SITTING in the cosy comfort of No 10 Downing Street on Monday night, Jim Callaghan offered his thoughts to BBC TV’s ‘Panorama’.

He attacked any strikers his interviewers cared to mention, but then he stressed: ‘On the whole it’s not the national leaders. The responsibility is much lower down’.

True enough. For instance:
In the National Union of Public Employees, the national executive overturned the decision of its negotiators — led by general secretary Alan Fisher — to accept the miserly government offer.

In the ambulance service, workers voted against the policy of all the union leaders involved and decided on strike action this Friday.

Union leaders attempt to limit strike action by their members or stop it altogether.

Union leaders sign agreements with employers and concordats with the government.
And the ‘lower down’ rebel.

The causes of the rebellion are not hard to find: Low pay, crumbling public services, a trade union leadership which disregards conference decisions, a Labour Government which disregards its party’s conference decisions.
The ‘lower down’ have, to borrow another of Callaghan’s phrases, ‘had a baptism.
The rebellion they are engaged in has yet to take concrete form or shape.

The obvious conclusion from the NUPE executive’s rejection of the deal — all-out strike action — has not yet been called for by the executive.
In the civil service dispute, too, the union leadership is content to offer only ‘selective’ strike action.
Even the ‘left’ TUC and Labour Party tops have neglected to call for recall conferences of their respective organisations.

But it is now obvious that the government is very determined to crush the public sector strike and determined too to reject the claims of civil service workers.

Only an equal show of strength by those involved in these struggles will persuade the government to change its mind.

All-out action is the obvious prescription.
Such action would no doubt bring further lectures from Callaghan. He spoke on Monday of the need for a change in ‘moral attitude’.

For a government which has ordered massive cuts in the NHS to lecture ambulance workers on ‘morality’ is taking hypocrisy to bizarre proportions.

Callaghan and the rest of the Labour government have ‘squeezed’ the poor ‘until their pipes squeak’.

That is the root of the rebellion and why it should be spread and supported.

INSIDE: Iran—pages 7, 8 & 9
China & Vietnam—pages 2 & 3
Shankill Butchers—page 12
**EDITORIAL**

Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1. 

**The CON cordon**

IF ANYONE had any doubts about the meaning of the TVC's proposal that the concordat should be clearly cleared up last week. With the combined voices of Len Murray, Peter Shore, Joel Barnett and just about every other government minister demanding that the public sector workers reject the NUPE decision, and go back to work, it is clear that the concordat is nothing but a plan for open strike-breaking by governments and Murray's actions are in fact even more blatant act of scabbing than the TUC General Council decision to isolate and defeat the Fire Brigades Union strike last year.

**CORE OF CONCORDAT**

Such strike-breaking, and attacks on rank-and-file trade unionists and union democracy, is at the very core of the concordat. Even its details are virtually identical to that previous anti-union measures as Labour's 1969 In Place of Strife, the Tory Industrial Relations Act and the social contract.

* The talk of strikes being 'just another' and exposing strikes 'during negotiations' is no different to Paragraph 15 of In Place of Strife, with that 'the typical British strike...is in breach of the supposed agreement', or the Tory Industrial Relations Act's attempts to stop industrial procedures.

**ATTACKS ON PICKETS**

* The attacks on picketing and solidarity, now named 'secondary action' by the press, Tories, and government, are no different from the finding found in the In Place of Strife. This outlawed any attempt to interfere with the performance by another person of a contract. It is a one in a line of attacks on pickets — notably the infamous 'Shrewsbury frame-up trial of 1912, and Warren and other building worker trade unionists.

* The move by the concordat to get secret individual ballots has exactly the same aim as In Place of Strife. This ruled that: 'Where an industrial dispute is threatened, the secretary of the union will discuss the union with the concordat the desirability of holding a secret ballot'. The Industrial Relations Act proposed the same with concordat: the unions with the concordat desirability of holding a secret ballot'. The aim is to break up the solidarity of workers and make them individual targets for anti-union press and television campaigns.

**PURE MOONSHINE**

* The economic part of the concordat, such as its so-called aim to get inflation down to 5 per cent in three years, is pure moonshine. It is just like the social contract, which in fact reduced real wages by 12 per cent between 1975 and 1977. Real wages are only just beginning to recover from this year, and are unlikely due to the fact that last year's wages bear the government incomes policy limits.

* The concordat's growth target of only 3.7 per cent means that the TUC is accepting policies of mass unemployment.

* In fact, under the concordat the TUC is offering to go the government to prevent employers from being able to start the working class to accept through In Place of Strife, the Industrial Relations Act, that such a deal will end the trade union movement. Thatcher will thank the TUC kindly for surrendering the last ten years struggle to defend workers' rights, and will try to turn all their proposals into law the moment she is returned to office as a result of the right-wing policies of this government.

**OPENS WAY FOR TORIES**

Anyone who supports the concordat is supporting a massive attack on the rights of rank-and-file trade unionists to fight and organise, starting with the public sector struggle, and is helping to open the door for the Tory wolves. Total and complete rejection of the concordat is the teststone for any class struggle politics in Britain today.

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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.

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Send to Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper St, London N1.
PECING’S offer of peace talks is no offer at all. Vietnam has rejected the Chinese talks and has remained the only possible Chinese troops still left in Vietnam.

Instead the Hanoi government has warned the Vietnamese people that they may face a long war. In an unusual move the New China News Agency has repeated the Vietnamese stance as evidence of the impact its armies have. It links this to a comment from vice-premier Dang Xieap, hoping for a quick end to the "passive action". But it is uncertain if Vietnam will be able to disentangle itself so quickly. If the war goes on it will not be because of Vietnam's weakness but because the invading armies find it impossible to withdraw.

There is a simple geographical problem. The troops have been pushed through the border passes like air through a valve — it is notpossible simply to close such a pass. The other problem is Vietnam's military strength. Western intelligence sources now confirm Hanoi's claims.

In the first week of the war the Chinese had sustained 9,000 casualties and lost some 100 tanks, about a fifth of those involved. And at this point no regular Vietnamese units were seen.

The Chinese military and political leaders are wondering what will happen when the battle-hardened divisions are engaged. Ever since Dien Bien Phu in 1954, when the forces of General Giap shattered an apparently superior French army, the Vietnamese have put the best soldiers in the world to flight.

Speculation is idle, but it looks increasingly likely that the low level of the Chinese troop involvement so far may be part of a plan to lure the invaders into a Dien Bien Phu style ambush.

Another worry in Peking will be the possible emergence of internal opposition to the war. One wall poster criticising the invasion has been reported, prompting the Communist Party Central Committee to issue "Directive Number 11" banning all "big character posters" and demonstrations on the war.

The ferment of discussion on Peking’s "Democracy Wall" has "calmly but not allowed to spread to foreign policy issues. The Chinese bureaucracy must be aware, at least subconsciously, that this is where it departs most obviously from the norms of revolutionary conduct. The statements of the foreign policy makers in the Heavenly City read like the Kissing Doctrines not surprisingly since the present leadership learnt international relations at the school of Richard M. Nixon.

There could hardly be a more graphic demonstration of what is meant by "socialism in one country". As far back as the 1954 Geneva conference long before the Sino-Soviet split — the Chinese leaders favoured the partition of Vietnam and the transformation of the South into an American sphere of influence. In the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution the desire to establish a separate Chinese sphere of influence in the Far East led the bureaucracy to close co-operation with imperialism and its local clients. Nixon’s visit to Peking is well known. Close Chinese relations with the reactionary ASEAN bloc — Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia — have got less publicity.

In contrast to its mild aid to Vietnam during the war, in the early 1970s China began to supply oil to the ASEAN states. Since then in 1974 it settled the Vietnamese-held Paracel Islands in the South China Sea, depriving Vietnam of a major source of oil.

For a long time Peking has also had its eyes on the Spratlys, to the south of the Paracels. Both claims are utterly bizarre, their only legal justification being that the islands are linked to China by a string of reefs running down through the South China Sea. All these facts are forgotten by those who equate the entry of Chinese troops into Vietnam with that of the Vietnamese into Kampuchea. The same people like to see the Vietnam-Kampuchea dispute as a simple reflection of the Sino-Soviet rift.

Washington immediately responded to the Chinese invasion by linking the two: It was possible that Chinese troops might remain in Vietnam to be used in exchange for a withdrawal of Chinese forces now in Cambodia. What the spokespeople did not add was that just before the invasion Chinese leader Deng had been having top-level talks in the United States! Kampuchea was undoubtedly the immediate cause of the invasion. Probably China is trying to draw Vietnamese troops out of Kampuchea, which it maintained as a counterbalance to Vietnam in Indochina.

But China’s political aspirations in South East Asia as a whole are the real cause of the war. The Chinese leadership’s desire for a weak Vietnam can be traced back to 1954. Now, eased on by imperialism, it is trying to realise that desire — and if that brings it up against the Soviet Union, the "more dangerous" super-power, then so be it.

Proletarian internationalism is long since dead in China. The Vietnamese revolution is threatened from all sides. But the continuation of this suicidal alliance with imperialism threatens its success for the Vietnamese revolution too.

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China-Vietnam: a chronology

1974
January: China occupies the oil-rich Paracel Islands in the South China Sea, which were previously controlled by South Vietnamese forces.

1975
30 April: Fall of Saigon. China ends its military aid to Vietnam, citing the conclusion of hostilities.

9 September: Peking’s visit to Peking by Lei Duan, the secretary of the Vietnamese Communist Party, ends without a common communiqué, revealing a chilliness in Chinese-Vietnamese relations. But China grants Hanoi an interest-free loan.

1976
December: Fourth congress of the Vietnamese Communist Party. Pro-Chinese figures are removed from the central committee. Hong Kong reveals the existence of disputes on the China-Vietnam border.

1977
June: Official visit to China by general Giap, who also goes to Moscow.

1978
March: Nationalisation of small businesses in Vietnam to make a measure which affects numerous Chinese residents. Start of raids on the Hoa (Chinese community in Vietnam). About 200,000 Chinese flee the country. Vietnamese troops leave the country by sea.

April: Nhu Dhan, the VCP daily, reports sporadic inci-

1979
7 January: Prince Shanhoun arrives in Peking.
9 January: The FUSK, supported by the Vietnamese army, entrains Phnom Penh. The Chinese denounces the invasion of Kampuchea by Vietnam.

20 January: The Vietnamese Ministry of foreign affairs sends a note to the Chinese government protesting against the "continual violations of Vietnamese territory by Chinese troops".

23 January: Deng Xiaoping visits the United States. Deng Xiaoping raises with American journalists the need to give "a good lesson" to the Vietnamese.

5 January: Pham Van Dong, Vietnamese prime minister, and Lin Biao, Chinese Premier, Peking describes the situation on the China-Vietnam border as "unacceptable".

11 February: China unloads "counterattack" into Viet-

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A RECENT opposition demonstration by students and peasants in Peking. After a wall poster has criticised the invasion of Vietnam, the Chinese leaders are worried this too may become a political issue.

Socialist Challenge 1 March 1979 page 3
Hackney

By Jon Davey
Hackney Central C.L.P.

The London Regional Council of the Labour Party will be holding its 3rd annual conference on 14 and 15 March. Standing outside on the opening day will be a lobby called by Battersea and Westminster Trades Council support committee to back the public sector workers full claim.

But inside the conference hall the preparation discussion on the strike are not proceeding. Only a few CLPs have submitted emergency motions on that sector.

Hackney South & Shoreditch has an emergency resolution backing the full claim, while Hackney North & Stoke Newington calls for all London councils to grant the 60 per cent minimum and 35-hour week.

Even if such emergency resolutions are taken they fail to take into account how the full claim is to be implemented.

Last year's conference agreed to set up a committee to examine interest payments and for every penny of public money available to local government to be invested in a general purpose scheme. Unfortunately not much has been heard of this campaign since.

Teesside

By Alan Theasty
SCHOOL carers throughout Cleveland in the North-East are to hold a one-day strike on 26 February. The action has been notified to the NAAC with particular emphasis on the action on the five days earlier - the same day a mass meeting of refuse collectors in Middleton, complete with strike Fund collection bags, marched to the town's main shopping area. The NAAC"s regional officer John Davies called on his members out on strike.

The sewage strike, together with the one at Transport House and a series of small protests, presented the prospect of really challenging the Conservative majority in the local council, driving its leaders to the side of the workers. This, said Davies, "is a reality that people on the picket line must be prepared to take."

The success of the action has largely been a result of the council's policy of confrontation and its decision to send home refuse workers who had refused to cross a picket line.

Somerset

By Mike Zande
TGWU

NORTH Somerset ambulance workers in NUPE, TGWU and CWU have called a one-day national day strike on Wednesday 14 March. NUPE have also called for a national day strike on the same day. However, they were told to emergency action because of the procedures.

Avon ambulance workers threatened with a week's notice to the Sommerset drivers paid for the time lost as a result of it. Three hours later members of the ambulance stations around the county were instructed to work with exception, phoning in.

HOME NEWS

messages of strike action in support of North Somerset. Members of North Somerset and other areas not to be split by allowing emergency ambulance staff to take different actions, as an immediate threat. If necessary only, was an important factor in winning support to reject the pay offer that same evening.

Swansea

By J Barker
TGWU

SwANSEA'S local authority workers members of the TGWU unanioumly rejected the national offer at a 700-strong meeting on Wednesday of last week.

Missing at the meeting was the union's regional secretary, George Wright. He too busy hobnobbing with Jim Prior, and Len Murray, who were speaking in Swansea the same evening at a rally of the local Labour Party.

The rally itself was picketed by public and private employers organised by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

An especially lively response was also heard from members of the TGWU, who talked about the usefulness of the revolution measures for extending democracy. More than a few members of the union's executive pointed to the new contract is totally against National Union of Public Employees conference decisions.

Bristol

From Bristol Voice
NATIONAL: Front things set got on the second day of the 39th Annual Conference at Transport House, Bristol. Bristol hospital workers were attacked just a few minutes after an argument between a number of branch members and people flying 'picketing' posters on the walls of Transport House.

The pickets, who were being sent on their way by a Bristol Transport bus, were attacked by however the four who were attacked stood their ground.

A second phase of the action a stoppage of another 30 minutes on Monday night.

The incident was followed by a strike meeting called by general secretary David Nelums. It was agreed that the pickets should continue.

Alan Fisher will still fight to defend the interest of his rank and file. He has sent out circulars to branches involved in all-out action instructing those in order to go to work or return to selective action.

His aim is to stop the strike escalating; his hope is that without an altered and selective the membership will eventually drift back. However the rejection of the offer is in itself a guarantee of future success for the low paid; there is now a pressing need for an alternative to selectivity.

The obvious alternative is all-out, national strike action, involving the membership of every union in dispute.

The two London regions of the General and Municipal Workers Union also voted to oppose the rejection, and the London regions had also called for a picket line outside Transport House.

The NUPE national industrial council - a general strike meeting passed by general secretary David Nelums.

As Socialist Challenge went to press, the Socialists fought to be given a meeting by the TUC. The National Office of the Labour Party called for a strike by the local Labour Party and the NUPE.

It may even occur that a settlement above the present offer will mean massive cuts in the public services.

That too will need an answer. Comparisons like the rumoured 25 per cent award about to be given to soldiers - can be made.

If the government can afford such a thing to strikers and workers, why not to nurses? And the problem of cuts at local government level can be referred to the benefit of payments local councils make to insurance and compensation companies.

For instance, the projected £60m deal, which doesn't meet the full claim, will cost just £2 million. Compare that to the £18 million Wandsworth council in London paid out in interest charges last year.

Undoubtedly the government will try to make additional cuts once the claim is settled.

But for a government which has already closed 130 hospitals to blame people like care workers for yet more cuts would be carrying the joke too far.

With the government and TUC's estimated strike action by London, the NUPE and the TGWU, the Socialist Challenge, 1 March 1979 page 4
Mr Fisher's tastless bait

NUPE general secretary Alan Fisher was quick to dash off a circular to the union's local authority manual branches last week after agreeing to the government's offer.

The circular stressed that the miserly 9 per cent had been 'unnanimously agreed' by the union negotiators. And it went on to try to put the best possible gloss on the latter's attitude.

But Fisher's memo was more interesting for what it didn't say.

By Tom Marlowe

The circular talked of "an increase of £3.50 per week on the basic rates of each grade", and underestimated it was "with effect from the pay week in which 4 November fell". It was obviously intended as an answer to PTEs' offer.

But the circular omitted to mention that in some instances this increase is in the basic rate representing a gain of over 40 per cent on the original claim.

The circular also stressed proportionate increases to part-time rates, but not mention how much this represented in hard cash. For some it could be as little as 50p a week.

Then again, it boasted about "full consolidation of the existing increments system, thereby making it unanswerable for overtime."

But this stress on overtime goes against one of the main points of the original claim. As the 'Day of Action Special' in the NUPE journal Public Employees put it, "no new claim for overtime payment to get a living wage."

From holding out the carrot of overtime rate, Fisher's circular proceeded to stress the possibility of a standing commission on comparability, 50 per cent of whose recommendations are promised for 1 August, with the other half due seven months later.

The circular did not go into detail about this comparability study. Specifically, it did not mention that the 'comparability' would be made with similar jobs in private industry. And as to why Fisher neglected this fact is in the following observation on this concept of comparability:

"...comparing say, school cleaners with warehousemen, kitchen staff in cafes and restaurants; comparing hospital porters and domestics with hotel workers; comparing public service workers with office cleaners in other words; comparing public service workers with some of the worst paid workers in private industry."

"Any comparison, argued NUPE, must be with national average earnings."

This striking argument went on to say Fisher eventually agreed to this came from the January issue of NUPE's own Public Employees.

The last main point of substance in the employers' offer was also warmly welcomed by Fisher. He wrote: "in addition to the foregoing, a supplement of £1 per week to all employers with a normal working of 35 hours or more to be paid from the pay week up in which 22 February 1979 falls; the cost of this to be merged into the sum due from the instalment of the comparability award due from 1 August."

The second part of that sentence is not immediately clear. What it means is that the extra pound is simply an advance on the comparability payment due in August.

And what if this comparability payment is less than £1 a week? This may not seem very likely, but with the type of comparability study Fisher has made, he is very unlikely to get anything.

Accordingly it is a very interesting argument which is the most discredited in the eyes of the NUPE membership - Alan Fisher, or the deal he tried to sell?

Building opposition in Nottingham

NURSING sisters have invited them to the offices to hold a "No Strike" meeting.

"We're going to be setting up" -- in Nottingham in November, CAN aims to fight for an alternative leadership and policies for the trade unions.

In Nottingham we're fighting as hard as we can to have the nursing people who are on their own, says Graham Atwell, a NUPE shop steward and leading activist in the campaign.

We've printed 1,000 bulletins with the 'No Sell Out' message. We'll be taking them all over the city and taking them to as many branches and groups of workers as possible. We'll be back on the local radio programme - the After the NCE we're going to be saying reject the offer and for all-out strike action."

The local government strike committee, of which Graham is a member, has called for a national demonstration of public sector workers on 30 November in Nottingham. But Tony Morris, the assistant district officer, has tried to block it by saying that all meetings would be unofficial and shop stewards should not attend.

"It's the key to the success of any campaign."

No more meetings for the NUPE local. As the NUPE claim has been turned down by the government, NUPE has asked for its members to "go public" with their views.

The NUPE demonstration will be on 28 November in Nottingham.

For action to win the pay claim, CAN will have to win a mass campaign. For a £500 minimum wage and opposition to all forms of wage control. For the government to sign its own wage control policy and to compensate for the effects of inflation. For a 35 hour week with no loss of pay. Against productivity deals.

For more information about CAN write to R.M. Atwell, 10 Woburn Street, London W1N 2XU.

So CAN will face the challenge of winning a national rally on 28 November in Nottingham. Two CAN members have already been arrested for leafleting on the picket line at the meeting in Milton Keynes last week.

For CAN member, John Cudmore, was arrested for the incident.

The main point of the CAN rally is to build a national demonstration of public sector workers on the day after the NUPE rally in Nottingham.

"It's the day after the NUPE rally in Nottingham and we're going to be taking our message to the streets," says John Cudmore.

On the following page, CAN will publish a letter to the editor, written by a CAN member who has been arrested for his activities.

The letter reads: "We're going to be setting up the NUPE rally in Nottingham in November, CAN aims to fight for an alternative leadership and policies for the trade unions."

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CPSA demand more pay

CONCORDAT ENTHUSIASTS needed a very stiff upper lip last Friday to hide their displeasure as yet another section of the labour movement moved into action.

Upwards of 150,000 civil servants went on 24-hour strike in support of their pay claim, which is likely to be a 25 per cent rise. Its being followed by a programme of selective and indefinite strikes.

By Pam Shepherd

The union leaders promised to call a series of five-day industrial action this weekend if there is no satisfactory response to their pay claim.

By the chancellor's figures, 700,000 civil servants will be left without work for a total of 250 million working days this year.

The compromise of 1981, which led to the pay rise that the government is now considering, was based on the recommendation of the pay research units. The agreement was that civil servants should be paid a flat rate of 200 per cent of their pay.

But the government is now considering a flat rate of 200 per cent of their pay.

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IRAN's last week saw the first major political challenge to Ayatollah Khomeini's 'Islamic Revolutionary Council'. The Marxist Fedaye-en-Khalq called a mass protest rally in Tehran, which was attended by nearly 100,000 people.

The Islamic guerrilla organisation, the Mujahedeen, have now also declared their support for the main demands of the Fedaye-en-Khalq.

By Brian Grogan

The Fedaye-en-Khalq, who have been described as a left wing group born out of the anti-government movement, have been demanding the release of political prisoners, the dissolution of the religious courts, the end of censorship and the restoration of democratic rights.

The group, which was founded in 1978, has been active in the Shi'ite areas of Iran, particularly in the cities of Ahvaz, Khorramshahr and Ahwaz.

The demands of the Fedaye-en-Khalq are seen as a threat to the stability of the regime, and the government has launched a crackdown on the group.

The Fedaye-en-Khalq has called for a general strike on 18 March, and there are reports of clashes between the group and the security forces.

The group's leader, Majid Moussavi, has been arrested several times, and he is currently serving a 20-year prison sentence.

The Fedaye-en-Khalq has also been accused of links to international terrorism, and the US has placed the group on its list of terrorist organisations.

The government has denied these allegations, and it has said that the Fedaye-en-Khalq is a front for foreign governments.

However, the group has gained support from some sections of the population, particularly those who are dissatisfied with the government's policies.

The Fedaye-en-Khalq has also called for the release of political prisoners and the end of censorship, and it has called for a general strike on 18 March.

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Rank and file demands democracy in army

(THI resolution, entitled 'In Protest at the appointment of Air Force commanders', is being distributed at meetings and demonstrations of homofars and other soldiers. Signed by 'A Group of Homofars in support of democracy in the Army', the resolution was presented to the authorities at a meeting of homofars at Technical University in Tehran on 16 February.)

Follow homofars.

The struggle to achieve democracy and social justice, which began in our society one year ago, has found its reflection in the army as well.

Soldiers, homofars, and others who were insulted daily by their commanders, individuals who were denied the slightest human rights such as freedom of speech, press and assembly, and the right to vote; joined with the great mass of the Iranian people to overthrow the corrupt regime and replace it with an order in the interests of all the oppressed, an order that would overcome the misery and excesses of the past.

We and other military personnel joined the huge demonstration of Arba (the 8 February march to support Brazan against the Shah) and then took part in the days of revolution, acting with the ranks of the people to fight the Shah's guards and paramilitary forces.

But unfortunately the events of the past few days have gone in a direction exactly opposite to all these aims. They give us reason to continue our struggle.

The same laws are being applied to the Army's members as elsewhere. We ask ourselves why the government has been so eager to crush the homofars and other soldiers? Our fellow soldiers didn't risk their lives to see the same faces back in the barracks.

No, we voluntarily stood side by side with the people in the face of enemy bullets... to struggle for social justice and democracy. But now we're returning to the same old conditions.

Some of our right to free speech and free press? Where is our right to assemble? To belong to a political party? Where is our right to vote? Where is our right to organise in the army? Where is our right to organise in the army, to establish our own committee where we can discuss and make our own decisions?

The Shah's generals always told us not to interfere in politics. But this was only a trick. It was meant to prevent us from protesting against their crimes against the people and their plundering of the nation's riches.

We must ask ourselves why there have been so many martyrs among the homofars and soldiers. Our fellow soldiers didn't risk their lives to see the same faces back in the barracks. No, we voluntarily stood side by side with the people in the face of enemy bullets... to struggle for social justice and democracy. But now we're returning to the same old conditions.

The homofars in the army that we fought for! Where is our right to organise in the army? To belong to a political party? To vote in elections? An end to the ban on homofars attending the university.

Homofars themselves must elect their own commanders. The elections should be decided by majority vote, with everyone having the right to run for office.

The right to form committees of homofars in every garrison in struggle for these demands.

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One in Tehran was a guerilla getting the inscription?

It is difficult to convey the impact of the mass media's involvement in the insurrection. In the area where I was, the roofs were packed with local inhabitants, who were constantly relaying messages to the press.

In another neighbourhood, residents spotted attempts to move troops towards Tehran, the main industrial city. They set off a warn by blocking the road, since the troops were moving faster than the troops, people along the way were able to block roads and blow up bridges, stopping the soldiers getting through.

According to the report, the factor was the unprecedented solidarity of the people of Tehran with the homofoils when the fighting began. Some observers have been left with the mistaken impression that the main force behind the uprising was the air force personnel were the two guerrilla groups - the Islamic Majdistoun and the Marxist-oriented Fedayeen.

These guerrillas were active partici-

This world press reported Khánhin’s decision to hand over the Israeli embassy to the Palestinian Liberation Organization. What they did not mention, however, is that this gesture was purely symbolic.

The few journalists who were shown around the embassy, because I was known to know about the building was utterly unattractive. The main Palestinian outpost was near the Israeli embassy, just a few hundred meters away, through the toilet bowls.

Early next morning the homofoils reported for work:

The inscription spread from Doshan Tappeh. Homofor took over a police station to get more arms for the people. They joined in the battles around the city, although not in an organized way. It was the collapse of the army in the defense of the city that led to the people’s victory. An equally important.

Their own officers. Other democratic demands are also coming to the fore on the airwaves.

The homofoils explained: “We deserve the same rights as any other citizen in Iran. That means the right to speak and to vote, the right to lead, to read whatever books we like. We ought to be able to join political parties and to vote. Under the present laws established by the Shah, homofors need permission to get married. We can’t attend the universities, although we have a right to do so.”

These laws should be abolished.

Another reason to ban us from talking to foreigners. The idea is that we would give away military secrets. What secrets could a homofoil reveal to the CIA? The CIA is as interested in Iranian armed forces in the first place!”

The homofoils lived in a unique social structure. In the evenings, they would gather in small groups in homes, discussing the current events and planning the next actions.

Victimisation. Nevertheless, some of the homofoils lost their lives.

Military intelligence caught some people involved in the uprising, who had marched identified by the homosexuals. These people were arrested. Shortly before the Shah was forced to leave the country, he had 157 homofoils executed in Tehran and another 40 were shot later.

The homofoils were only reported in the bourgeois press after the
PRESS coverage of this Tuesday's general elections in Spain has tended to concentrate on the situation in the Basque country - supposedly under siege from 'terrorist' forces. But, as this graphic account from the Basque country shows, the reverse is true - it is a society that has managed to escape the horror of the state.

The parallels with another 'troubled province' nearer home are striking. After we received this article, the Spanish government was under threat of a couple of dozen revolutions and radical nationalists under a law exactly like the Prevention of Terrorism Act. That is why the Basque country describes itself as 'Soria', where the last Basque police prisoners are held, as the Alhambra. Maybe Spanish H Block would be nearer the mark.

By Mike Exarren

BUYING a newspaper in Euskadi (the Basque country) means having to prepare yourself every morning for an avalanche of denunciations and shootings. Euskadi lives with checkpoints and vans packed with anti-riot equipment with rifles and machine-guns pointing out the back windows. The pretext is the 'war against ETA'. The whole Basque people suffers the consequences.

Unable to offer what our people have been demanding for many years - national sovereignty and an end to the activity of the armed police - the government of the Democratic Centre is filling the streets with police and the barracks and police stations with Basque citizens.

The decision was taken just at the moment when Peltxo, an ETA leader living in the French Basque country, was gravely wounded; when there was a civil guard died in an attack in Guipuzcoa, when the police left Alozain Chivite - mentally backward and, moreover, son of a lieutenant colonel - in a coma and Maria Luisa Garcia Cabeza lost an eye through a shot from a rubber bullet, both of them, bomb smashing anti-nuclear demonstrators.

The net is cast very wide. Dozens of people are detained daily. Just one example: 20 young people were arrested in Durango on 17 January for running support groups for the ETA.

People remain incomunicado from their relatives and lawyers for as long as police consider it necessary to interrogate them.

Recently all Basque prisoners accused of belonging to the ETA were removed to Soria in Castile. Every day more alarming news reaches Euskadi about the situation of the 97 Basque prisoners.

"If of us prisoners found ourselves here because of something we did, what we might do, is a completely illegal situation, we feel we are already being convicted of things for which we are still awaiting trial."

"They've got us submitted to a continual tension created by the presence of the Armed Police near our cells day and night. Searches, as much of cells as of individuals, are done day and night. The men of the cells are done while we're not there.

"These armed police carry their guns, rifles, with machine-guns, that they cannot load, gas and smoke bombs, the normal truncheon and the electric charge, and a spray gun to hold them down. We find that they're constantly flashing at great speed.

"All of this the prisoners in Soria denounce - pleeb's hygienic, the restrictions, the impossibility to communicate with relatives and lawyers, and the absolute ban on their doing this in the Basque language, the censorship of their correspondence - all letters they send or receive are read - and so on.

They're beginning to call Soria the Alhambra.

Spanish women bring abortion into the open

UNDER the impetus of the International Committee for Abortion Rights (ICAR), Spanish women are making abortion a public political issue.

Last weekend they took advantage of the meeting of women from several European countries - including five from Britain - at the ICAR planning meeting in Barcelona to hold a press conference and their first public meeting on the subject.

Despite the fact that abortion is illegal, over 500 people came to debate the issues in a cinema on a Sunday morning.

One Spanish woman demanded to know what British feminists were doing to provide rest homes and clinics for Spanish women who were going to London for abortions.

Another British speaker explained what was being done, but other Spanish women came back saying they were the job of British women was to defend the laws which made abortion available.

They argued that for feminists to use their time to obtain abortions was inadequate and futile. The need would always be so much greater than could be supplied through extra-legal methods.

They pointed to the 3,000 women who die in Spain from illegal abortions every year, who would never get near a feminist network. They said that the Spanish and British feminists should be waging a political struggle so that all women could have abortions legally and under proper medical supervision.

This point was applauded by the meeting.

A state wide-co-ordinating group was formed to plan for the international day of protest on 31 March. Representatives from Britain, France, Denmark, Germany and the ICAR planning meeting.

"As London on 31 March there will be a demonstration, starting at 1.30 at Hyde Park gate with a rally in Trafalgar Square. Further information can be obtained from Mr. C. B. O'Brien, 154 Lin Road, London WC1.
INTERATIONAL

An Open Letter to the S

DEAR COMRADES,

Revolutionaries have real opportunities in the class struggle today, to build a revolutionary party. The current strike waves show that even under a Labour government, workers no longer accept responsibility for a crisis not of their making.

The Anti-Nazi League has shown the tremendous potential for revolutionaries to take the lead in organizing genuine mass movements. These openings also exist outside Britain. The unfolding revolution in Iran, in particular, provides the conditions for building a revolutionary workers' party in the country. With deep roots in the working class.

Yet in Britain we have so far failed to provide a credible alternative to the Labour left and Communist Party for workers by means of a revolutionary workers' party. The reasons for this, but one we would highlight are the divisions between and within the revolutionary organisations.

Most revolutionary organisations ask: "How do you expect to unite our class when you are divided among yourselves?" Perhaps there is a basis for such a unification as a step towards building a strong and credible revolutionary party capable of capturing the growing tendency towards systematic joint work between our organisations.

In the Ford strike, for example, we were able to work jointly with other members of the Workers' Committee. In the current public sector strike our supporters are coming forward to shoulder the load of all-out national strike action through the Low Pay Action Committee and the Campaign for Action in NUE.

In the National Union of Teachers, in which socialists have a powerful influence, there is a united front and platform between Rank and File and the Socialists' Alliance for the Inner London Teachers Association election.

Likewise in the Civil and Public Services Association, despite tactical differences, are trying to co-ordinate their lobbying and mobilising work in a joint campaign over union democracy.

This joint work is repeated in other areas of the class struggle, especially in the National Union of Mineworkers.

We have also been engaged in joint propaganda activity. During the Ford strike, bookstalls were held in Birmingham, North London, Manchester and Liverpool. In the February Iran demonstration, a joint statement was made by the NUE, ELAM, IMG, and other left organisations.

Political discussion between our organisations on a national level has begun. The national sections of the SWP are engaged in discussions on how the SWP can best participate in the debate for our 11th World Congress to be held at the end of this year.

In the Ford strike, for example, we proposed to your leadership that we open discussions on the three points decided at your conference, with a view to fusion.

These included the need to build the revolutionary party now; acceptance or the central importance of the building of rank and file movements and an orientation to the workers; and acceptance of the conception of a party as a united front, which discusses in order to decide and acts in a disciplined and cohesive fashion.

Revolutionary unity will not be easy to achieve, not least because of the workers' illegal attitudes which long years of division have created.

We will be treating these points in bước forward by the main organisations. We cannot afford to lose the support that we are the reason for the workers' support that we have.

In the Ford strike, we are the reason for the workers' support that we have.

Ford Workers Group showed the possibility of systemic joint work.

Local branches of the SWP and IMG in some areas have already begun this discussion.

There have been some reserves, too. We believe that the SWP leadership's decision not to stand in the General Election is a serious mistake. It misses an important opportunity to explain to large numbers of working class militants the need for a workers' party as a united front.

We think a second mistake was made at your conference, when a resolution proposing a joint state between the SWP and Socialist Unity was rejected.

However, we consider that the possibilities of seriously discussing steps towards a united revolutionary organisation have never been more favourable.

It is for this reason that we have

Zimbabwe: land or death

LAST WEEK we looked at how Britain and the United States are trying to oversee a transition to neo-colonialism in Zimbabwe. In the second of two articles leading up to the important Zimbabwe Action Conference on 3 March, we look at the condition of the black masses and the desperate need to resist the neo-colonialism.

By Jim Atkinson

"No issue is of greater dimension, and of deeper emotional appeal, to Africans in Southern Africa, than land shortage," as Nathan Shamuyarira, now one of the leaders of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), put it in a book, Crisis in Rhodesia, published at the time of UDI in 1965.

"So much envy has been created that expropriation or seizure of European land will be impossible, given the African rulers of the country."

When the British conquered Zimbabwe in 1899-1900, the settler states sent thousands of European immigrants to take much of their cattle. The Europeans were then able to work for European landlords or driven onto less fertile land which was then taken up by the Europeans.

SEGREGATED

In 1931, the government formally segregated the land: under the Homelands Incorporation Act, 49 million acres were granted exclusively to the white minority and 29 million acres to the black minority. In 1969, the Rhodesian Front government introduced a new law, the Land Tenure Act, to establish the division of land in Rhodesia into African and European areas. This laid down that the Europeans could not hold less than 68 per cent of the total farming land in the country.

HALVED

Thus, under this Act, the land was roughly halved between the 273,000 whites and the 6.3 million blacks. The whites got 18.1 million hectares and the blacks 18.2 million hectares. (259 hectares to the square mile.)

The European farming area is about 7 million hectares, or 400,000 large capitalist farms. By contrast, over 4 million blacks are divided into the Tribal Trust Lands, the largest of which is the Nyanga, which has an average area of 4.8 hectares (a small homestead). The distribution is so skewed and expansion is on evil.

EXPLOITED

The 350,000 agricultural workers who work on the 160,000 capitalist farms are the most exploited workers in the country. Their average wage in 1976 was less than £10 a month, and under the draconian masters and servants' legislation, they are prohibited from striking or going out of work.

Meanwhile, the overwhelming impoverished Tribal Trust Lands have served capitalist agriculture as reservoirs of cheap labour. In an attempt to improve its image, the Smith regime amended the Land Tenure Act in February 1977 to allow blacks to buy land in the white areas for the first time. But this changed nothing in practice.

Almost no Africans have the capital needed to buy large wildlife farms, and even if a minority of black capitalist farmers did arise, there would be no change in the appalling conditions of the mass of peasants in the Tribal Trust Lands or the agricultural proletariat on the capitalist farms. The continued hunger of the rural masses will produce another land revolution and redistribution of the white-owned plantations, ranches and estates. And this is precisely what they are fighting for as soon as they can.

The land working class is potentially one of the strongest in Africa, with over one million of Zimbabwe's 6.3 million Africans living in the cities. So far, industrial action has been limited, but this will change as the workers' grip begins to slip and the workers sense their power to improve their conditions.

DEMANDS

One of their top demands will be to wipe out wage inequalities between blacks and whites. The Salisbury regime's own Economic Survey Rhodesia 1977 revealed that the average annual wage for an African in 1976 was £295, less than one third of the average white wage of £642.

The black workers also want to get rid of the present antiunion legislation. The Industrial Relations Act effectively makes all strikes by black workers illegal.

The repressive police state and the existence of a large proportion of unemployed Africans in the cities and in a rural diaspora of the Tribal Trust lands have allowed the large multinational corporations which dominate the Zimbabwean economy to go on paying starvation wages and taking their super profits.

LIBERATION

The liberation struggle will not be complete unless and until the so-called worker-owned monopolies of the post-colonial situation in Zimbabwe are broken. The imperialist powers, intent on a continued colonial solution, will do everything possible to prevent the Zimbabwean masses from taking control of the wealth of their country by expropiated their multinational holdings.

David Green, the British Foreign Secretary, has warned that the so-called "workers' state" is under the guise of a "UN 'peacekeeping force", to police a transition to neo-colonialism.

So a key task facing socialists in Britain is to defend Zimbabwe's right to determine their own future and oppose any attempt by the imperialists, who hold onto a colonial presence, to intervene to defend their interests.

Saturday, 3 March

ZIMBABWE ACTION CONFERENCE

11am-4pm London School of Economics, Houghton Street, WC2A 2JQ

Further information from AAM, 89 Charlotte Street, W1. Tel: 01-631 5311.

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International Marxist Group.
IRELAND

in the pay of the British Army

'Shankill butcher' was member of the UDR

ONE of the men jailed in the 'Shankill butchers' case which ended last week in Belfast was a member of the British Army-controlled Ulster Defence Regiment while involved in the 19 sectarian assassinations.

But his membership of the UDR was unreported in the British media, as did a number of other aspects of the grisly story of the Loyalist murder gang.

By Geoff Bell

The UDR member in question was 25-year-old Gerald McIlwaine. At last week's trial he was given a suspended sentence for kidnapping, assault, and gun charges.

McIlwaine was a member of the UDR from 1974 to 1977. The British Army has neither confirmed nor denied that McIlwaine was on its payroll during the time of his arrest.

But at the trial of the man who had the 'Shankill butchers' convictions took place from 1975 to 1977, he was a certain UDR member during this period.

McIlwaine, the gang leader Billy Moore, and all the others convicted were members of the paramilitary, Loyalist extremist, United Volunteer Force. Their Catholic victims were murdered at random at night in the black townships of the state capital.

Aдей were taken to Protestant areas where they were executed at the gunpoint of a patrol between being killed by a stray bullet or a stray bullet or a stray bullet.

Other victims included a ten-year-old boy blown to pieces at the start of an official Republic demonstrator and an INF member. Noel Shaw, killed in an internal feud.

It is by no means the first time that a member of the UDR has been involved in sectarian crimes. The most infamous massacre was the massacre of the Miami Showband in 1975, when all seven of those convicted of the triple murder were or had been in the UDR.

As an article last year in The Irish Times put it: 'Scores of Loyalist prisoners have appeared in court on serious charges and have been found guilty of sectarian killings.'

The same article went on to note: 'In the early days many cases of murder...were not even brought to court.'

In contrast to the UDR, the Royal Ulster Constabulary might appear to have emerged free of any 'clean' investigations and convictions of the Shankill butchers.

The British police have been involved in a number of high-profile cases, and have been able to keep a lid on any 'dirty' investigations.

The police have been able to keep a lid on any 'dirty' investigations of the Shankill butchers, Justice O'Donnell commented. The facts speak for themselves and will remain forever a lasting monument to the sectarian bias.

The facts of McIlwaine's involvement in the crimes and the minor reductions are yet to be revealed.

When an official secret is best kept secret

THE unwillingness of the British media to report that one of the victims of the 'Shankill butchers' was being paid by the British Army to kill his fellow killers contrasts with other aspects of the reporting of the case.

All the British press, including the Guardian, named the victim of the gang who lived to identify his attackers.

The Irish Times, however, preferred not to report that the victim and his family are in considerable danger of being identified by other Loyalists without identifying him in public.

The British media showed no such concern; they blazoned his name across the front pages.

But standards were applied when it came to three former leading lights in the Loyalist prison service who, claimed the Provisional, had resigned out of fear of being assassinated by the British military.

The only substantial report of the government's Northern Ireland Office to these allegations was a plea to the media not to add to theAWN.

The authorities have named the phenomenon of the Shankill butchers.

and Peter Fearon of the Press Association now face prosecution under the Official Secrets Act.

They refused to assist the RUC in their investigation into a leak on the John Boyle murder case.

Sixteen-year-old Boyle was shot last September by one of the soldiers of the SAS. The post-mortem report on the police file stated that Boyle had been shot in the back, and that his fingerprints were not found on any guns hidden nearby.

It was only when this story was leaked that two SAS members were charged with his murder.

The two journalists have now been cautioned by the police that they may face charges under the Official Secrets Act. Their 'crime': that they are suspected of belonging to the press.

Ron Knowles, press officer of the National Union of Journalists, told Socialist Challenge that the NUI will take 'a very serious view' if any charges against Martin and Fearon are eventually lodged.

IRA charges dropped

TWELEVE members of Provisional Sinn Fein were freed from a Belfast court last Wednesday after charges of conspiracy and IRA membership were dropped by the prosecution.

The Sinn Fein members had been charged with planning an armed attack since December 1977, when security forces in Belfast conducted a series of raids on private homes and the offices of Sinn Fein and Republican News.

In April last year the twelve, as well as leading Belfast Republican Gerry Adams, were eventually charged. The majorty were immediately dis- patched to Long Kesh, where they were remanded.

The PSNI named seven months in prison before the charges against the defendants. The North of Ireland's Lord Chief Justice Robert Long had remanded them.

This acquittal gained the release of the visitors who were charged with Adams, but it wasn't until last week that the pronunciation arrived that there was 'insufficient evidence' to send the five women and seven men to trial.

But the case should not be regarded as a humiliation for the state forces. At the time of illness of the John Boyle murder case, it has been suggested that the motivation behind the drop in charges was the need to work in such organisations by operating the new familiar system of 'interrients by remand'.

This practice is best known by the case of Antony McDonagh, who was arrested in August and sentenced to 18 months in prison for possession of a firearm.

For nine months McDonagh was remanded in custody each week until the case finally came up for a preliminary hearing. It took a further nine months for the case to be finalised and, at last, the judge ruled that the prosecution had failed to make a case against McDonagh.

But the point about the case is that it is that for the past 18 months McDonagh has been in jail, although the police, in the words of the determination, had 'not prepared a case against him'.

But as with the Sinn Fein 12, the whole charade had, for the police, served a useful purpose — it had put one suspected 'troublemaker' behind bars.

That there was no evidence against this individual in the first place was then taken away by the police so that the functional law in the North of Ireland, entirely incidental.

Danny Morrison — one of the twelve.

Gerald McIlwaine

time of the crimes.

Billy Moore was an owner of a black taxi but again this was never checked until Moore was identified by the gang's victim.

The failure to follow up such obvious evidence may in part have been due to the slender resources allotted by the RUC to investigating the multiple murders.

Only 10 detectives were assigned to investigating the crimes — just over half a detective for each of the 19 victims.

When passing sentence on the Shankill butchers, Justice O'Donnell commented: 'The facts speak for themselves and will remain forever a lasting monument to the sectarian bias.

The facts of McIlwaine's involvement in the crimes and the minimal reductions are yet to be revealed.

And Peter Fearon of the Press Association now face prosecution under the Official Secrets Act.

They refused to assist the RUC in their investigation into a leak on the John Boyle murder case.

Sixteen-year-old Boyle was shot last September by two members of the SAS. The post-mortem report on the police file stated that Boyle had been shot in the back, and that his fingerprints were not found on any guns hidden nearby.

It was only when this story was leaked that two SAS members were charged with his murder.

The two journalists have now been cautioned by the police that they may face charges under the Official Secrets Act. Their 'crime': that they are suspected of belonging to the press.

Ron Knowles, press officer of the National Union of Journalists, told Socialist Challenge that the NUI will take 'a very serious view' if any charges against Martin and Fearon are eventually lodged.

Third anniversary of abolition of political states

TORCHLIGHT DEMONSTRATION

Oxford Circus, London

Thursday 1 March, 6pm

Called by United Left On Movement
"Like many of those who live on reservations, artists resort to incest, producing more and more paintings about paintings. 'Others have gone insane, and sit about in tubs of bull's blood, gather twigs, or insist that their nail clippings or excrement should be acknowledged as "art".

PETER FULLER explores"

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The Crisis in the Fine Art Tradition

CONTEMPORARY IMAGES: "Mightier than man beast!"
The Tate banquet in Guildhall,
VéR THE PAST three years there has been renewed popular upsurge in the press about "modern art". This gained momentum in the notorious Tate brick affair, swept on through nappies and sanitary towels at the Institute of Contemporary Arts and blank canvases at the Hayward, and last manifested itself over a prize-winning blue monochrome in Liverpool.

There have been outcries of this kind before, of course: but the difference is that they can no longer be dismissed as "philistine". What, after all, is a "philistine" response to a blank, grey canvas or a pile of bricks? Late modernism has become inescapable.

How has this situation arisen? What is to be done? To answer these questions, we must go back to history.

The word "art" only began to assume its present meaning at the end of the 18th century when, as Raymond Williams has explained, it came to stand not just for any human skill, as previously, but for certain "imaginative" ("creative") skills.

It simultaneously came to signify a
designing posters, billboards, and so on were every bit as controlled as their counterparts in the USSR.

One can see immediately that the Keynesian experiment was doomed to failure. It helped to create an offensive of socially redundant, over-specialised, over-privileged, over-produced, over-stimulated, over-liberated, over-expensive freedom—except the only one without strings. People count as nothing to the freedom to act socially. Artists have become like asexual, displaced into a government reservation; there is nothing for them to do. Small paintings or excrement should be acknowledged as "art".

The Keynesian "hands-off" system of state patronage has thus promoted an unmitigated failure. Politically, it is threatened because the sovereign in the art world is no longer demonstrative to the many Russians, nor to anyone else, the magnificence of achievements of Western "artistic freedom".

This is now even acknowledged within the patronising institutions themselves. In recent months there has been a tendency to place less and less emphasis on the formal abstractions within the late modernist enclosures, and to stress the residual fine art practices still maintained by specific audiences, through specific markets.

Andrew Brighton has done interesting work mapping out this territory. The painters concerned range through regimental portraits by Cunco, Shepherd's charging elephants, landscapes produced in East Anglia, the images of worker artists, the popular art association, the genuine tradition of Stalinist socialist realism. Two questions arise from this: what is the fine art tradition? And what is the fine art tradition become unhelpful? Are there those, on both left and right, who argue that the visual arts are no longer on the public agenda, and that the fine art tradition is therefore irrelevant? Is the fine art tradition a public art tradition or an "urban" art tradition? Is it possible to have a visual art at all? Is the result of the fine art tradition become unhelpful a visual art?

However, I believe Gramsci that there is the possibility of a visual art that is not an "urban" art, and that is what we are aiming to do. There is the possibility of visual art that is not an "urban" art, and that is what we are aiming to do. There is the possibility of a visual art that is not an "urban" art, and that is what we are aiming to do. There is the possibility of a visual art that is not an "urban" art, and that is what we are aiming to do. There is the possibility of a visual art that is not an "urban" art, and that is what we are aiming to do. There is the possibility of a visual art that is not an "urban" art, and that is what we are aiming to do. There is the possibility of a visual art that is not an "urban" art, and that is what we are aiming to do. There is the possibility of a visual art that is not an "urban" art, and that is what we are aiming to do.
LETTERS

Communicating theory

JAMES Francis' article on the Charterists (8 February) oversimplifies some important issues. The Charterists were not simply revolutionaries, they were also concerned with the rights and freedom of the boroughs and the limitations on the power of the central government.

In his article, James implies that the Charterists were primarily concerned with the rights of the people in the southern counties. However, the Charterists' primary concern was the limitations on the power of the central government and the rights of the people in the boroughs.

The Charterists were not simply revolutionaries, they were also concerned with the rights and freedom of the boroughs and the limitations on the power of the central government.

Confusion on Labour

JOHN Ross writes (8 February) about a move within the National Union of Public Employees to disaffiliate from the Labour Party. He criticises the idea, arguing that it would not be a healthy development for the Labour movement.

Ross proposes an emergency conference of the Labour Party to re-examine policies and support the public sector workers, which could also "help initiate the flight of the Labour movement in the Labour movement for socialist policies and a new leadership". Rich Palmer writes in a Labour Party to disaffiliate, which offers a socialist alternative to the crisis in capitalism.

The Labour Party cannot reform itself away from capitalism. It is futile to attempt to change the Labour Party. If the article quotes the report of the International Marxist Group, then why does it not enter the Labour Party?

By standing candidates against the Labour Party, the IMG disqualifies its members from joining. Why stand candidates when the idea is to go to a meeting of the Labour Party? The IMG needs to resolve these contradictions in its policies.

PAUL KEGAN (London N5)

Books for South Africa

SOME months ago you published an appeal from Carl Breker and myself for 'Books for South Africa'. The response was quite good, and I think there was only right that we should let those who contributed know what we have done so far done with the money collected.

DAVID BREKER (London)

SOCIALIST LEAGUE

THE DEADLINE for this column is Thursday each week. Please send contributions to: Socialist League, 14 Shepherds Hill, London SW1P 1GJ.

NORTH WEST

WARRINGTON Socialist Challenge 70p, 38-40 Wilderspool Causeway, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 4HY. Contact: Ian Rawlinson. Better to give than to receive.

GREAT MANCHESTER Socialist Challenge 70p, 72 Hulme Walk, Manchester M15 5DS. contacto: John McArthur. It is a pleasure to give.

NORTH MIDLANDS Socialist Challenge 75p, 29 Woodbank Road, Derby DE21 4LN. "Count the number of people, not the houses."

GREAT NORTHERN Socialist Challenge 75p, 49 Simpson Road, Darlington, Co. Durham DL1 4RT. Contact: Neil Elmore. What would you do if you were the mayor?"

NORTH SOUTHERN Socialist Challenge 75p, 16 Daffodil Drive, Wigan, WN5 8PA. Contact: Paul O'Connor. What would you do if you were the mayor of the country?"

NORTH EAST

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WOLVERHAMPTON anti-racist Dave Stevens was unanimously acquitted of all charges against him after a five-day trial at Stafford Crown Court last week.

That evening 8 million people in the Midlands saw the film which had proved his innocence as the main item on the TV news.

By Chris Roseblade

When the case began, the police slapped a further assault charge on Dave, so that he faced four charges of police assault, one charge of breach of the peace, and one charge of inflicting actual bodily harm on a police inspector.

The police accused Dave of grabbing one constable from above, hitting two officers, kicking both Batson and stripping his ankle, whilst simultaneously fracturing the inspector's wrist with his left shoulder.

They further alleged that Dave shouted: "Pull me up, stop the pigs from arresting me, kick the bastard!"

But then the defence produced a videotape (which the police witnesses hadn't seen prior to its use in cross-examination) which clearly showed that the demonstration was attacked by a supporter of the National Front, that Dave was actually pushed, and that he was so out of breath he could not even identify himself on the film.

The prosecution's final play was a vicious cross-examination of Dave. One would have thought that Dave was on trial for political beliefs, and that he was being forced to say that he did not think that the police were not above criticism.

Their argument was based on the belief that the jury would simply not be able to decide that nine respectable British daily papers were correct and that there were not simply an extreme right-wing organisation.

Instead, the demonstration raised the issue of why so many black and Asian and working class people have not had a videotape to prove that they were innocent and the police were lying. One can only guess at the answer.

ALMOST 200 people marched through Bradford on Sunday calling for the dropping of police charges of "bribery and inquest of a innocent and defendant of local anti gay fascist Kelly Frankly."

WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE

VICTIMISING women leading up to a National Women's Campaign for Action on March 14th at Friends Meeting House, Woodhouse Moor, Leeds. June 3rd. Women's breakfast meeting. Phone Leeds (0113) 246 6277.

LIVINGSTONE (Colin), Ted Knight (Junior), John (Hucknall). Bernie Grice (Wood Park). 67-3 July.

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OVER the past ten years everyone in Scottish politics has been forced to relate to the demands for an elected Assembly in Edinburgh.

The professional politicians have been split on the issue; it forced a huge crisis in the Labour Party; the reactionary SNP grew from obscurity to challenge Labour’s hold over the industrial working class.

The unions, the women’s movement, the socialist organisations — all have been forced to discuss their policies for the Assembly. The most immediate issue which way to vote in the 1 March referendum?

By Pat Kane

The demand for an elected Assembly in Edinburgh grew out of years of discontent with the performance of both major political parties.

The economic boom of the 1950s made no impact on the traditional sectors of the Scottish economy, which continued to decline and stagnate. Scottish workers still had to emigrate in order to secure employment.

Alongside this grew a new policy, championed by the Labour Party, of devolved regional aid to provide the opportunities that the capitalists could not.

But by the end of the 1960s, Scottish people could see that their lives hadn’t changed. The bad housing was still there, along with unemployment and poor social services.

They started to look for change, and the only kind they found was in the SNP’s policy of more control for Scotland — an idea that the workers and lower middle classes already understood through their experience of the regional councils.

For the first time tens of thousands of workers deserted their traditional loyalties to the Labour Party. Safe Labour seats became a thing of the past.

The SNP grew from irrelevant obscurity to become the second largest party in Scotland, with 17 MPs, hundreds of local councillors, and thousands of members. It was the fastest growing party in Europe.

What this reflected was an attempt to get out of the crisis of capitalism. People who support an Assembly have no other experience than the present political system. So it was natural for them to express this desire for change through the ballot box, and at first the SNP was the only party which appeared to support them.

By Steve Bell

THE votes of Welsh people have sent James Callaghan, Michael Foot, and Speaker George Thomas to Parliament at election after election. Yet the most visible contribution those Labour leaders have brought back in return has been a steep rise in the number of jobless. Nor have housing, social services, etc. exactly improved.

Welsh people are looking for an alternative — and the Assembly is what is currently on offer.

The Labour leaders are simply gambling that the Wales Act which incorporates the Assembly will help to cut down support for Plaid Cymru — support which has been fuelled, among other things, by the involvement of Labour councilors in several local government corruption scandals.

But the capitalist forces in the Cill and Tory Party know that it could mean much more than this — which is why they oppose it.

The powers laid down for the Assembly are very limited. But they know that, dominated as it would be by Labour and the left wing of Plaid, increasing pressure could focus on it to act independently.

It would highlight the question: ‘The Welsh people have the right to decide their own future. And that is a question we reply emphatically: Yes.

Our FUND DRIVE

THINKING we might make a bit of money for the paper, we phoned up the William Hill organisation last week and asked what odds they would give us for the Shah dying within three months.

"We aren't offering odds", was the reply, "We don't take bets on consequences.

So the fund drive's attempts remain restricted to more conventional ventures. Cameral Socialist Challenge group threw us a hefty lifeline by organising a jumble sale which raised an impressive £85.

But for this donation and another regular benefit from our stamp sales organisation in Leicester, we would all be facing the prospect of the dole queue.

A big nationwide effort is now required if we are to meet our quarter's target. If our readers don't rush us substantial donations in the next couple of weeks this column will get increasingly briefer.

That is an even bigger certainty than the Shah's demise.

Send your money to SC Fund Drive, PO Box 30, London N1 2XY. We have this week 80 LP supporters, £1.75.

P. Sheehan 1.50

Mel Sharp 2.00

Anon 1.50

A. Acheson (stamps) 15.00

Cameran SC group jumble sale 85.00

G. Irwin 1.00

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This week's total £122.25

Quarter's total £1,559.33

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