that the confusion caused on the week before as to whether the mass picket was to be called at all on 11 July did not help matters either.

But these are lessons which both the strike committee and all those on the picket must learn. And we must take up those lessons in the most fraternal way possible, especially with those who are actually in the forefront of the struggle.

**TESSA VAN GELDEREN [Brent]**



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

### far left intervention

AT THE Grunwick mass picket on 11 July the organisations of the revolutionary left, without exception, failed to live up to their political responsibilities to the working class. No organisation made a serious political intervention into the picket. And yet the need for such an intervention was apparent in every feature of the day's events.

Firstly, the march organised by the TUC diverted the mass picket into a pointless tramp around Willesden, allowing the scab's bus to get through the gates. That this would happen was entirely foreseeable. What was needed was a determined intervention, using leaflets and megaphones, to encourage people to stay at the gates. This would have made it possible to hold the gates until late afternoon. Yet no organisation took any steps to dissuade people from going on the demonstration.

Secondly, the huge concentration of police ensured that there would be violent clashes. In such circumstances revolutionaries should have been prepared to play an exemplary role in defending the picket against police attacks. That would have meant the organisation of well-stewarded revolutionary contingents, capable of giving an example in action to other forces on the picket, of a coordinated response to the onslaughts of the boys in blue. Instead, the revolutionaries, like everyone else, melted around in a state of confusion and disorganisation.

Thirdly, the trade union bureaucracy had a monopoly of political

propaganda - they made all the speeches. Other than paper selling, no attempt was made to put a revolutionary point of view to the thousands of assembled trade unionists. Surely an attempt could have been made to organise a platform for revolutionaries without opposing it, in a sectarian manner, to the official one.

I think it a great pity that *Socialist Challenge* missed the opportunity to seek to organise a revolutionary intervention in line with its fight for revolutionary unity. It should have been possible to build a jointly stewarded contingent of forces from at least IMG, Big Flame, and the Workers League, with joint propaganda activities. Even if, as is unfortunately likely, the SWP refused participation in the contingent, it may have been possible to make an agreement with them on tactics. The isolation of the revolutionary left will not be overcome if it fails, as it did on 11 July, to take bold initiatives in the major events of the class struggle.

**JOHN HUNT [Oxford]**

**2**  
 YOUR PAGE 3 coverage of the 11 July mass picket last week at Grunwick was somewhat unbalanced in its emphasis. Although the presence of 10-15,000 trade unionists in solidarity was indeed a great step forward, the events relating to the demonstration in the late morning revealed a great deal about the weaknesses of the labour movement and the revolutionary left, which deserves closer scrutiny.

Firstly a massive position of strength, where the mass picket controlled the streets (even the

main road to Wembley, which the police were forced to close) was abandoned at 11.00am for a totally fruitless, passive and 'peaceful' demonstration (procession?) round Willesden. Meanwhile the bus carrying the scabs, already turned away three times, was allowed to enter the factory. You may describe this as a 'hollow victory' but the bus is both a concrete factor and a symbol in the present situation, and this victory for Ward had the effect of demoralising many of those present. *Socialist Challenge* did after all say 'Scabs shall not pass' on its front page.

The social democratic leadership of the picket, in the shape of Jack Dromey, APEX and mysteriously Scargill himself, actively encouraged the disbanding of the mass picket. This was not met with any organised opposition (despite the evident uneasiness of many present at leaving Cobbold Road and Chapter Road unguarded). When a small nucleus of demonstrators, mainly revolutionaries and feminists remained behind and courageously attempted to stop the bus, they were viciously attacked by the police and then verbally 'disowned' by the APEX official present.

During the whole episode, the weakness of the revolutionary left, including the IMG, was revealed. They presented no opposition to what many saw as a 'sell out'.

Finally, just a comment about your Grunwick cover on issue 6. Despite the fact that there were thousands of women on the picket and the majority of the strikers are women, there is not one woman in your selection of cover photos. A little more attention to sexist ideology as it presents itself in visual images, would certainly be in order.

**CARL GARDNER [Central London]**

# Sexism and necrophilia

OF COURSE *Socialist Challenge* must defend the rights of homosexuals and oppose censorship. However, I do not see it as part of the task of this paper to print and circulate sexist poetry exemplifying the objectification and depersonalisation of sex produced by a repressive and exploitative society.

I am confident that you wouldn't print and circulate a poem glorifying rape, but the sexual activity in this poem (i.e. necrophilia) has even less of an element of human communication and mutuality. In fact it is totally devoid of all the positive attitudes to sex which socialists should encourage, since it involves intercourse with a dead body.

Rather than insert the leaflet with a facsimile of the poem, it would have been better to print an article about the dangers of censorship. This could be accompanied by an article about the cruelty and repression inflicted on homosexuals in our society - treatment which produces the alienated attitude towards sex portrayed in the poem, an attitude which has nothing to do with homosexuality as such, but is an aspect of sexual relations under capitalism and hierarchy.

*Socialist Challenge* so far has been an excellent paper. This is the first issue that I will not thoroughly enjoy selling.

**JILL SIMONS, Workers League (Harrow)**

# The last note!

My intention in writing of brass bands, to bring a neglected cultural form within the focus of the left, seems to have had some success. The response of comrades Chanan and Witts is to be welcomed.

However, I still find myself in general disagreement with them on the issue. The attainment of high standards of musical competence by large numbers of working people within the opportunities provided by brass bands is I think a remarkable achievement, not diminished by criticisms of the origins of bands - the central criticism. That high standards are achieved, that there are self-financing, self-generating bands (only a small minority of bands are tied to companies), seems to me to be worthy of approbation. To concentrate as do Chanan and Witts on the fostering of the cultural form by companies, and the alleged opiate effects,

undervalues what is a real achievement.

Whilst I accept much of what was written of the genesis of bands, some of Comrade Witts' points are of a kind which I would like to correct. He writes that bands 'are absolutely sexist', also implying that they are racist. It's true that there are no women players in the best bands, but not that 'there are only a handful in the entire movement'. Of twenty-two bands viewed at the Saddleworth Band Festival, twenty had female members. That all were under twenty-five (they invariably leave when married etc.) is an indication of the sexism of society, not that of bands. And, drawn as they are from communities with few black people it is as unreasonable to comment upon their absence of black members as it would be to make a similar comment on the racial composition of steel bands.

That the whole movement is engendered by various varieties of capricious capitalists I find hardly credible. It is alleged that in the 1950s they were 'artificially revived by the instruments industry', that 'their music is thrust upon them'. Such allegations can not only be made of any widespread musical form, but moreover smack of the conspiratorial theme which opponents of the left delight in ridiculing.

Neither is the movement static. Grimethorpe Colliery Band have just declared their intention not to enter for contests, seeing them as standing in the way of their musical development. Other bands are experimenting with their format and their music. The development of bands may yet surprise the 'Methodists, mill-owners and ... bourgeois moralists'.

**PETER BURTON [Manchester]**

# Bursting out of the Victorian strait jacket

Standing casually in front of his cottage, the sandalled and bearded Edward Carpenter looks in his photograph like the familiar stereotype of an upper-class eccentric. He was a member of the Fellowship of the New Life formed in 1883, a group which was just one of the strands in the loose-knit socialist movement of the later nineteenth century.

In her study of his life\* Sheila Rowbotham describes in her unaffected and imaginative style the day-to-day preoccupations and relationships of Carpenter's group in the context of Victorian society.

To counter the traditional focus of labour history solely on how the working class has sought to take power, or tried to improve its conditions, Rowbotham asks:

*'How did these early socialists try to live, how did they see and relate to one another? What did they think and feel about love, about their bodies and their sexuality? To demand so impertinently of the past is a political choice based on a redefinition of the relationship between what is political and what is personal.'*

Carpenter's homosexuality is seen as one of the motive forces which turned him against capitalism — the capitalism in which 'to be a man was to be a brute despite the civilised veneer of dress-coat and classical educa-

by SUE ASPINALL

The second part of *Socialism and the New Life*, by Jeffrey Weeks, concerns Havelock Ellis, the sexual theorist who was a founder member of the Fellowship. In the course of his studies he collected numerous case studies of homosexuals, which established for the first time the widespread existence of homosexuality.

Ellis, who was married to a lesbian, Edith Lees, was sympathetic towards homosexuality and had a liberal attitude of tolerance for a wide variety of sexual practices. But both he and Carpenter assumed that individual behaviour was the expression of inherent biological drives, not of social processes.

Ellis justified homosexual practice on the grounds that it was 'congenital', or 'natural' in some people. Carpenter adopted a theory that we evolve towards a 'higher' form of human nature which would be sexually androgynous, 'including male and female characteristics'.

In practice these positions led Ellis to a reformist position on homosexuality and a reactionary attitude towards women. Weeks quotes a 'particularly devastating' phrase of Ellis's, that 'women's brains are in a certain sense... in their wombs'. Carpenter, on the other hand, did attempt to break down the sexual division of labour in his own life.

Rowbotham points out that male comradeship was the dominant force in Carpenter's group — so much so that in their correspondence events of considerable importance to the women, such as childbirth and the upbringing of children, are rarely mentioned at all. She also



reminds us that if the world of women had been documented as extensively as that of the men a very different picture might emerge.

Despite the limitations and conservatism of many of Carpenter's ideas, his life in practice



EDWARD CARPENTER

did constitute a startling break with Victorian bourgeois conventions. The weakness of these utopian socialists was their reluctance to work out any strategy for the overthrow of capitalism, other than through personal fulfilment.

The consequence of this was the eventual split between the Fellowship and the rest of the socialist movement, which — with the formation of the Independent Labour Party in 1893 — turned towards parliamentary socialism and questions of organisation exclusively.

Although Weeks and Rowbotham deny that their studies present 'lessons' for now, it is obvious that the debate on the personal and the political which has been stimulated by the women's movement in recent years, will be clarified by this book. The divisions Rowbotham

describes in the early socialist movement strongly resemble the divisions which exist today between libertarians and feminists and the 'straight left'.

It is largely the absence of any tradition of socialist culture and socialist alternatives in the personal sphere which has caused this division between those who 'want it now' and those who say 'after the revolution'. This polarisation within the socialist movement will continue to weaken the movement until a real debate is opened up between the warring factions.

\* *Socialism and the New Life: The Personal and Sexual Politics of Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis*. By Sheila Rowbotham and Jeffrey Weeks. Pluto Press, £1.80. Available from Red Books, 182 Pentonville Road, London N1. (Add 25p p&p).



HAVELOCK ELLIS

tion. How else could the sons of the ruling class be bred for domination over workers, women and the empire?'

# Billy Connolly — one of us

by GEOFF BELL

THEY GIVE YOU free sticks of rock as you go into Billy Connolly's concert. Red and white striped rock with the legend 'Billy Connolly' running through it instead of 'Blackpool'. The superstar with the common touch is probably what they have in mind.

And a superstar Connolly undoubtedly is. The former welder from Glasgow's shipyards is reckoned to have made himself £80,000 through his countrywide tour which ended at the Rainbow in London last week.

That is an awful lot of money, but compared to the earnings of monarchs, company directors,

and tennis players, Billy Connolly is underpaid.

From a 'professional' point of view Connolly is way above anyone else in this country. His originality, his spontaneity, his delivery mark him out as the

superstar. Not for him a galaxy of song, script, and gag writers. The only material he borrows is working class Glasgow street repartee.

His concert in London repeated the obsessions that made him:



farts, drunkenness, 'willies'. Toilet humour, some would say. But there is more to his current concert performance than that.

Three songs in particular lifted Connolly's performance far beyond the exceedingly good fun they undoubtedly are. One spoke of the criminality of the British army's presence in Ireland; another commented bitterly on the Stonehouse, Slater Walker, and Poulson scandals; and the third was entitled 'Boys in Blue'. Its chorus runs:

*Do you think I would leave you lying,  
When I can lie just as well as you  
If anyone squawks in the witness box  
I'll cover up for you...  
We're two little boys in blue.*

The connection between this type of material and jokes and songs about bowel movements may be difficult to see — but there is one. Essentially the common theme can be described as anti-bourgeois.

Connolly deliberately confronts middle class values, from the 'impropriety' of talking about farts to police as anything other than paragons of virtue. It is Connolly's contempt for such notions which can allow socialists to go to his concerts without having to wear a white mac with the collar turned up.

There are strong elements of sexism in his material, but at the same time he speaks 'romantically' of living with women with wooden legs and black teeth — people whom the normal codes of sexism rule out of court. And that there are no anti-black or anti-Irish jokes in his performance makes Connolly exceptional compared to the normal run of mindless mediocrity that

passes on our TV screens for 'humour'.

In short, Connolly is no reactionary. It is to his credit that now, as he sits at the very top of the entertainment pinnacle, he sings and talks with greater political content than ever before.

He has not softened up as his fame and money have grown; indeed the reverse has happened. His 'protest' songs are not of the middle class liberalism, social comment variety. He hates the police and he clearly welcomes the opportunity to tell of that hatred; for they can't touch him now.

Connolly is not a well developed, fully conscious revolutionary socialist. He plays the role of the individual superstar and he obviously enjoys it. But he that as it may, he is one of us. And you can't say that about many with his money these days.

# WEDGE

A NEW MAGAZINE of cultural practice and theory, *Wedge*, is now out. Produced by journalists, film-makers, musicians, theatre-workers, teachers and students, it is an attempt to raise the question of 'cultural politics' amongst the revolutionary left, to draw together cultural theorists and practitioners and to evolve a strategy for cultural struggle in the revolutionary process.

The first issue includes articles on: grant-aid and the crisis in political theatre; a debate on the mass media; an introduction to Brecht's theatre poems; women and domestic architecture; a critique of the Communist Party's cultural practice; Italian 'free' radio, and the work of the Chile Cultural Committee.

*Wedge* is available from 56A Shurford Road, London W9. POs/cheques for 90p (incl. p&p) made out to *Wedge*. Or ask at your local left bookshop and give them the magazine's address.

On Saturday 30 July at 6pm there will be a benefit film show for *Wedge* at the Other Cinema, 25 Tottenham St, London W1. Price £1. The programme will consist of short political films, including the EGA film, 'L.B.J.' by Santiago Alvarez, and political documentary material from the 1930s. With speakers.

## COMMENT

# Remote

ALTHOUGH THE Under Review page on 7 July was a slight improvement over the first four issues, in that the *Bound for Glory* review deals with a film that will be on general release, the page still remains out of context with the rest of the paper and fails to provide 'cultural' coverage which is accessible to the majority of readers.

Any review page must deal with media such as television which play a far greater part in the life of working people than plays or films which are only shown at London 'art' centres.

A clear example of the importance of both pre-viewing and reviewing TV is given by the first TV showing on 10 July of the film *The Ballad of Joe Hill*.

A review could have covered the aspects of Joe Hill's life left out of the film — the background to the growth of American trade unions and the Industrial Workers of the World; how members of the IWW such as J.P. Cannon later formed the American Communist Party and the American Trotskyist movement; and finally how the State of Utah, which murdered Joe Hill, was recently the first state to re-introduce legal murder.

Coverage of films shown on TV, reviews of TV news coverage, and even articles on how such series as *Cross Roads* reinforce traditional ideas would be a great advance on the present coverage of films, which those low-paid and unemployed readers cannot afford to see — that is if they have any desire to after reading jargon-filled reviews such as that of *Bound for Glory*.

Under Review must be for the whole readership, not just the London elite who follow the 'revolutionary high culture' circuit.

MIKE TUCKER [Southampton]

ALAN BULLOCK reviews four new books on HITLER in the July BOOKS & BOOKMEN now on sale 75p Copies by post 90p from 75 Victoria St., London SW1

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Epic documentary on China. Showing daily — check for times.

Multiple ISBN reviews include World Affairs, July 10, John Burgess, Earl Bahr, Margaret Cole, Douglas Cooper, W. J. Burckhardt, Paul Fussler, John Galt, Richard Ingrams, Cecil King, Diana Mosley, Frank Rowland, G. S. Ross, Anthony Standish, Colin Wallace. Sample book order form on request.

# Socialist Challenge

## Editorial

# The Communist Party and democracy

A split has taken place in the British Communist Party. It raises a number of fundamental political and organisational questions for members of both the old and the 'new' CP.

The statement issued by the Political Committee condemning the split states: 'The Communist Party is at present involved in one of the most democratic discussions of its programme ever organised by a political party in Britain'. We shall dis-

miss this particular assertion at some other time. What is revealing is that a few paragraphs later we read of 'secret meetings' and executive investigations of the same. We are also told that these 'investigations' might have accelerated the split.

This is not democracy. Why are these or any other secret meetings necessary in the first place? The question is not simply related to the Sid French grouping, but to other oppositional currents that still exist in the party. It is precisely the lack of institutionalised internal democracy which led to the suppression of the Doyle pamphlet, the decision not to publish the party's journal for women, Link, (because it contained two articles critical of the New Draft) and the departure of Sid French and his supporters. Thus the question of allowing tendencies and factions [Point 4 of 'Our Policies' published on p.2] is not a fetish, but the only way in which a democratic revolutionary organisation can be constructed.

Sid French's NCP is preparing to adopt and enforce the rules of the CPGB so for them the question of inner-party or workers democracy is not an issue at all. The character of this new organisation is not difficult to surmise: its model is the Brezhnevite party in Sweden and Finland. It combines loyalty to the Soviet Party with support for the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' and 'Leninism' as practiced in the USSR. In our opinion on these positions it will remain



SID FRENCH — leader of the New Communist Party. For full NCP press release see p. 2.

an isolated sect in British politics.

We believe that socialist democracy and revolutionary politics are not merely not incompatible, but are closely related. The state of the left in Britain is an issue of some concern. Socialist Challenge has, since its inception, argued for a united fightback against Labour's capitalist policies both on the shop floor and in the electoral arena. We think that militants of both communist parties should be involved in such a fightback.

In our opinion, a conference this autumn involving all those militants active in challenging the Social Contract is a vital nec-

essity. This should include members of existing organisations ('Rank and File', LCDTU, CDLM, etc) as well as non-aligned militants. Such a conference could help to lay the basis for a fighting unity in action. Secondly, a debate on socialist strategy means that a meeting should be prepared involving socialists from all tendencies to discuss the problems which confront the left as a whole. Socialist Challenge will be in the forefront of both these campaigns. In addition, our supporters will be putting forward these positions at meetings organised by the NCP in the coming weeks.

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Reproduced from the Evening Standard of 12 July



Evening Standard: Authors: H&C

READ ALL ABOUT IT—business is slack for police at Grunwick this morning, giving ample time to catch up on yesterday's news of strife as told by Socialist Challenge.

## EXPANDING READERSHIP



THE PICTURE speaks for itself. The only thing to be added is that it is not only the police at Grunwick who are avidly reading Socialist Challenge. So are the pickets. Last Thursday, the 150 pickets at the gate bought 100 copies of the paper.

Last week's issue sold well. At the Durham Miners' Gala — while Cullaghan attempted to justify another cut in workers' living standards — 60 copies of Socialist Challenge were sold.

The report of the Robin Blackburn-Monty Johnstone debate boosted sales at the Communist University. During the week almost 400 were bought. Our determined sellers sold out three times and phoned for more papers to be sent urgently. Collets Bookshop had sold out 150 copies by last Friday. More had to be

sent. The same success cannot be claimed for the fighting fund. Last week £83.02 came in. Each week our target for survival is £130. We fell short by almost £50. The cumulative figure now stands at £482.53.

One reader in Leicester set an example to all our readers. This militant sent us the first pension he had just drawn.

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A. Green	5.00
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Guildford reader	1.00
Birmingham readers	4.00
Edinburgh teacher	16.00
TOTAL	83.02