

CHARTIST

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END LABOUR'S STRIKEBREAKING!

AS WE GO TO PRESS, the strike by the Fire Brigades' Union - the first in their 56 year history - against the Government's 10% pay limit is mid-way through its third week. Unlike the power workers' whose overtime ban was smashed by a vicious press campaign which went as far as open incitement to violence against them, the firefighters' have the overwhelming support of public opinion behind their claim. They will need it.



Callaghan and Rees have clearly staked the Government's future on the wages policy. Correctly, they see the fate of the wages policy resting on the success or failure of the firefighters' claim. This is why to break the strike Rees has deployed 11,000 troops, 132 Royal Air Force fire specialists, and 60 sailors trained in the use of breathing equipment. This massive scabbing is grotesque even by the standards of this Labour Government. What is more this force is completely inadequate for fighting fires. Equipped with the antique "Green Goddess" appliances and a few days training, the troops could be a source of as much danger

as fire itself in their rescue operations.

Their real purpose is clear: it is not to save life or property but to break the strike. One major disaster and public opinion will be turned against the firefighters. If the strike is not won rapidly the lack of any union strike fund will be used to drive the strikers back to work. Already, the firefighters' case is beginning to take second place in news coverage to scenes of "heroic army firefighters" and the complaints of soldiers wives.

What is the firefighters' case? Today, a married firefighter with two children, after four years training, can expect to take home



Young soldiers and 'Green Goddesses'

by GEOFF BENDER

the sum of £46.71p. This is for a 48 hour week. Their demand is for 30% which would bring them level with the average industrial wage, restore what inflation has taken from them and provide an extra 10% for the special conditions of their job. Conditions which requires skills as varied as HGV driving, use of breathing apparatus, emergency rescues of all kinds, fire prevention inspections, first aid, turntable ladder operations, chemical accident squads and much else.

It is precisely these special conditions of their jobs together with the military discipline, and peculiar loyalty of a uniformed force operating in dangerous circumstances which has led many people including not a few firefighters to see their fight as a "special case". Nothing could be more guaranteed to lose the dispute than this notion.

SUPPORT

If the FBU claim is to be won then firefighters will need the support of the whole working class movement. In turn, if their claim is won it will give a tremendous boost to all low-paid workers, especially those in vital services in the public sector who have been blackmailed into wage cuts by appeals to their social consciences.

Terry Parry, FBU leader is pushing the "special case" line for all he is worth. He has made no attempt to enlist the support of other trade unionists; he has warned his men to beware of left-wingers on the picket line and given no instructions on building local support. But then this is not surprising since he and the other members of the Executive OPPOSED strike action at the Union's conference.

The most right-wing columnists of the Tory press are backing the Government's stand. Peregrine Worsthorpe, inveterate enemy of the Labour movement wrote in the Sunday Telegraph,

"If an identikit picture were to be drawn up of the ideal leader needed to cope with a trade union confrontation then surely it would look the spitting image of Uncle Jim." With leaders like this, who needs enemies!

The Government's stand has, and will continue to provide the focus for their Liberal junior partners, the CBI, the IMF and all who stand for them. The firefighters' struggle has begun to, and must continue to provide the focus for the attention of all those who have been robbed by the Government's pay limits. The role of the Labour leaders must be condemned in every trade union branch, trades council and Labour Party in the country and a mighty movement of solidarity with the firefighters built.

LABOUR LEADERS SILENT ON OFFICIAL SECRETS

by JIM BARROW (NUJ)

THE BLOODY PATH of the Special Patrol Group through the Grunwick picket line is a well marked one. We know what that abstract sounding phrase "the co-ercive arm of the state" means when that arm is beating about our head with a baton at the end of it.

The outlines of the strong state clearly emerge on a picket line that's seen more arrests for any dispute since the 1926 General Strike. In Manchester too the 'Bobby on the beat' image blurs behind the armoured plastic of a riot shield.

Here 8,000 police with helicopters, heavily armoured transits, riot gear, helped the Fascist National Front to march.

One observer wrote of the October 8th Manchester operation:

"It resembled something out of Orwell's 1984. Whole areas of Greater Manchester were completely sealed off to traffic. Police helicopters hovered over-head. Loudspeakers and radios blared from police vehicles which slewed across road junctions, men in riot gear were everywhere.

In one side street alone 500 police stood alongside 10 double decker buses. A squad of 10 heavily armoured 'Transit' Vans fitted with bullet proof windows and grills like 'cow catchers' stood on some waste ground, headlights glaring dramatically."

"And the cost of this 1984'ish nightmare, this exercise in police/NF collaboration to break the 'Race Relations' law? A cool quarter of a million pounds."

Here the labour movement sees its future task on the streets and on the picket line pointed up clearly.

But what of those areas where the strength, size and extent of the state's armoury against those who want to change society is hazy? The half-world shrouded in legislation, mystification and secrecy.

It is here where the question of 'national security' is held to outweigh all other considerations that knowledge is minimal, speculation rife and a

PLEDGE

THESE THREE PEOPLE SPENT AN EVENING TALKING TOGETHER.



EACH OF THEM COULD NOW GO TO PRISON FOR FOURTEEN YEARS.

SCRAP THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT!

cohesive picture difficult to obtain.

The Official Secrets Act, Prevention of Terrorism Act, 'Screening' procedures for jobs, the 1964 Police Act, 'D' or Defence notices, Incitement to Disaffection Act and others provide a safety curtain of powerful dimensions.

The quantitative expansion of the more open and physical elements of the police power has been more than matched in the 'grey' area of operations.

Special Branch - who deal with 'run-of-the-mill' political surveillance and dirty tricks (phone-

tapping, mail opening, photographs at Grunwicks, anti-fascist activities) are probably a force of over 1,200 now.

This represents a doubling in strength over the last ten years. One unit varying in size between 50-70 officers has been earmarked to special 'Irish' duties and uses the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act to harass the Irish community in Britain.

Apologists for this force - which is vitally beyond public scrutiny or accountability - say it's been expanded ostensibly to meet the problems of 'terrorism'. The real reasons for the expansion should be obvious to those in the Labour movement who are constantly aware of being in camera at Grunwicks or wonder about those men in brown lightweight suits.

The state is keeping very close tabs on the Labour movement during this period of crisis.

Symbolic of the pathetic response of the Labour leaders has been their failure to repeal the Official Secrets Acts (or even amend them), despite Manifesto Pledges. This time round the Queens Speech contained no mention of any intention to deal with these reactionary laws.

Harry Street, Professor of Law at Manchester University describes the laws thus:

"What must be realised, however, is that the Official Secrets Acts are deliberately framed in terms so wide as to go far beyond the protection of national safety and to cover all kinds of official information unrelated to security; in that extended area such extraordinary rules have no place. It may be retorted that even if the Acts are so extensive it is merely the usual technique of British Governments to assume wider powers than necessary on their reliable assurance that these will not be used except for the important and restricted purpose. What is more sinister is that the Acts are used to threaten citizens with prosecutions for matters unconnected with espionage."

Street sees the laws as illogical. However, set

Continued on page two...

1977 WAS A year when a strike by over 100 predominantly Asian workers at a small photo-processing plant in North London, fighting for the elementary right to join a trade union, captured both the headlines of the national press and the solidarity of thousands of trade unionists and militants. But it has not been enough to secure the laurel of victory.

1977 has been the year of the Lib-Lab pact, following the loss of the Labour Party's parliamentary majority. A year of big threats from Tory leader Thatcher to force an election but only the satisfaction of big swings in by-elections from Stonehouse's (in jail) seat in Walsall North, Birmingham Stechford seat of Roy Jenkins (gone to the 'European Commission for £30,000) to Ashfield and Birmingham Ladywood.

For Jack Jones it was the "Year of the Beaver", self-financing productivity deals, social contract mark 2 and 3 and retirement (to a knight-hood?).

For Callaghan and Healey it was the year when crisis-torn British capitalism began "turning the corner" to open up a "decade of opportunity". Just another year of double-talk and class compromise really.

MASS ARRESTS

1977 was also a year of enormous anti-fascist struggles from Wood Green in April to Lewisham and Ladywood in mid August and numerous local anti-fascist pickets which gave potential National Front members something to think about. It was also a year of growing attacks—by racists and government—on black and Asian people. A year of mass arrests and police intimidation. Nothing to match the scale of the north of Ireland, although troops are now at least on the streets of England, as they have been in Scotland (dustman and Scottish firemen's strike's three years ago) and Ireland for a long time.

For all workers 1977 was a year in which living standards were slashed drastically through pay controls. According to the 'Economist', "The 7% by which the past year's 10% increase in earnings fell behind its 17% increase in prices represents the biggest recorded fall in the average Briton's real disposable income for over a hundred years: worse than anything that happened in the 1930s."

Unemployment remained constant throughout the year at around 1½ million, the highest number since before the war. Female unemployment more than doubled and official figures don't reveal the thousands of women who just return to domestic labour in the home after redundancy.

Women and gays came under particular attack through attempts to further restrict limited abortion rights, cuts in public sector jobs and nursery building programmes, lenient court rulings against rapists and a growing climate in which

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1977 YEAR OF UNCERTAINTY

sexual attacks can take place.

1977 was also the 40th Anniversary of Tribune. Fitting testimony, some would say, to mark the year of the ignominious collapse of the Labour left (with few exceptions) into deafening silence as Callaghan either adopted parts of their Alternative Economic Strategy or cracked the whip of 'loyalty to government and nation' in the face of the Tory spectre. Footless silent than Benn, unmistakably joined their trade union counterparts Scanlon, Jones and Daly in being foot-soldiers for the stallions of pay restraint, productivity deals, and 12-month rules'.

This year has underlined again the fundamental problems which have been posed before socialists and Marxists by the election of a Labour Government in 1974. How could the tidal wave of militancy which toppled the Tories recede so far and for so long? How has the Labour Government and TUC got away with it? (Not, we stress at the outset, through naked state violence with Rees' police, troops and the courts). And why has the fragmentation of the revolutionary left continued?

OPPOSITE

The movement which defeated Ted Heath might almost be said to have turned into its opposite. Phase one of Labour's incomes policy met little or no resistance. Phase 2—the 4½ per cent—sank the seamen and all further industrial rumblings against it. The third phase, this time without the backing of the TUC for the 10 per cent 'voluntary-compulsory' guidelines, is not faring so well but has hardly been breached, except perhaps for recalcitrant employers whom the CBI overlooks while shouting for more government whip-cracking, especially against public sector workers.

Air traffic control assistants, bread workers, dockers, British Leyland carworkers, Lucas workers, Ford workers and farm workers (who obtained 12% and 12½% increases respectively) all effectively failed to blow a whole in phase three. The miners rejection of the incentive bonus scheme, power workers work-to-rule and now the fireman's action brought new light to the struggle. But so far, the labour movement has lacked the political confidence and unity to break through.

Resistance to cuts and unemployment has been limited to a few token demonstrations, and some deliberately isolated occupations against cuts and closures. The Elizabeth

Garrett Anderson hospital staff battle on to keep the women's hospital open, Hounslow staff were invaded by scabs who took out patients and equipment. The NUT has limited teachers action against cuts and 20,000 unemployed to localised sanctions. The local government workers union Nalgo called off action against cuts in April as did the civil servants union CPSA call off their statistics ban.

The point about all this is not to depress or demoralise but to face reality, to confront the dominant trends in the current situation in order to understand them and change the direction of working class struggle. For too long socialist revolutionaries have contented themselves with a rosy picture of the situation, with dreams of imminent mass actions, the ditching of the social contract and the end of the Labour government's honeymoon with the working class.

ORTHODOX

But it has not worked out that way. Not at least, for the last three years. The 'orthodox' Trotskyist reply to the current situation has been the above view informed by the traditional "crisis of leadership" theory. The problem is, it is a truism to talk of such a crisis without explaining the complex nature of social relations and conditions and the ideology and consciousness to which they give rise, and of which the crisis of leadership is only a reflection.

Yes, the Labour government has betrayed the movement that put it in office. But has it been tolerated or acquiesced to simply by bureaucratic manoeuvres? These have played their part, of course. But they are not primary factors. The essence of the matter is that they are political and ideological problems. Whilst the working class might exist potentially as a revolutionary class, at present it is split and divided along sexual, occupational, sectional, nationalist and racial lines. The more advanced sections of the movement are dominated by reformist and Stalinist political thinking and the bulk of the working class have had little experience in seeing the world in anything other than bourgeois terms.

The revolutionary left in Britain have failed in theory and practice to recognise consistently the prevailing characteristics of British class society. Firstly, the deeply-rooted nationalist, racist and sexist prejudices which find fertile

soil in the imperialist British culture and are continually reproduced in the daily life-experience of the working class through all the institutions of capitalism, especially the nuclear family, education and work systems.

Secondly, there has been a failure to comprehend the depth of reformist illusions and their organisational expression in the Labour Party. Illusions which cherish the view of the neutrality of the state and impartiality of the 'rule of law' and the sovereignty of parliament (continually bolstered by the politics of the Tribune-ites and Stalinists). Nationalisations are equated with socialism rather than measures of state capitalism, the remains of the 'welfare state' are seen as socialist conquests rather than democratic or social conquests.

Far from betrayals raising the political consciousness of the labour movement they have historically, especially in Britain, the oldest of the capitalist nations, led to rightward swings, the growth of reaction and depoliticisation.

The third weakness rests on an incorrect view of how the working class learns and gains knowledge of itself as a class with revolutionary tasks. It is related to the theory that the leaders of the movement inevitably expose themselves by their policies. Hence the alternatives: build the rank-and-file movement or build "Socialist Unity"—an electoral "class struggle" alternative to the Labour Party.

BROKEN

Whether this view expresses itself in the almost apolitical approach to building trade union fractions of the SWP or the lowest-common denominator politics of the partners of 'Socialist Unity', it amounts to a very similar view of building a revolutionary Marxist tendency in Britain. Namely, that there are broad sections of workers and oppressed people who have ideologically broken from reformist politics and only need "organising". If only it were so simple.

Unfortunately, the ideological struggle for POLITICAL class consciousness involves a fight to change the actual conditions and consciousness of women, black people, gays and nationally oppressed as an integral part of the fight to defend and extend the wages and conditions of the working class. In this fight the Labour Party and trade union leaders and their potential or actual ability to head off or mislead the struggle cannot be bypassed or ignored.

Perhaps 1978 will lead to a more sober approach on the part of the revolutionary left to the problems of political analysis and strategy and tactics rather than the superficial approach to date. The worst enemy at present is an infatuation with our own strength leading to an obscuring of the real tasks.

... OFFICIAL SECRETS CONTD from page 1:

in the context of a crisis-ridden Capitalist society faced with a possible challenge from the Labour movement they are by no means illogical.

Last month (November) we saw the end of committal hearings in the Berry, Aubrey, Campbell case with the trio being sent for jury trial on charges under the Official Secrets Act.

In a farce at the hearings mystery military men gave evidence without giving their names. Nowhere did the prosecution show that any information gathered about signalling and communications networks in Britain by the investigative journalists was transmitted to a foreign source.

Here we have the nub of the matter. The three Official Secrets Acts of 1911, 1920 and 1939 were railroaded through Parliament with the threat of foreign intervention-spying as their justification.

The Berry, Aubrey, Campbell case is a perfect illustration of the real nature of the laws. They are there to stop internal dissent. They are there to stop people learning the real nature of the supposedly Liberal Democratic state they live under.

The *Chartist* has dealt with the roots of repressive legislation (July 1976 and April 1977) and its effects in the past. What we now face is a determination to cling onto laws even conservatives have found reactionary and to use them.

We have seen the law (projected as neutral) used in the Labour movement (Newham), stopping a one day public sector strike in Scotland, driving back the Cricklewood sorters who showed solidarity with the Grunwick strikers.

This is the tip of the iceberg. Journalists who come too close to revealing uncomfortable truths

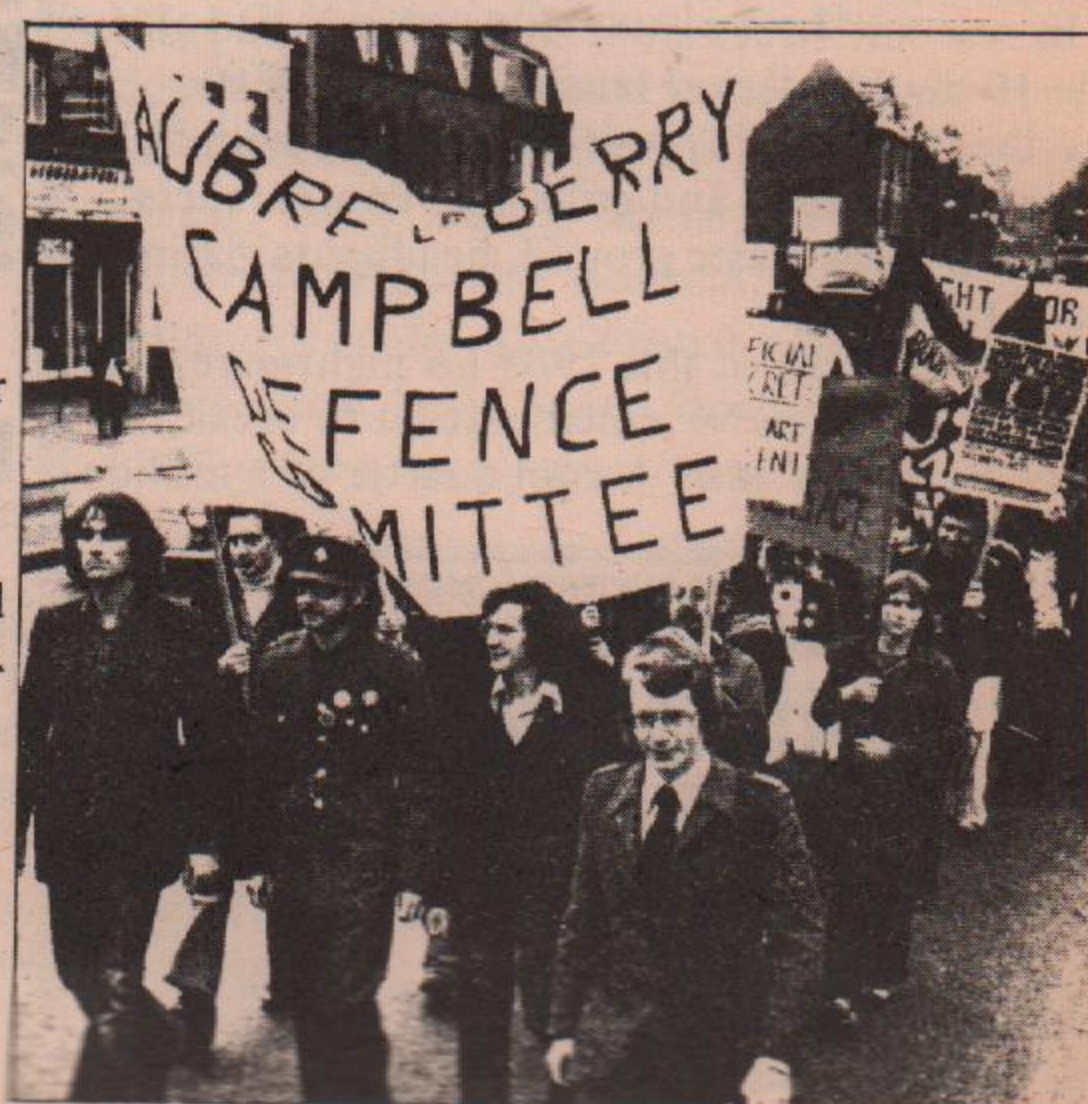
about the nature of the state, militant trade unionists who try to find out the connections between business and the state are all at risk.

All this must be seen in context. Britain is not about to become Argentina in the twinkling of an eye—forces at work in a decaying Capitalist economy are subject to uneven development over time.

What is certain is that as the distractions in our society cease to distract and the illusions cease to illude the state's use of force—overt and covert—will become more and more commonplace. We have been warned.

As the first step to breaking the covert action we must demand our Labour leaders honour the Manifesto pledge to

- Amend the Official Secrets Act; and demand
- Free Aubrey, Berry and Campbell.
- Drop the charges.



Productivity Deals— The Sting in the Tail

THE RECENT vote by the miners to reject the 'incentive bonus scheme' for increasing pit productivity dealt a severe blow to Government, Coal Board and NUM leaders' plans to avoid a confrontation with the miners 10% limit-busting £135 pay claim. It also highlights the issue of productivity dealing which is now being pushed by employers in numerous industries. PETE TOWEY examines the reasons for the productivity deal offensive the dangers inherent in such schemes and provides a working class answer.

PRODUCTIVITY BARGAINING, that remarkable phenomena of post war industrial relations, is back in the centre of the stage.

It was put there by the magnificent decision of the miners to resist the pressures being put upon them by their employers, the government, their union leadership (or rather the worst part of it) and all the prostitute pens of fleet street, and their decision to reject the National Coal Boards (NCB) proposed incentive scheme.

At first sight a "productivity deal" seems a very strange beast. When such schemes first appeared in the late fifties and early sixties, seasoned negotiators were amazed and incredulous as employers were seen to be offering a painless panacea for the troubles of wage negotiation. 'Prod' deals, employers claimed, would simultaneously benefit the workers, the company, "the country", and just about anybody else. Luscious carrots of large and immediate pay increases were dangled before negotiators noses (and in some cases stuffed down their throats!)

For a period in the early sixties such deals were seen as the answer to a bureaucrats prayer — here was a way of satisfying members demands for increased wages which did not, however, involve any conflict or uncomfortable disturbance. In fact it made it easy for union leaders to act out their beloved role, assigned to them by the ruling class as "hard headed" but "realistic" fellows who drove a good but "fair" bargain for their members, and be flattered by the bourgeois press as such.

Under the Labour Government of 1964 — 70 productivity deals acquired a central importance, for of course the myth of a painless solution to the problems of capitalism was (and is) the hub of Labour Party "ideology". Productivity deals enable the ruling class to tap a rich seam of pro-capitalist ideas and prejudices which have permeated the thinking of the workers and their representatives.

Thus, ready support can be found for arrangements which are presented as "striking a fair bargain" and "being in the interests of the country".

The assumptions behind productivity bargains are precisely those assumptions which underpin capitalist society as a whole. During the campaign around the NUM ballot one (pro-deal) Lancashire miners leader stated "You can't keep going to the pantry and taking things out and not putting anything in."

But what do the workers in reality put in and what do they get out in such deals? As the name suggests the common feature of such deals is that employers demand an increase in productivity. The worker is expected to produce more surplus value in relation to the wages she or he receives. In effect the value of the workers labour power is reduced. Any increases in the productivity of labour is designed to reduce the cost (in terms

of labour expended) of commodities produced.

In a developed capitalist economy the proportion of constant capital (i.e. plant, machinery etc.) compared to variable capital (wages) has increased enormously as each competing group of capitalists has tried (by mechanisation etc.) to reduce the amount of labour contained in each commodity. As it is only the variable capital which yields surplus value there is a tendency for the rate of profit to fall.

This tendency is to a degree offset (but never eliminated) by the fact that the increasing proportion spent on machinery etc. enables the productivity of labour to increase and therefore for the rate of surplus value to increase.

To the capitalist this situation presents itself as the urgent need to squeeze the maximum possible productivity out of new machinery and to increase the productiveness of old machinery (by de-manning, speed-ups etc.) To the worker it means an increase in the rate of exploitation, that is, in fact the crux of the matter. When workers agree to a productivity deal they are agreeing to an increase in their exploitation. It is on this basis that socialists must begin their criticisms.

The most obvious way for management to increase exploitation is to reduce the workforce and workers are often persuaded to accept redundancy with the lure of "golden handshakes" which rarely go as far as first anticipated and can eventually leave the worker penniless and jobless. With older workers and in areas of



Miners reject productivity scheme.

high unemployment this can be a grim prospect.

In addition once jobs are lost they are rarely replaced so it is not just the retiring workers who suffer — in some single industry areas they are literally depriving their own children of job opportunities. Another effect of de-manning is the placing of a greater workload on the remaining workers, speed-ups can lead to a real deterioration of working conditions and safety levels. Often workers have agreed to reductions in the standards of working conditions in return for benefits which management's would have conceded anyway had the workers been prepared to fight.

But the immediate economic disadvantages are not the only drawbacks to such deals. By conniving with employers to increase their own exploitation workers are tying their hands for future struggles. One of the most pernicious effects of such deals is the way they can damage the union organisation and spirit of solidarity of the workforce.

As payments under most schemes are related to output measured, the effect is to set worker against worker and department against department as each worker or group of workers strive to ensure that the others "pull their weight". The workers themselves, or their union organisation

become the instruments by which the company impose their discipline, the effect on union organisation can be disastrous.

Clearly the working class must be prepared to resist such situations being foisted upon them. This is not to say that we should oppose improvements in productive techniques in themselves. It would be reactionary to adopt a neo-Luddite position on the question.

What is needed is for the working class to ensure that the benefits of improvements in technique are enjoyed by the workers themselves. To do this workers faced with negotiations with the smooth talking purveyors of this productivity pseudo-science must insist that there be no redundancy or job loss but rather a reduction in the working week without loss of pay. In opposition to speed-ups, workers should demand that extra labour be taken on.

Workers should try to maintain solidarity by opposing any incentive schemes which involve time stury or other work measurement systems. Above all workers must strive to maintain the independence of their union organisation and not allow management to manipulate it as their agency. The principle must be; all benefits from increased production to go to the workforce.

McGahey joins 'work harder' call to miners

MICK MCGAHEY, National Union of Miners Scottish President and chairman of the Communist Party of Great Britain has added his voice to the chorus of Government Ministers, Tories, British industry spokesmen and 'social contracting' union leaders calling for greater productivity from workers.

McGahey's call, urging miners to 'work harder', came in a joint statement from NUM leaders Joe Gormley, Lawrence Daly and himself only a couple of days after the miners had resoundingly rejected any form of productivity

bargaining in a national ballot.

After a genuflection to the ballot vote against incentive schemes the statement said:

"However, the result does not mean that the problems which gave rise to the ballot have gone away. We are still faced with a situation where production is falling and the NUM, as one of the partners in the tripartite examination which produced Plan for Coal, must face up to its responsibilities.

"Therefore, we must explore the possibilities available at each colliery to achieve an increase in coal production in order to secure the future of the industry as envisaged in Plan for Coal. The NUM is committed to meet the production targets laid down in the plan and we appeal to all areas, all branches and all members of the union for the utmost co-operation in meeting these targets," it concluded.

In this flagrant breach of union democracy the NUM triumvirate are opening the doors to local pit productivity deals and putting the

blame for the industry's 'under-production' on the miners themselves.

But it is not the miners' who are responsible for lower production. Rather it is the refusal of successive governments' to concede a decent inflation-proof wage commensurate with the dangers of the work. Only this (and improved safety) can attract new labour to the declining work-force and ensure that more production does not mean greater exploitation but rather benefits the miners through opening up more jobs, reducing the work-week and providing decent wages.

That the state-run coal industry refuses to concede this illustrates more about the impossibility of "nationalised" industry to benefit workers while the capitalist system of production for profit still reigns.

What ever happened to the Grunwick 550?

OUTSIDE THE gates of the Grunwick factory in North London five hundred and fifty trade unionists, Labour Party members and socialists have been arrested and an estimated 1500 injured throughout the last year.

Those arrested face charges of obstruction, threatening behaviour, breach of the peace and assault on police and even a charge of grievous bodily harm.

So far nearly a third of those arrested have been tried at Barnet and Willesden (police) Magistrate courts. The rate of "success" for the police in gaining convictions has been 80 per cent — that's four out of five. Fines ranging from £5 to £100, including costs, are being imposed on those found 'guilty'. Prison sentences of between one to three months have been meted out on six pickets.

Even now further charges of threat-

BY JOHN QUIRKE

ening behaviour and assault are being made against some of those who were arrested way back in June and July when mass picketing began. Many of those arrested are not only having to pay their fines but also legal fees after the Grunwick strikers' union (sic) APEX decided in July that it would not cover fines and costs any more. Many of those arrested are also being denied legal aid.

Intimidation, harassment and licenced police violence has been the stock-in-trade of George Ward's blue-coated strike-breakers. Home Secretary Merlyn Rees and Police Commission MacNee have used the opportunity as a 'laboratory' for experiments in dealing with pickets and in preparation for any widespread challenge to the power of the state and government from the working class.

The effects of these arrests should

not be underestimated by the labour movement. Those arrested in some cases face the prospect of being sacked from their jobs — and also having second thoughts about participating in future demonstrations and pickets. In fact, every arrest, and certainly conviction, means that hundreds of socialists and trade unionists are being implicitly denied their democratic right to demonstrate and picket for fear of a second arrest and possible imprisonment. More directly, these obviously 'deterrent' arrests put an enormous question mark over the very basic right to picket itself — supposedly protected in Michael Foot's Employment Protection Act and other Labour Laws.

The arrests also provide useful information for the new police computer at Enfield where information on most active socialists and militant trade unionists is stored.

With the events and arrests at Grunwick, together with those at Lewisham (200 arrests) and other local struggles, the number of political arrests this year (not counting those under the Prevention of

Terrorism Act) must be well over 1000.

The Labour and trade union movement has responsibility for everybody arrested in these struggles and in particular Grunwick's. The action of the Strike Committee in setting up a defence fund must be supported and extended. Money must be raised in every CLP, trade union and work-place.

Last March, the London Labour Party passed a motion from Brent East CLP (covering the Grunwick factory area) calling on the Executive Committee of the London Region to set up and organise a defence fund. The decision has been ignored on the grounds that the Labour Party cannot interfere in the affairs of a trade union. This is nothing but the worst hypocrisy when a Labour Government is pursuing a policy of unswerving state interference in controlling wages and trade union rights.

Brent East CLP will be resubmitting their motion at the March '78 conference calling for immediate implementation of the '77 decision.

THE RELEVANCE OF THE R REVOLUTION TODAY

by GEOFF BENDER



Rosa Luxemburg



Trotsky

IN A SERIES of articles over the past year the Chartist has attempted to detail the events leading up to the October revolution on its 60th anniversary. In this final article we attempt to evaluate the significance of the Russian experience for socialists in the countries of advanced capitalism in this the last quarter of the 20th century.

Without such an attempt all the numerous accounts which have appeared of that momentous event can be nothing more than ritualistic genuflections before the shrine of past achievements. How then has the Russian Revolution fared over the years and what can we learn from the pioneering work undertaken by the Bolsheviks which can help guide our struggles on a vastly different terrain today?

The history of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics since those eventful months of 1917 has become well-known. The bitter and bloody years of civil war and intervention, the terrible famines and the chaos in agriculture and industry which the New Economic Policy was designed to redress; all this is well-recorded.

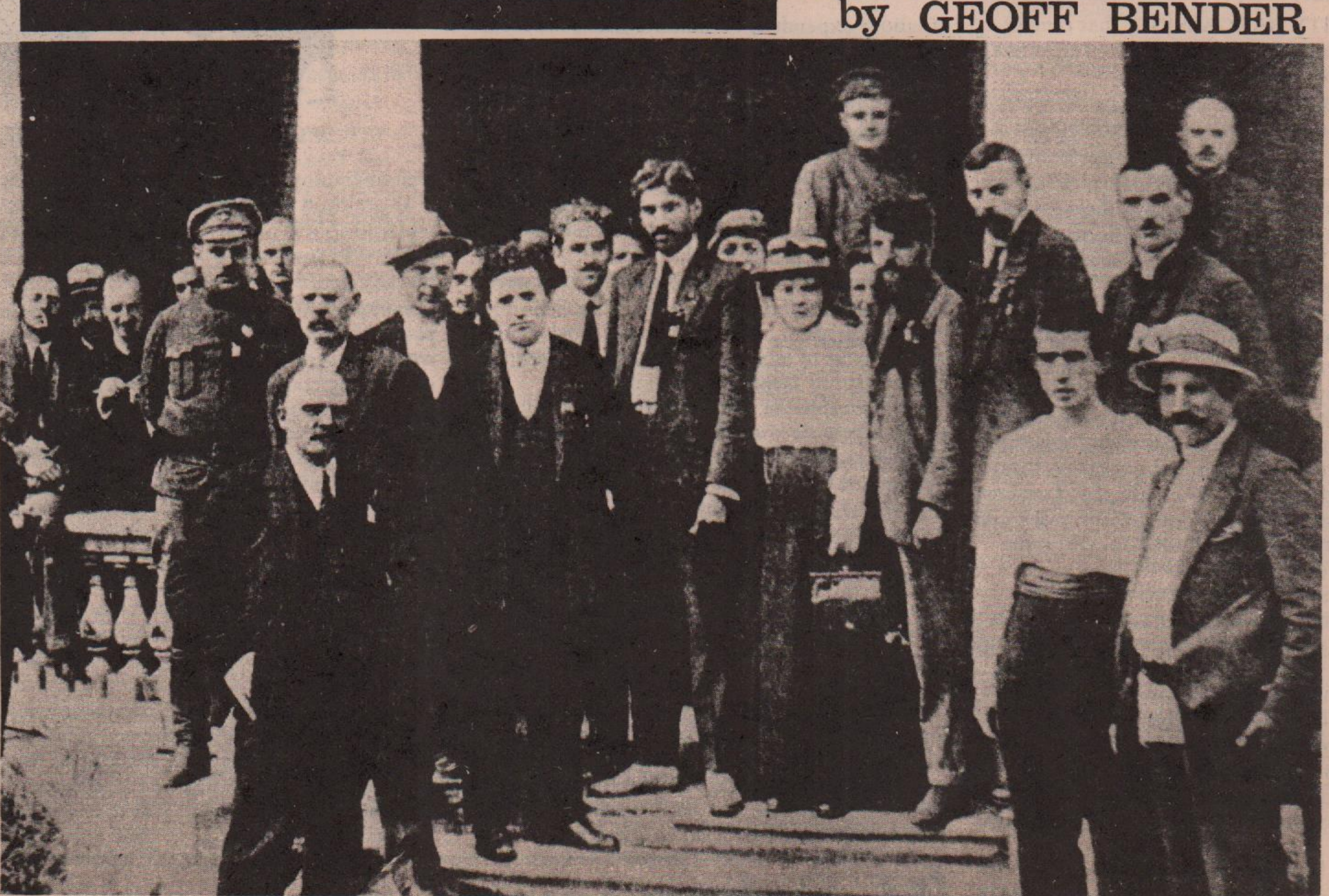
How, after Lenin's death, the bureaucracy hauled itself into power resting on the support of the NEP-men and the kulaks on the backs of an exhausted working class; the tremendous debates on industrialisation, on the Chinese Revolution, on the Anglo-Russian committee; the final rout of the Left Opposition and Trotsky's exile all within a dozen years of the revolution's first flush of triumph; all this has been recorded.

REVOLUTION ROLLED BACK

We know too the disastrous effects of the sudden left turn of 1928-33 which accompanied the forced collectivisation of agriculture and the build-up of heavy industry from sweated labour. The '30s also saw the final destruction of what remained of the generation of 1917 in purges and show trials. As the New Constitution of 1936 proclaimed universal rights the social conquests of the revolution were being rolled back in every sphere.

Internationally, the same policies of the same Stalinist apparatus brought forth defeat after defeat — in China, Spain, Germany — against a rising tide of world reaction and global economic crisis. In no country was an independent leadership permitted to arise which could have carried on the work of the Russian October.

Certainly, the fate of the Soviet people under Stalin was not an enviable one. Since the Second World War, the extension of states on the Russian model have failed to generate the response and create the inspiration of the Russian Revolution in its earliest days. The revolutions which have taken place in Yugoslavia, China, Cuba and Vietnam have had more effect. But even with these



Lenin with delegates to the Second Congress of the Communist International



1917 factory meeting

countries, and certainly, in the countries of Eastern Europe the bureaucratic deformations which scar these states have repelled many from the socialist cause and from revolutionary methods of struggle.

Today it is the 'Eurocommunists' who, under the guise of rejecting the "Russian model" lump together the revolutionary measures of Lenin and Trotsky with the policies of Stalin reinforcing the myth that revolutions always lead to dictatorship and that the dictatorship of the proletariat means the suppression of personal liberty.

Looking for a Western Marxism free of "Russian excesses" they borrow from the writings of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci giving them a purely reformist twist and conveniently forgetting that the best of them were produced from the inside of a fascist jail. Furthermore, Gramsci's "Prison Notebooks" were not part of an attempt to jettison the Russian experience but to apply its lessons under very different conditions.

The development of an understanding of the Russian Revolution goes hand-in-hand with the continuation of the work it began. Stalinism, committed to the negation of that work could not help but conceal the real lessons of the Russian October.

HARD CONDITIONS

One of the sharpest critics of the limitations of Bolshevik policies in 1917 from a revolutionary standpoint, Rosa Luxemburg, wrote "By their determined revolutionary stand, their exemplary strength in action, and their unbreakable loyalty to international socialism, they have contributed whatever could possibly be contributed under such devilishly hard conditions". But she warned, "The danger begins only when they make a virtue of necessity and want to freeze into a complete theoretical system all the tactics forced upon them by these fatal circumstances. . ."

For Rosa Luxemburg the responsibility for the limitations of Bolshevik policy were the results of the failure of the German workers' movement to rise to its responsibilities. In the years which followed both the dangers of which she had warned and the very real failure of the German Communists to learn the lessons of the Bolsheviks strategy and tactics were to have tragic results for the international workers' movement.

Today, with the benefit of historical hindsight and with the re-emergence on an international scale of a movement, organisationally and politically weak, as yet, but unmistakably revolutionary, we are better able to assess the real and abiding significance the Bolsheviks' achievement.

Three of the most significant aspects of the Russian experience from which we need to learn from today are the nature and role of the revolu-

tionary party, Soviets as organs for the struggle for power and as the state forms of the proletarian dictatorship which must replace all the institutions of the bourgeois state, and lastly, but by no means least, the significance of combined and uneven development which permitted the workers of a backward country to come to power before those in the developed heartlands of imperialism.

BOLSHEVIK PARTY

The role of the Bolshevik Party and of Lenin have long since been enveloped in the mist-shrouded regions of mythology which lie beyond analysis and where criticism is regarded as blasphemy. Yet, the role of Lenin and of Bolshevism is incomprehensible unless it is understood that neither were immaculately conceived and brought forth fully-formed. Rather, with both, a process of recognising and transcending previous errors and weaknesses was their distinguishing feature. For Lenin, a hallmark of a genuinely revolutionary party was its attitude to its own mistakes.

It was in fierce opposition to the political line that he had defended for 13 years that Lenin directed the April Theses at the Party leaders fighting every inch of the way against the entrenched conservatism of the 'old Bolsheviks'. The myth of an infallible leader at the head of a perfect party did not and could not emerge until after Lenin's death when Lenin's thought, frozen into a rigid system and systematically distorted, became the ideology of the Soviet leadership.

Attempts to construct revolutionary parties along Bolshevik lines in the early years of the Communist International were not at all successful. Despite the mass splits from the old Social Democratic Parties brought about by the impact of the Russian Revolution, the new Communist Parties created had neither the theoretical foundations nor practical experience which had shaped Bolshevism over fifteen years of struggle. Besides this, in Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Germany where revolutionary opportunities were lost, the Communists faced a host of new problems for which answers could not have been provided in advance.

Arising as the first wave of revolutionary struggles which greeted the end of the imperialist war receded, the infant Communist Parties either attempted to galvanise the masses by revolutionary offensives when the workers were in retreat or themselves wavered and vacillated when the workers were on the move. In Germany, above all, errors of both kinds were committed in the revolutionary crises of 1919-23.

Yet, had all the appropriate lessons of the Russian experience been learnt would these have been adequate to ensure victory elsewhere. Clearly, the tactics of Bolshevism could not and

cannot be simply transposed to more advanced capitalist countries without an analysis of the conditions under which the revolution had, and in most cases, still has to be made. On the other hand, a rejection in advance of the "Russian model" — without a proven alternative — would be merely foolish. It is clearly necessary to separate that which is essential from that which is more or less accidental.

ROLE OF SOVIETS

Few would deny that the most essential feature of the Russian Revolution was the role of the Soviets. But once again, the significance of soviets has often been shrouded in reverential mists which have concealed their real character. First emerging in the 1905 revolution, the Soviets from the beginning took on the character of a 'workers' government' in a country which had known no Parliamentary democracy. When they re-emerged in the first flush of the February revolution, workers took a back seat as radical lawyers and writers made fine speeches. It was only during the course of the year that the working class were able in a conscious fashion to reclaim the Soviets for their own as a pre-condition for taking power.

It should be noted too, that it was the Soviet, through the Military Revolutionary Committee in Petrograd that took power and not the Party. The Soviets were simply bodies which reflected in their politics and composition the general moods, consciousness and organisation of the working class. Lenin, for instance, was quite willing, should the Soviets prove to have gone over quite conclusively to the side of the Provisional Government, to seize power on the basis of factory committees or other organisations of the class. It was one thing to recognise the importance of Soviets, another to fetishise them.

The Soviet idea spread like wildfire after the Russian success. In Germany Soviets sprang up in 1918. In England, Ramsay MacDonald called for Soviets at the Leeds Unity Conference. A Soviet Republic in Hungary lasted a few months. But nowhere were soviets able to take power from and replace bourgeois parliaments.

Today, where workers in the advanced capitalist countries have for generations been raised within the framework of bourgeois democratic institutions which breed both naive illusions and an apolitical world-weary cynicism the need for Soviets seems to be in inverse proportion to the possibility of their creation. Nevertheless it is clear that in these countries, if the working class are to come to power they will need state organs of their own. They will look far before they find a better model than the Russian Soviets of 1917.

The Menshevik wing of the Russian Social Democracy interpreted Marx's statement that the



led by Bolshevik workers.

Novosti

TALKING OF PEACE - WHILE BOMBS DROP

THE DECISION OF the Israeli government to resume air attacks on Southern Lebanon is symptomatic of the violent logic of the Israel-Palestine confrontation. The conditions for serious political bargaining around a Geneva conference table simply do not exist and, in this sense, the more detailed arguments about who should represent who and talk about what are not of primary importance. However, certain Arab governments, especially Sadat's in Egypt and of course President Carter, have got a lot of credibility wrapped up in them.

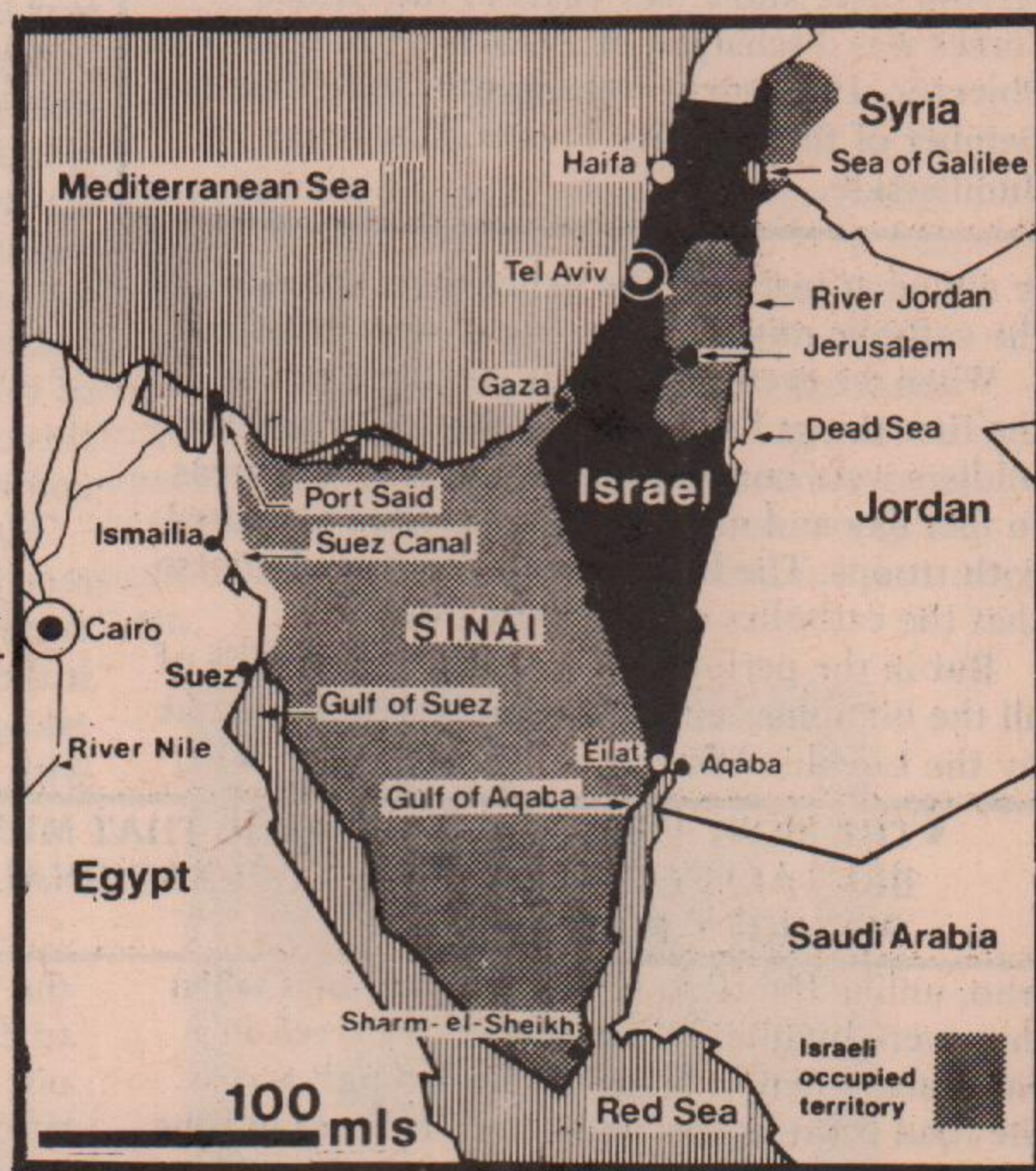
On the face of it Israel is in a position of strength. Her military superiority, the unruptured pro-Zionist consensus amongst her Jewish population and the recovery of nerve in the crucial pro-Israel lobby in the United States serves to underwrite the intransigence of her leaders. Her US paymaster is, of course, gravely embarrassed by the ingestion of the West Bank into Greater Israel but there is *no question at all* of the United States fundamentally ditching Israel.

The brilliant political and military strategists who run Israel therefore know that they can pursue their expansionist ambitions and make a mockery of US diplomatic initiatives (or pretend to go along with them as the occasion demands) without suddenly finding themselves alone in a hostile world.

What neither Israel nor US imperialism can do, however, is abolish the four million strong Palestinian people whose national consciousness colours the politics of every Arab nation.

The Palestinians are not generally understood outside them. They do not comprise a majority of the inhabitants of Greater Israel, nor are they mainly classic refugees in tents. They are variegated in circumstances, and geography, united in political resolve to reassemble a Palestinian nation. Unemployed shanty town dwellers in Lebanon, peasants in Jordan, industrial workers in Israel and Kuwait, bankers in Arab capitals are all Palestinians.

Their political weight stems not just from their militancy, but their overwhelming physical presence in Jordan and Kuwait, for example, and their presence in all Arab society is, ironically,



analogous in many respect to that of the Jews in North America and European capitalist states, in *social* terms, and not their existence as a nationality.

It is necessary to be clear that the incompatibility of Israel with the aspirations of Palestinians is not simply a matter of intransigence on either side. Israel exists. The Zionist settler state was created by a violent expulsion of Palestinians from their country after the Second World War. Today it physically excludes as many Palestinians as possible and includes as many Jewish settlers as possible. Like a congress of librarians forbidden to discuss books but empowered to rewrite the Dewey Decimal classification system, Israeli politics is imprisoned by this continuing reality.

Military strength courtesy of a *willingly* blackmailed imperialist superpower gives the appear-

BRYNLEY HEAVEN

ance of strength, but it is the fatal strength of an attempt at rapacious nation-building set on collision course with the Palestinian diaspora.

The united front of Arab governments is as fragile as many of the regimes themselves. The Arab governments can no more abandon the Palestinians than they can resolve their aspirations in a negotiated compromise. The very nature of the Israeli state, an exclusive home for a settler people, excludes enduring compromise and binds the Palestinians to some reliance on their own best friends and worst enemies, the very Arab states which have fought their resistance in Lebanon and Jordan.

The picture is not an optimistic one. Facile projections of the political unity of Jewish and Palestinian workers are two a penny. But equally most pro-Palestinian commentators, and in our view the component organisations of the Palestine Liberation Organisation itself, tend to play down the necessity for a fracture in the Israeli society's consensus (Palestinians excluded) in support of Zionism. Such a fracture is unlikely to be the straightforward product of Israel's internal economic crisis, nor the simple outcome of their military defeats or (less still) victories. It would open up when the stranglehold of imperialism is under challenge in the Arab world.

In this sense the Arab masses do hold a key to the future of Palestine and they are most likely to explode the simmering social crisis of the Arab world when the regimes facing Israel are entrapped by war in which the nouveau riches Gulf States are compromised by the same imperialism that sustains Israel.

In Britain some left wing students have mistakenly attempted, no doubt for the best of motives, to ban pro-Israeli speakers or societies. This move is doubly counterproductive since it assists apologists for Israel in their dishonest accusations of anti-semitism, reinforcing the supposed martyrdom of a martyred people, and obscures the fundamental political point: for or against Palestinian self-determination?

THE REPERCUSSIONS of Sadat's surprise visit to the Knesset, Israel's Parliament in Jerusalem and his reception there by Prime Minister, Menachem Begin are still reverberating around the Middle East. Sadat has invited all interested parties to a summit in Cairo while a rejectionist summit is being convened at Tripoli by Syria, Libya and the Palestine Liberation Organisation to oppose Sadat's attempts at a settlement with Israel. But why this sudden turn of events? Has Sadat's visit really been the "heroic venture" the Western press has styled it or has it rather been the "knife in the back" which it has been seen as in the Arab world?

As the first direct contact between Israeli and Arab Governments since 1949 the visit undoubtedly bestowed a degree of legitimacy on the State of Israel which until now no Arab leaders have been prepared to concede. This comes as a double blow to the Arab cause in that Begin's government is not simply a Zionist government in a Zionist state but represents the most extreme and aggressive wing of Zionist politics, firmly committed to territorial expansion and colonisation on the West Bank of the Jordan. It is hard to see that Sadat's speech in the Knesset could be at all acceptable to Begin's Likud coalition but the visit itself was more important than the verbal shadow-boxing of Sadat's five points.

These five points were: (1) the ending of the occupation of territory taken in 1967; (2) Restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people, including a state; (3) The right of all states to live in peace within secure boundaries; (4) a commitment on all sides in keeping with the United Nations Charter, including non-resort to force to resolve conflicts; (5) an end to the state of belligerence.

Begin, speaking in reply to Sadat, made no attempt to answer specifically any of these points, though it is clear that on no condition is he likely to accept (1) and (2) and without these the others become practically devoid of all meaning. In fact, far from being a step towards a settlement the formal contents of Sadat's speech to the Knesset and Begin's reply would seem to indicate how far away any settlement really is.

But like the first round of any negotiation the fact that they are taking place outweighs the formal demands made. Despite the flood of rhetoric which flows from Begin — whose appeals for peace, invoking Israel's god, Israel's history and military might in equal measure, are always liberally spiced with denunciations of the PLO as murderers, criminals and Nazis (no less) — he has yet to offer anyone anything more substantial than words. It was Begin, then in opposition,

SADAT 'PEACE' VISIT STRENGTHENS ZIONISTS



President Sadat listens to Prime Minister Begin's speech in the Knesset

who ranted and raved against the Sinai disengagement agreement as though the state of Israel itself was being dismantled.

But if Begin's talk of peace and brotherhood is addressed only to the chosen (and, of course, the Press) and if Sadat said nothing new in his Knesset speech why all the repercussions?

Sadat's position in Egypt is far from secure. With a deficit of 16 billion dollars, 30% inflation, an enormous military budget and a working class which has more than once flexed its muscles in recent years, he badly needs American support and finance. The price for this has clearly been his credibility in the Arab world. Israel too, depends on American money. Perhaps a clue to their togetherness?

Sadat's visit has also provided a chance for

Syria's Assad to enhance his standing with the Palestinians by denouncing the visit. Yet, it was Syrian armour which prevented a Palestinian leftist victory in Lebanon's civil war. Today Assad is able to join with Libya in opposition to Sadat's attempt at a separate peace. What is more the tenuous unity of Arab nations in opposition to Israel has burst asunder. Hussein of Jordan is likely to attempt to join with Egypt in entering negotiations with Israel, perhaps recruiting puppets from amongst the West Bank Arabs as a token gesture. The other states will make militant anti-Sadat noises at their Tripoli summit.

Meanwhile, Begin will visit Britain, no doubt to the effusive welcome of the British press and the Zionist and pro-Zionist leaders of the Labour Party.

REVOLUTIONARY EVENTS

In Portugal from 1974-76 we saw clearly how the struggles of the peoples of her-ex-colonies precipitated revolutionary events on the mainland of Europe. Today it is the imperialist fortress of Southern Africa which is coming under siege from the oppressed African masses. It is impossible to assess the revolutionary repercussions of its defeat for the European and American working class.

Here too, combined and uneven development, which Trotsky analysed as the basis for his theory of permanent revolution after the 1905 events in Russia finds historical expression. Not by lifting an analysis ready-made but by applying the same degree of study to the real historical processes with all their unevenness and complexity as Trotsky did then, or, as Lenin put it, by studying "the specific features of the new and living reality" will it be possible to understand the trend of world events. Understanding them it will be possible to act decisively when the time to do so arrives.

As Rosa Luxemburg put it at the time, "In Russia the problem could only be posed. It could not be solved in Russia. And in *this* sense, the future everywhere belongs to "Bolshevism".

ACCUSATIONS OF systematic brutality and oppression by the security-forces on the catholic population in the North of Ireland are trenchantly denied by the Army and the Government. Those cases where brutality has been proved are usually treated by the press as having been isolated aberrations that are understandable given the difficult circumstances soldiers have to work in.

Thus they effectively condone these actions but at the same time deny that they are a natural consequence of the official policy and tactics of the Army's operations in Northern Ireland. However, my own experiences of Northern Ireland and the training we were given prior to our tour in 1973 led me to quite different conclusions.

Most active service units (or battalions) are required to spend at least four months out of every 15 to 18 months in Northern Ireland. I say at least because military police, Special Air Service (SAS) and those at the Lisburn headquarters usually spend something like two years out there. Every unit also has to spend up to three months pre-Northern Ireland training and another month after the actual tour is spent on de-briefing. Thus each active service unit spends at least eight months out of every 15 or 18 on what is known as 'Internal Security' training and operations. (Ominous implications for the Labour movement).

Most of my 'IS' training was done in the barracks. Each Company (there were four) took it in turns to be 'rioters' and 'terrorists' one day and the security forces the next. About a month before the actual tour we had to spend two weeks at a barracks in Lydd (Kent). It is here that the 'IS' training becomes most realistic.

REALISTIC

Within the barracks there is a mock town consisting of several streets, alleyways and generally resembling any ordinary working class district. Practical training is given in riot control, house searching, interrogation techniques, sniper positioning, setting up secret observation posts etc., etc. The training is so realistic that every day people were injured. I used to wonder that if this is what happened during training God only knows what'll happen when we get out there.

We were also given lectures on the situation out there at the time. Even though we were going to be deployed in a part of Belfast that consisted of mostly Protestants with one small Catholic area the enemy was firmly defined as being the IRA, and their sympathisers (which meant all Catholics). The Republican political arguments were dismissed as being Communist, and we were even given a lecture on the 'Russian threat'. This kind of indoctrination was obvious-

Which way forward for Irish Solidarity Movement?

IN RECENT YEARS the organised British labour movement has refused to discuss the role of the British state in the north of Ireland. No resolutions were taken at this year's Labour Party Conference, for example, and Callaghan refused to mention Ireland in his Parliamentary Labour Party report — despite the fact that he had discussed British policy on Ireland with Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, only the week before. The Left in the movement have, to date, failed to confront such wretched arrogance.

The signs are, however, that there are new beginnings to the debate on the role — or more particularly the methods of the imperialist state. Recent articles in "Tribune" and the "Morning Star" have expressed concern and regret at the brutal methods employed by the army on the streets of Northern Irish towns and by the RUC in their 'questioning' of Republicans at the Castlereagh Detention Centre.

FAILURE

The virtual silence on the part of the British Left has, in part, been consequent upon their failure to understand Ireland's British problem. By seeing the problem as being one of erroneous and unfortunate British policy decisions — rather than as a consequence of British imperialism itself — the Left has failed to understand the necessity for the violent repression of the Republican movement as far as imperialism is concerned.

Similarly the necessity for a violent Republican response has not been understood. Thus the sizeable demonstrations that were mounted against British policy, as expressed against internment and 'Bloody Sunday', collapsed in the face of the IRA campaign in England. These were protests against what were seen as regrettable and harsh actions, and failed to explain those actions. The only 'explanation' that 'Tribune' could offer for the IRA response was in terms of 'madmen' and 'tribal warfare'.

Understanding nothing of what was taking place in Ireland the Left was numbed into important silence by the 'insane' IRA. Even though

Ex-British soldier speaks out

IAN PHILLIPS

Serving three-and-a-half years in the Armed Forces was discharged in 1975 as a Conscientious Objector. 1973 spent four months in Belfast as a member of the Security Forces, now living in Humberside.

ly aimed at instilling the belief that repression of the catholic minority was 'right' and 'justified'.

When we eventually went out there one of the first things I noticed was that nearly all the soldiers were concentrated in the Catholic areas. In fact day and night these areas were saturated with troops. The logic behind this was of course that the Catholics caused most trouble.

But in the period that I was in Belfast 90% of all the bombings and shootings were carried out by the Loyalist Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF),

'THE MOST IMPORTANT MESSAGE THAT MUST BE GOT ACROSS IS THAT SUCH BRUTALITY IS PART OF THE OPERATIONAL METHODS AND TACTICS OF THE 'SECURITY FORCES'.'

who, unlike the IRA, never gave warnings when they were bombing. I remember one week in particular when the Catholic owned pub across the road from us was bombed four times in four days, dozens of people were injured and made homeless. The UVF admitted responsibility yet not one suspect was brought in for questioning. But every day Catholics were being brought in and many were interned.

Another indication of the blatant bias of the security forces was that when I was in Northern Ireland there were something like 30 protestant internees compared to 500 Catholic internees.

If for a moment one puts aside the historical reasons for the conflict between the Army and the Catholic community it is obvious that there is bound to be more trouble in Catholic areas because there are more troops there. What the Army means by trouble was not trouble in any objective sense, but trouble for them. They couldn't comprehend the fact that their presence in the Catholic areas was the main reason for this trouble.

During the unit tour of Northern Ireland I spent much of my time at the field Tactical Headquarters which enables me to see how the operations of the unit were coordinated and controlled. It was here also that all prisoners

were brought for interrogation; all day by day records were kept; and the intelligence section was based.

My first experience on arriving there was noticing that the interrogation room had its walls splattered with blood. When I asked about this, I was told that a man was brought in earlier, who had been suspected of killing a soldier from our unit a year before, he was smashed to bits because one of his interrogators was an old mate of this dead soldier. I was to realise later that this case was no aberration or excess but a common occurrence.

Hardly a week went by without somebody receiving a beating. Everybody knew it went on, everybody had witnessed it and many had done it themselves. I remember on one occasion I was asked to guard three prisoners who had to stand with their feet apart and hands held high against

the wall. I was given a pickaxe handle and told to clobber them if they moved. After an hour one of the prisoners began to cry and asked to sit down as he was still recovering from a bullet wound in the leg. When I allowed him to sit down a Corporal came up, threatening me and then ordered me off the job. Two hours later the prisoners were still standing there, by now all of them were suffering greatly.

On entering the Intelligence Section office I noticed the display of suspect photographs and pictures of wanted men. But in the middle of this display was a blown-up photograph of a man who had been beaten to pulp and was being propped up either side by two soldiers.

However, as well as interrogating prisoners the main job of the Intelligence Section was to liaise with the RUC, Special Branch and the SAS. They kept tabs on all movement in the area and produced a weekly 'INTSUM' (Intelligence Summary) which was sent back to England for use by the Intelligence Section of the unit who would relieve us. The sophistication of their techniques was on a par with '1984'.



are the facts.

Problems of perspective also confront the proposed International Tribunal on British war crimes in Ireland. It is possible that the Tribunal will win a fairly healthy amount of support — on the same basis as previous protests against the more crude aspects of colonial repression. If, as we hope, such support is won in Labour Parties, Union branches, Women's organisations etc., the question then becomes what happens to this support?

Clearly if this support — which will not be based on a principled internationalist understanding in the main — is to be sustained the realities and necessities of the war in Ireland must be made clear. The Tribunal can only mean anything if it is seen in the context of a continuing struggle to build a principled anti-imperialist movement in Britain.

In so far as the Tribunal is able to get the question of Ireland on the agenda it is to be welcomed. There appears to be a danger, however, that the Tribunal is to be built as being authoritative, respectable and unbiased at the expense of taking a political — rather than moral

In the Orderly Room of 1ac HQ was kept all day by day records of the unit's operations in the area. Whilst working as a general dogsbody in there I was able to take in the full extent of the official repression of the Catholics in Northern Ireland.

I remember in particular the Sniper files which documented the hits and misses of the unit snipers. The shooting of unarmed suspects by Army snipers was carried out with the full knowledge of Commanding Officers. And even in those cases where the sniper claimed the man was armed the secret positioning of the sniper and his likely distance from the target preclude the possibility of giving any effective warning which is what is required by the Yellow and Blue card regulations.

It would not be difficult to fill this article with particular brutal incidents which I personally experienced whilst serving in Northern Ireland. However, the most important message that must be got across is that such brutality is part of the operational methods and tactics of the 'Security Forces'. From their point of view it is the only way to successfully suppress the Republican movement.

In conclusion I think a few words should be said on the changing attitudes of soldiers towards Northern Ireland. Years ago when the 'trouble' first started soldiers viewed the conflict in Northern Ireland as an opportunity to get in some active service. To many young soldiers who had not served in Aden or Malaya, despite the dangers, Northern Ireland seemed very exciting, it was the real thing, something to boast about back home.

However, after ten years the novelty has worn off. By 1975 when I was discharged a tour of Northern Ireland was the worst thing that could happen. The number of soldiers deserting or going AWOL would increase, alcoholism and violence was prevalent, and the cost to family relationships was immeasurable. Apart from very new recruits who have never been there the attitude of most ordinary soldiers is that we should get out — though it is usually expressed by saying that we should let them fight it out.

In fact the inevitability of having to withdraw from Northern Ireland is fully recognised by the Army. It is believed that when that day comes all the Army could do is set up protective corridors to allow Catholic refugees to get out of protestant dominated areas. Four years ago when I was in Northern Ireland contingency plans like this were openly espoused, one wonders today how far advanced they have become.

stand against Britain. It would be nonsense to talk of a neutral Tribunal and foolish to pretend to be unbiased as some wish to appear. As revolutionary socialists we are not neutral and we would not be revolutionary socialists if we were.

The 'Chartist' supports the International Tribunal as part of an attempt to open up debate with politically conscious workers and as part of consistent propaganda work around the slogans of the UTOM. It is only through winning support for the Tribunal in the British Labour movement and in Ireland that it will become authoritative because it is the British working-class that is best able to affect the Labour Government in Britain.

The Tribunal would be more internationalist if it were able to mobilise the political support of the British working-class against its own state than if it were to gain the paper support of innumerable respectable Europeans, intellectuals, authors and philosophers etc.

We must not delude ourselves, however. The Tribunal will be no short-cut and we cannot afford the luxury of believing that this struggle for principled socialist internationalism will find mass support from within the ranks of the working class movement during this period.

FASCISM AND THE FAMILY

"IN THE CASE of female education the main stress should be on bodily training, and after that on development of character; and last of all on intellect. But the one absolute aim of female education must be with a view to the future mother." — Hitler, *Mein Kampf*.

'I would like to see real manhood and real womanhood once again valued, and the trend towards unisex reversed.' — John Tyndall, *National Front*.

What has the area of one's personal life, sexual relations, and the family to do with politics? Surely that is the one 'private' area that no one can interfere with? These are questions which many people ask. The idea that being a husband, wife, mother, child is an area of one's life affected by politics sometimes seems blatantly absurd.

The two quotes above are made by leaders of two fascist movements. One in Germany which led to the defeat of the working class, the rise of one of the most brutal regimes seen in recent history, and one of the most catastrophic wars we have known. The latter statement, by one of the contemporary leaders of the fascist movement in this country today. What is their concern about how men and women behave today, and what should be our interest in it as socialists?

TWO TYPES

Authority depends on two types of control— one form of external institutions we can easily identify are the kinds of institutions which the state uses to enforce law and order — the police force, prisons, law courts, and the bodies which are invested with the power to make and enforce laws. The other method of control is less visible— our social behaviour, how we act towards each



Mother's Day, Nazi style. Prolific mothers are invested with the Mother's Cross at a Berlin ceremony.

other, our families, how we 'know' what is right and wrong — these attitudes are often said to be dictated by our 'consciences'. They seem to come from nowhere other than a moral sense of right and wrong.

Hence we are sometimes called to act as 'our consciences dictate' — as if our consciences were outside and above any external influence. This has often been a strong element in the arguments of the anti-abortion lobby, to 'de-politicise' the issue of abortion.

In reality, our modes of social behaviour are vastly influenced by the earliest years of our upbringing — in the family, with our parents, and later as parents we in turn influence and shape the future behaviour of our children. This fact is widely accepted by psychologists, many of whom maintain that the most crucial years for human beings in terms of future behaviour patterns are the first 18 months of our lives.

Therefore the type of family structure that exists is crucial in determining the inculcation of social values and the acceptance of the external institutions which dominate the political system into which we grow up. Fascism has a vested interest in maintaining a certain kind of family structure to mirror the authoritarian basis of its regime. As a political force, fascism demands that the wills of individuals are subordinated to the dictates of its leadership: freedom to act, to organise, for instance, in trade unions, is denied.

TAKE ROOT

In order to take root, fascism relies on two psychological traits, fear of freedom, and fear of authority. Under certain conditions of extreme demoralisation, where the leadership of the working class has been defeated, submission to an authoritarian regime and the maintenance of that regime is made possible not only by the outward trappings of enforcement of power, but also by the development of a certain kind of character structure, which suppresses the potential of the development of human beings to the full.

William Reich, writing about the rise of fascism in Germany, in *"The Mass Psychology of Fascism"* demonstrated how an authoritarian family structure was able to reproduce the acceptance of the fascist state. In a sense he is rectifying the view that it was not just the failure of working class leaderships which provided the conditions for the growth of fascism, but that conditions prevailed in the conservative and potentially reactionary structure of family life in one important layer of society, the lower middle classes, which enabled fascist ideas to take root.

Key to this was the role of the father. "Within the family the father holds the same position that his boss holds towards him in the production process. And he reproduces his subservient attitude towards authority in his children, particularly in his sons." Also central was the position of women and children as subservient to men —

By Liz Adams

"What this position of the father actually necessitates is the strictest sexual suppression of women and children." Thus an attitude of strict, unquestioning acceptance of authority is inculcated at an early age.

AUTHORITY

Another leading psychologist contemporary with Reich, Eric Fromm, outlines in *"The Fear of Freedom"* two types of learning situations which can be created, which he calls 'rational authority' and 'inhibiting authority'. Rational authority he characterises as where one person or persons learn from others so as to become equal to them; inhibiting authority is where one group exploits another by maintaining distance between them.



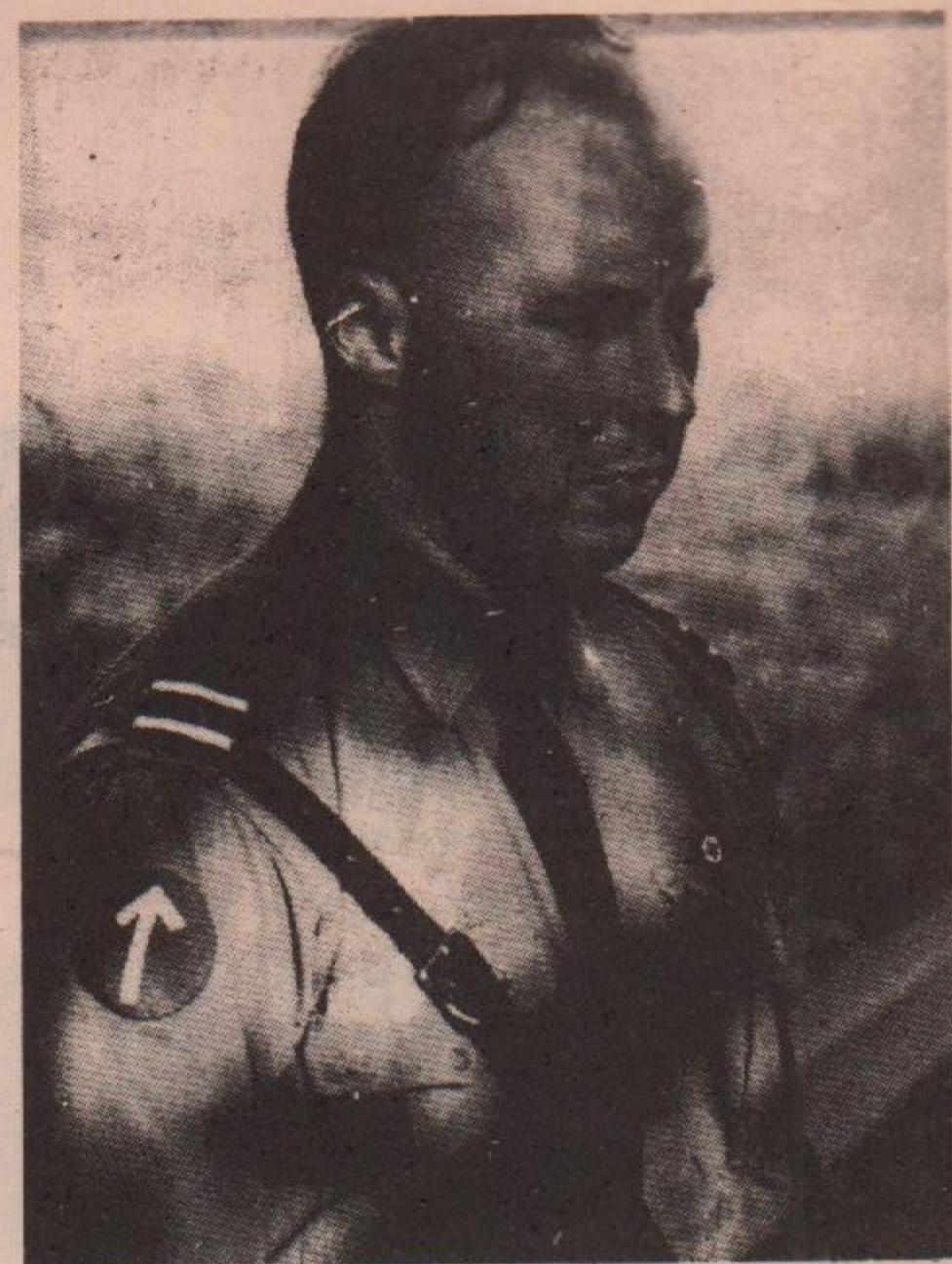
Direct appeal for the Hitler Youth

He explains the differences thus; "The dynamics of authority in these two types are different too: the more the student learns, the less wide is the gap between him and the teacher. He becomes more like the teacher himself. In other words, the authority relationship tends to dissolve itself. But when the superiority serves as a basis for exploitation, the distance becomes intensified through its long duration".

The type of family that Reich is describing depends on inhibiting authority to maintain the oppression of all the individuals of the family— men, women and children.

MALE-DOMINATED

But why should we today under capitalism worry about the type of family relationships which Reich describes? Under capitalism, the family which is often referred to as the 'nuclear' family, has evolved from the particular form of social relations which grew up to protect private property — the male-dominated 'patriarchal' family. In this family property was passed on through the male line, and in order to ensure that the children who inherited the property were his, it was essential that the woman who bore the children was sexually faithful to him.



John Tyndall

Remnants of this system exist today — even though inheritance of property is no longer a key issue for the mass of people — a wife takes her husband's surname, the man is the one who is officially recognised as the head of the household. The role that women play in society has been used politically under capitalism for its own ends— thus expansion in welfare services, and in particular, nursery provision, has taken place when capitalism needed to draw women into the labour force for social production, such as during the second world war.

"No matter how far women's sphere of activity can be stretched, the ultimate aim of a truly organic and logical development must be the creation of a family. It is the smallest but most valuable unit in the structure of the state. Work honours both man and woman, but the child exalts the woman." Hitler — *'Mein Programm'*.

However, in the present climate of high unemployment when capital needs fewer rather than more workers, women's role as housewife and mother is emphasised as the primary one, so as to keep them in the home. It is a key weapon in ensuring the social acceptance of laying off women workers, who only work for "pin-money" the common myth goes. The current cut backs in public services, the government's moves to introduce restrictive abortion legislation, are critical in re-inforcing women's isolated position in the home — and depend on deep rooted prejudices amongst male and some female workers that really men folk are the bread winners, the boss of the family and of reproducing these attitudes in their children at home. The fascists constantly attack the welfare state, and those that depend on it as 'scroungers'; for Tyndall and his followers 'real manhood' and 'real womanhood' means preying on the potential divisions between male and female workers, and reinforcing the sexual divisions and sexual dominance of men over women. Socialists must be aware of the seeds of reaction that lie within the 'male superiority' myth, which is used by capitalism and manipulated by fascists for their own ends.

APPEAL FOR CHINA'S POLITICAL PRISONERS

THE FOLLOWING is an open letter from several revolutionary socialist journals in Hong Kong and Europe received by the *Chartist*. It is not the first time we have raised the fate of hundreds of Chinese Trotskyists incarcerated by Mao in 1952. The post Mao leaders have gained much public support in China through their denunciations of the suppression of socialist legality and democra-

tic rights under the 'Gang of Four' and their supporters and have promised a relaxation of political controls. We reprint this statement in the interests of the struggle for workers democracy in all the workers states' and to aid the political revolution against the tyranny of bureaucratic rule.

RELEASE THE ARRESTED CHINESE TROTSKYISTS IMMEDIATELY! AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE COMING FIFTH NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS.

On the occasion of your celebration of the first anniversary of the downfall of the "Gang of Four" and the convocation of the 11th Congress of your party, at which you promised to convoke the 5th National People's Congress and solemnly pledged to "develop democracy", we would like to put to you the following elementary democratic demand.

Twenty five years ago, on the night of 21 December 1952, your police secretly, and therefore illegally, arrested most members of the Chinese Trotskyist movement. We now demand: to show that you are sincere about "developing democracy," please make public immediately what happened to the over three hundred Trotskyists you arrested, and set free all those who are still alive in your prisons.

Not all the under-signed are of Trotskyist political persuasion. Some are, other not. But we agree on one point: that it is extremely undemocratic and unscrupulously illegal of you secretly to arrest some hundreds of political dissidents without giving them a public and impartial trial, and to gaoil them for twenty five years!



Mr Cheng — in prison for 25 years

We are also agreed that the Chinese Trotskyists, like Trotskyists all over the world, are revolutionary communists. Over the past fifty years they firmly opposed the reactionary forces in China (first the Peiyang warlords, then the Kuomintang), firmly opposed imperialism and firmly participated in the democratic and socialist revolutions in China. Many of them were given long prison sentences by the Kuomintang for their revolutionary activities, and some even paid with their lives. Therefore, no matter what differences there may have been between your party and the Chinese Trotskyists on revolutionary strategy and tactics, the Trotskyists have never (as Stalin would have people believe) been counter-revolutionaries, and should never have been arrested and imprisoned.

Among the arrested were well-known veterans of Chinese communism like Cheng Ch'ao-lin, Ho

Chi-shen, Ying K'uen, Chiang Tseng-tung, Lin Hwan-hua, Lin Kwang-hsiu, Li Lo-ming, Chou Jen-sheng and Lin Soong-chi. You know as well as we that they joined the revolution and acted as its leaders at various levels ever since the early twenties. They made brilliant contributions to the revolution of 1925-27. They were terribly persecuted by the Kuomintang after the defeat of the revolution, and under persecution they showed themselves without exception to be loyal and unbending communists.

If you are really communists as you claim to be, you should never have treated revolutionary communists such as these in the way you have done. You should now meet our demands by immediately setting them free, and allowing them to express their opinions freely and carry on their activities without restriction. The first and, least thing you should do is to let the world know what has happened to Cheng Ch'ao-lin and others and what their present situation is. Only in this way can you show that you are really on the way towards the establishment of democracy and legality in China. Only in this way can you show yourselves to be genuinely different from the "Gang of Four".

Signed:
October Review
Rive Gauche Monthly
Equator Monthly
Combat Weekly
Sincerel Publishers
Re-awakening Monthly

UP AGAINST THE LAW

THOUSANDS OF trade unionists were beaten and over 100 pickets arrested on the November 7th Grunwick mass picket (see p 3).

Anti-fascists know that when they assemble to stop the National Front from marching, their main adversary will not be the fascists themselves, but their police bodyguard. In June 1974, Kevin Gately was killed by police who rampaged into an anti-fascist demonstration in Red Lion Square, London. This August in Lewisham, after the NF had dispersed, police charged into anti-fascists with their new riot shields and made 200 arrests.

It may be that socialists should not be provoked into confrontations with the police which they cannot win at this stage. But that would mean giving the fascists the freedom of the streets. The Left has succeeded, through these counter demonstrations in persuading most fascists to stay at home and watch the battle on TV. The police have found it more difficult to push the Left around, and better stewarding should make their job harder still.

The Communist Party (CP) put a stronger argument for avoiding confrontation. Fighting the police, they say, alienates socialists from those they want to convince who are not yet committed to an anti-fascist stand.

This is partly true. The media never miss an opportunity to brand socialists as thugs. The Labour Government and the trade union leaders join them in condemning

those who use more than words to fight the racists. Unfortunately, socialists often have to do things that are unpopular with the working people they need to win to their arguments. And one of the most central of these arguments is that the police are not a neutral peace-keeping force. Their main role is to defend capitalist property against those who threaten it, even in a minor way.

Almost any worthwhile action by trade unionists or socialists is seen by the police as a threat to law and order. The Labour Government's Criminal Law Act allows police to break up occupations of workplaces, empty houses etc. immediately.

Magistrates are handing out bigger fines and heavier sentences.

Not to mention the widespread use of "conspiracy" charges and "sus" laws, particularly against young Blacks. On top of all that, journalists are threatened with jail for breaking the "Official Secrets Act" but are not being charged with anything specific.

If this is how the state deals with relatively minor disturbances, how will they react to a serious challenge to the capitalist state? These measures are partly a preparation for more serious opposition to wage restraint and unemployment that might arise in the future. They are more effective in driving a wedge between the minority who are prepared to fight pro-capitalist policies who can thus be labelled as lawless hooligans, and the respectable



majority led by trade union leaders that the government (Labour or Tory) can negotiate with.

These trade union leaders are only prepared to fight for their members interests within the law"

JOHN LOCKWOOD, unemployed teacher and delegate to ALCARAF (All Lewisham Campaign Against Racism and Fascism) was arrested in Lewisham on August 13th after trying to leave the anti-fascist demo following the National Front's hasty departure.

His case is typical of many. He was arrested and charged with assault on an unknown member of the Metropolitan Police.

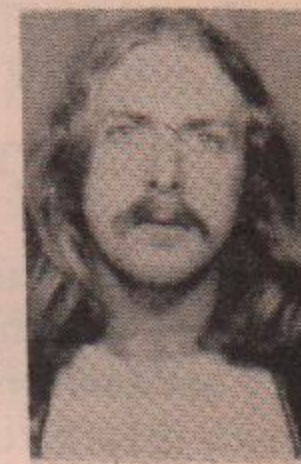
When his case came up in Lambeth Magistrates Court on November 28th the police officer (alleged to have been assaulted) could not be found!

John has medical evidence of bruising he received as he and a group of three others were kicked along Lewisham High Street by the

(if then). They consider that the Law is neutral and that "Bad Law" can be changed by pressurising a Labour Government. The fascists cannot be prevented from using school halls during elections, as

that would be illegal. The Union of Postal Workers discovered that even to go on strike was illegal. "Too Bad!" said their leaders Jackson and Stagg who bullied the Cricklewood postmen back to work.

Appeal for Lewisham Anti-Fascist



police.

Lambeth Magistrates ignored his defence evidence and the gaping holes in the police case and gave him a six month prison sentence!

It is essential for the three people who were with John at about 4.45pm on August 13th, or any other witnesses, to assist him in his appeal to the High Court.

Contact: Fisher Meredith (Solicitors) by telephone on 01-720 1374.

These gentlemen forget that the labour movement in every capitalist country was established by breaking the law. Workers defied legislation which forbade them to form unions and fought armies of strikebreakers. Today, an effective fight against unemployment, cuts in public spending and fascism also involves breaking the law.

This law considers that all manifestations of workers' power, such as pickets or occupations, disturb normal harmonious relations between employers and employees, and therefore constitutes a "breach of the peace". Unless socialists wish to abstain from these struggles, they cannot avoid confrontations with the police. Neither can they delay explaining the role of the police until such an explanation is popular.

unarmed

As long as most workers believe that the police are neutral they will not require much policing. The police will be able to remain friendly and unarmed and wear funny helmets. Lately, however, the brutality of the police at Grunwick's and elsewhere has received wide coverage. A larger minority of trade unionists have learnt the hard way what the role of the police is. Revolutionary socialists must convince these comrades that such brutality is not an aberration because the police were "only doing their job". They must change the doubts that the police really do defend all sections of society into a certainty that the police are our enemies.

Union suspends Grunwick strikers

By Frank Hansen

GRUNWICK HAS BECOME the shame of the Labour movement. Following the November 7th mass picket when thousands of trade unionists were attacked and brutally assaulted by the notorious Special Patrol Group, an action condoned and applauded by Labour Home Secretary Merlyn Rees) the APEX leadership have stepped up their efforts to emasculate and crush the Grunwick strike once and for all.

In a special ultimatum issued to the strikers on the eve of their hunger strike outside the TUC, the APEX executive declared that any further resumption of mass picketing or any demonstration against the TUC, would mean the cutting off of strike pay for four weeks. Despite this disgraceful threat, the Strike Committee went ahead with the hunger strike which culminated in a lobby of the TUC. For their pains, four of the strikers, Jayaben Desai, Yasu Patel, Vipin Magdani and Johnnie Patel were indeed suspended.

SHAMEFUL

In fact it would seem that the treachery of the trade unions' leaders knows no bounds! In a desperate effort to get the hunger strike called off, APEX General Secretary, Roy Grantham told the strikers that their action would be "an attack on our great movement".

"If you go ahead it will be you who have lost this strike". These shameful words are those of a murderer who blames his victim for resisting strangulation. If the Grunwick strike goes down there is not the slightest doubt that the trade

union leaders and the Labour Government are fully to blame.

During the summer mass pickets, when the strike was on the brink of victory, it was Grantham and co. who used the Scarman Inquiry as a political smokescreen to defuse the strike and get things "cooled down". According to them, Scarman would force George Ward to "see sense". As a result, all mass pickets and postal blacking were called off. In other words, the company was allowed to finish its crucial season in peace!

Once the complete bankruptcy of the "Scarman strategy" had been exposed, the APEX leaders told the strikers to "wait for the TUC", knowing full well that leaders of unions like the UPW, the EEPTU and the G&MWU, had no intention whatsoever of calling official action to cut off Grunwick's services. They hoped the strikers would become thoroughly demoralised and that the strike would simply fade away. Instead the strikers fought back by resuming mass picketing and by stepping up their demands on the TUC bureaucrats.

It is this activity that APEX is now determined to put a halt to. Not only are they threatening suspension if the strikers call another mass picket they are also tying up the Strike Committee's finances to prevent any independent activity whatsoever. They even seized the strikers manual typewriter on the ludicrous pretext that the electric

typewriters at APEX headquarters were immobilised by power cuts!

The Grunwick strike is too important and too vital for the whole Labour and trade union movement, for us to allow our leaders to get away with this gross betrayal.

UPHILL

The Grunwick Strike also shows that we cannot place an ounce of trust in our own leaders, whether it be the TUC or the Labour Government, or in so-called neutral bodies such as ACAS which are supposed to guarantee the right to join a union.

If the Grunwick strike is allowed to peter out without a fight, then many of these rich lessons will be lost. No matter how uphill the struggle, the left must take up the fight against the Labour leaders at Grunwick in a serious and consistent way. A defence fund must be launched to assist the hundreds of trade unionists and students now facing stiff sentences - fines, and, in some cases, prison sentences. A levy must be organised to guarantee strike pay if APEX ditches the strikers. A national conference must be convened to mobilise the thousands of workers who have supported the strike, and to expose the betrayals of the Labour leaders.

Above all, the issues which the Grunwick strike raise must continue to be hammered home in every trade union branch, CLP, Trades Council and student union throughout the country.

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