

Socialist Challenge

WANTED FROM THE TUC

A CALL TO ACTION



IN TEN DAYS' time the Trades Union Congress meets in conference at Blackpool's Opera House.

What is needed from the trade union leaders is summed up in a motion tabled by the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians. It reads:

'Congress views with alarm the declared intention of the government to undermine the existing statutory protection of trade unionists in relation to the closed shop, picketing, redundancy and allied issues.

'Congress resolves to resist by all means at its disposal these fundamental attacks on trade union rights. Congress instructs the incoming General Council to institute a campaign mobilising the resources and membership of the entire

trade union movement in a campaign as powerful and effective as those organised in opposition to "In Place of Strife" and the Industrial Relations Act.'

This motion appears alongside one from the Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians. This includes the demand 'to withdraw from all discussions with the government based on their proposals as published'.

No talks with the Tories, the type of action used against the Industrial Relations Act [i.e. strike action] — these are the twin demands which can unite and mobilise rank and file trade unionists up and down the country.

The militancy shown by engineering workers in fighting for their current claim on pay and a shorter working week, and

the promises of unequivocal resistance from shipyard workers to the Tories' plans to cut 10,000 jobs in that industry, are signs enough that large sections of the working class are not frightened or demoralised by the return of the Tory Government.

Indeed, it is obvious that the trade union leaders are holding back the militancy of their members. The engineering strike is a case in point. Support for the one-day strikes has been overwhelming. But so far those strikes have barely affected the employers. Even the prospect of two-day strikes does not appear to worry the major bosses. Who would deny that it would be an entirely different case if the engineering unions called an all-out strike?

The same point can be made with the

UCATT motion for 'no talks'. Such a position is best stated from a position of strength. But while tabling this motion, UCATT has also instructed its own members not to support a picket at two building sites in Wandsworth, London, where the local Tory council have obtained an anti-picketing injunction. Such an attack on trade union rights is exactly what the Tories are aiming at. There is no time like the present to fend off that attack, and the Wandsworth dispute is as good a place as any to mobilise in strength to take on the Tories.

The simple formula is that militant words need to be backed up by military action. A call for such action is what millions of working people want to hear loud and clear from the TUC.

OUR POLICIES

Capitalism is in crisis. The leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions offer solutions that are in the interests not of the workers but of the capitalist class.

Socialist Challenge believes that the two vital tasks confronting revolutionary socialists are:

- To build broad-based class struggle tendencies in opposition to class-collaborationism in the labour movement. These should be non-exclusive in character, grouping together militants holding a wide range of political views.

- To begin to fight for the creation of a unified and democratic revolutionary socialist organisation which can, through an application of united front tactics, begin to be seen as an alternative by thousands of workers engaged in struggles.

Such an organisation should be based on the understanding that:

1 The struggle for socialism seeks to unite the fight of workers against the bosses with that of other oppressed layers of society — women, black people, gays — struggling for their liberation. This socialism can only be achieved by creating new organs of power and defeating with all necessary means the power of the capitalist state.

2 Our socialism will be infinitely more democratic than what exists in Britain today, with full rights for all political parties and currents that do not take up arms against the socialist state. The Stalinist models of 'socialism' in the USSR and Eastern Europe have discredited socialism in the eyes of millions of workers throughout the world. We are opposed to them and will offer full support to all those fighting for socialist democracy.

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

In Britain it implies demanding the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and letting the Irish people determine their own future.

4 The Communist parties in Europe are in crisis. Neither the 'Eurocommunist' nor the pro-Moscow wings have any meaningful strategy for the overthrow of the capitalist state. New revolutionary socialist parties are more necessary than ever before. Conditions today are more favourable than over the preceding three decades. But such parties can only be built by rejecting sectarianism and seeing internal democracy not as a luxury but as a vital necessity. This means the right to organise factions and tendencies.

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

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

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Send to Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper St, London N1.

EDITORIAL

Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1 2XQ. Editorial: 01-359 8180/9. Distribution/Advertising: 01-359 8371.

Khomeini's dustbinful of death

AYATOLLAH Ruhollah Khomeini promised his opponents a 'dustbinful of death' last week in Iran. Those opponents now include oppressed nationalities, oil workers, socialists, journalists and printworkers, feminists and lawyers. It is a formidable list.

Most formidable of all are the Kurdish people. Now with the whole population armed, they have been fighting against national chauvinism for decades. It is not the first time they have been attacked by the Khomeini-Bazargan government. Earlier this year Phantom jets and helicopters were sent to the city of Sanandaj to back up troops fighting the Kurds' struggle for self-determination. Then the Kurds won.

They were quickly followed by the Turkoman people in the north of Iran, who demanded that they be allowed to take the land which had been stolen from them by the Shah. Then in the oil-producing south the Arabic-speaking people demanded that they be accorded some elements of self-government.

The failure of the government to quell these uprisings by force led to attacks on the left who supported them. Forty militants of the Fedayeen guerilla group, which played such a prominent role in the overthrow of the Shah, were imprisoned. In another celebrated case, a member of the Islamic guerilla group, the Mujahedeen, was framed up. In the south 15 militants of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS) were imprisoned in the town

of Ahwaz for supporting the just demands of the Arab people.

The elimination of the functionaries of the Shah regime is now taking second place to these attacks. The reason for these changed priorities became apparent with the fraudulent elections to the body of constitutional experts who will vet the already firmly enshrined laws of the Islamic republic. Both Khomeini and his prime minister Mehdi Bazargan are sworn to defend capitalism in Iran. Their first priority is to reconstruct the shattered state apparatus which safeguards private property. But opinions differed on how to do this. Khomeini wanted to integrate his substantial popular base as the core of the new state. Bazargan favoured piecing back together the army after cosmetic 'purgings'. Now both are agreed on the necessity of crushing opposition to their pro-capitalist plans.

Despite spirited opposition to these sorts of measures, Khomeini still enjoys mass popular support — evidenced by the demonstrations last weekend in support of the Palestinian struggle. This support, welded together by anti-imperialist rhetoric and promises of a society free from Western decadence, has arrested the process of discontent with the regime's social policies.

But this discontent with unemployment and soaring prices is slowly mounting, and Khomeini's credibility is beginning to run out. Amongst the Arab people who used to hang Khomeini's portrait next to those of their own leaders the

disenchantment is total, and they consider themselves part of a united front with other oppressed nationalities in Iran.

The Fourth Internationalists of the HKS continue to sell their paper to tens of thousands of people demanding immediate elections to a constituent assembly and a workers' and peasants' government to replace the autocrats of the mosque.

This is the vital difference with the regime of the Shah. Both Khomeini and the Shah fight to defend capitalism tooth and nail. Both are enemies of the working class and oppressed. But the point is not the comparison between personalities. The difference lies in the struggle. What is going on today in Iran is a sharp differentiation among the forces who overthrew the Shah — the beginning of a civil war, not a return to reaction.

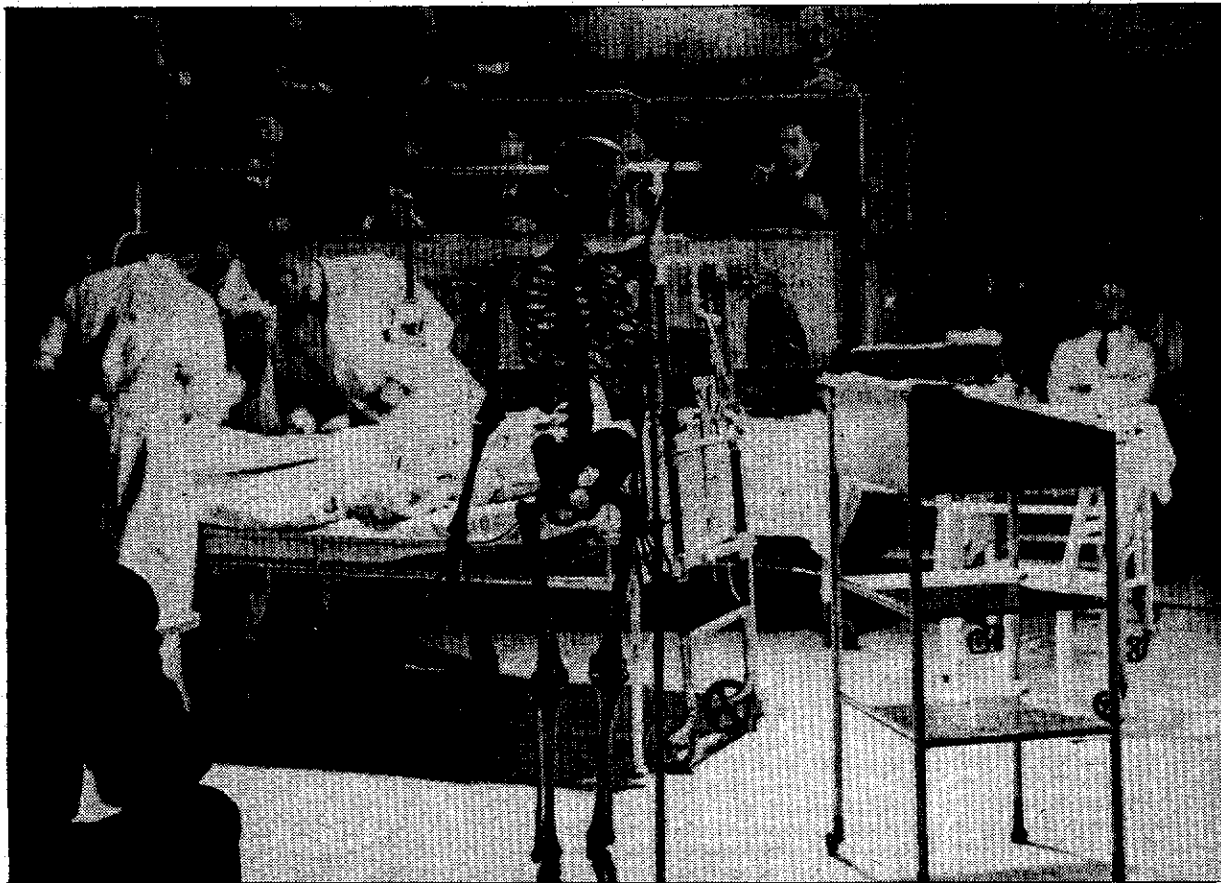
The best way we in this country can help to make sure that the result of that war is favourable to the international working class and oppressed is to demand

*An end to repression of the national minorities.

*Free the socialists in prison.

*For a workers' and peasants' government in Iran.

PICKET of the Iranian Embassy — demand an end to repression against the national minorities; free all socialists in jail. Saturday 25 August, 12-1pm, Iranian Embassy, 16 Princes Gate, London SW7.



Anti-Corrie doctors condemn 'interference by half-educated males'

DOCTORS and gynaecologists all around the country have made their opposition to the Corrie abortion Bill quite clear.

Doctors in Defence of the 1967 Abortion Act, representing more than half the professors of gynaecology in Britain, described the Bill as 'the thin end of the wedge'.

The group has correctly pointed out that the Bill, if passed into law, would drive thousands of women back into the hands of the back street abortionists.

Although the doctors involved limit themselves to defence of the '67 Act, statements from some of them reveal a certain understanding of the need for a 'woman's right to choose'.

Professor Sir Dugald Baird, Professor of Obstetrics and

Gynaecology at a Scottish university, told the Scotsman that it was quite clear that people these days realise that the choice and responsibility for an abortion was with the woman concerned.

Another Scottish professor, Ian MacGillivray of Aberdeen University, said that abortions 'are really done for the general welfare of women and the law has been working well for the past 12 years and I see no reason to change it.'

He added: 'Undoubtedly, if this becomes law, women will be driven into the hands of backstreet, criminal, septic abortionists.'

The members of the group have sent copies of their statement to Members of Parliament urging them to vote against the Bill.

They mention the mental suffering that will be caused to many girls and women, the inadequate provision of abortion facilities on the National Health, the need for more early abortion and contraception clinics, and point to the tendency of the Bill to confuse and delay — hence leading to more rather than fewer late abortions.

Sir Dugald Baird ended up by saying: 'I don't think this has a very good chance of becoming law because women are much more powerful today than they have ever been. They will not stand for this interference in their lives by half-educated males.'

It's up to all of us, not just women, to make sure that this is the case.

CAMPAIGN NEWS



LAUNCHING meeting for Birmingham Campaign Against Corrie will take place on Thursday 30 August in Digbeth Civic Hall, Lecture Room 3. Speakers will include the National Abortion Campaign and a local pro-choice trade unionist.

A day of street action is planned in the area for 8 September.

THE MILE End Day Care Abortion Clinic is a valuable asset for women in East London.

But there are fears that the local Area Health Authority will think it's expendable when it has to chop £2 million off health spending in the area — especially if Corrie's anti-abortion Bill gets through Parliament and the 'demand' for abortion declines.

This has added an extra edge to the Tower Hamlets Campaign Against Corrie, and among activities planned by the local CAC group is joining a picket of the AHA on 13 September against cuts in the local NHS.

Tower Hamlets Campaign Against Corrie was set up from a public meeting on 8 August called by the Trades Council and attended by nearly one hundred people. Last week the first campaign meeting attracted nearly forty people — including trade unionists, health workers, socialist feminists — prepared to work actively for the campaign.

A number of subgroups were set up to organise activities such as fundraising, publicity, petitioning and work in the trade unions and local hospitals. The next meeting of the campaign will be in a month's time.

A NEW leaflet, *Anti-Abortionists Tell Us Lies!*, has been produced by the Campaign Against the Corrie Bill. It gives all the details to answer the horror stories about foetuses left to die in hospital drains.

The leaflet, and stickers with anti-Corrie slogans, are available from the Campaign Against the Corrie Bill, 374 Grays Inn Rd, London WC1X 8BB.

Right to Work campaign Why I'll march again this year

KEVIN Burrage is twenty-five and unemployed. He went on the original Right to Work march and is intending to go again this year.

Socialist Challenge talked to him about why he was going on the march and what he thought about the Right to Work campaign.

“A friend took me along to the first Right to Work committee meeting in Bradford five years ago. After a couple of meetings I decided to go on the march as I was unemployed and agreed with the demands of the campaign.

I spent three months getting sponsors from factories and doing campaign work before going on the march. Eventually I was the only person who went from Bradford.

I'm going on this march because I am unemployed again at the moment. But it's also because I disagree with some things about the Right to Work campaign and I think that the only way to change things is to take part.

In Bradford especially the campaign is wheeled out two months before the march, and before that there's nothing.

The Tories are going to really make unemployment a lot worse so I think it's ridiculous not to have a campaign all the year round.

At the first Right to Work march there were groups set up based on geographical areas. One person from each group was nominated for the march council. For the last two weeks I was the council member as the original person had to drop out.

Basically we got told what the march plans were going to be, with surprises in between.

Later these turned out to be diverting off the road into building sites or factories. That was a good idea, but we were kept in the dark. It should have been brought up for discussion rather than people not knowing where they were going and so on.

The organisation on the march was very good. There were quite a few incidents with the police on the way, but no-one was arrested until we reached Hendon. People always defended those nearest to them.

The collective strength was very good with all the chores being shared out.



I think there will go on being Right to Work marches, but I'm not so sure whether they do much good. The novelty has worn off, it's become a yearly pilgrimage which has little effect.

But I think the campaign has laid the foundations for a mass movement of the unemployed. Now we have to get into the factories and the unions all year round rather than once or twice a year when the march is coming up.

I think the campaign may stagnate if it relies on the old tactics, like the marches, rather than coming up with fresh approaches. I'd like to see all the unemployed on a march, campaigning all year round for a mass movement against unemployment.



Stop the chat and fight back

Liverpool to Blackpool, 1-5 September

JOIN THE MARCH

I would like to join the march/have more information about the march

Name

Address

Send to Right to Work Campaign, 265a Seven Sisters Rd., London N4 (phone 01-802 0978).

News from nowhere

Pink perks

AMONG those to squeal loudly about the possibility of business people's perks being taxed is the president of the Engineering Union, Terry Duffy. He seems to think the bottom will fall out of the motor industry if the drivers of the two million or so 'company' cars on the road had to fork out for them themselves.

Of course, he could be right. But the fact that all full-time officers in the AUEW, in common with many other unions, are provided with a free car (renewed every two years) has in no way influenced Mr Duffy's thinking.

Rentaprop

THE AIM of Sir James Goldsmith is to be a press baron in the mould of Beaverbrook and Northcliffe. Goldsmith made his money in groceries, raising the turnover of Cavenham Foods from under £10m in 1970 to £2,000m today. That means he has the cash and the audacity to want to buy his way into our homes and hearts.

While Goldsmith has made his mark on the French media, securing a controlling interest in the news magazine *L'Express*, he has so far failed in his attempts to add a British newspaper to his empire.

Instead, we are shortly to be presented with *Now*, a glossy weekly which promises to be an amalgam of *Time*, the *Readers Digest*, and *Free Nation*.

Goldsmith's love of press freedom is well known. He has done his best to shut down *Private Eye*, by way of highly expensive law suits, and obtained the backing of the High Court to say some extremely

unpleasant things about a TV reporter he doesn't like.

So what of *Now*? The dummy issue includes an article on anti-fascists, although what it might say is not known since the text — as is common with such pre-publication issues — consists of Latin script.

When *Socialist Challenge* was rung up by a *Now* journalist a couple of months ago for information about the events in Southall, he wasn't too sure of his magazine's editorial policies. 'I'm supposed to be objective, I think,' he said. 'But since most of the people on the desk here have been



asking whether they're happy to be sharing the column with such as the Socialist Workers Party and the International Marxist Group.

If your brand of beer, fags, or whatever turns out to be advertised in Goldsmith's delightful organ, you might care to return the compliment.

been preparing material on 'terrorism' in Britain, and the problems business people have in fitting themselves into bullet-proof vests.

More insidiously, they have been on the phone to organisations which announce meetings in the Agitprop column of *Time Out* magazine, recruited from the *Daily Telegraph* you can judge for yourself.

More specific information has now leaked out of the *Now* office. Goldsmith's highly-paid hacks have

Animals

SUPPORTERS of Militant in the Southampton constituency Labour Party put forward a motion for the Labour Party conference on party democracy. But this did not suit the Tribunites and followers of the Hodgson centrist grouping. They ensured that a motion on animal welfare was put through for the conference.

Open government

THE Central Intelligence Agency has come in from the cold, or at least its recruiting methods have. The backers of the Bay of Pigs fiasco, the funding channel for Chile's right-wing press under Allende, and much else besides, now openly advertises for operatives in the job vacancy columns of the US press.

Adverts begin: 'In these times of meaningless jobs, here's a career where you can make a difference.' The message would seem to be: work in capitalist society is soul destroying, so join the CIA and help wreck political developments which could make a difference.

Lord Grade's salary drops to £195,208

Headline in the Daily Telegraph 15.8.79.

Bootle MP signs on

By Mary Ryan

ALLAN ROBERTS is the new Labour MP for Bootle, a grey devastated area to the north of Liverpool. Last Thursday he spent the day behind the counter of his local Job Centre. The Merseyside Right to Work Campaign held an occupation there so that we could tell him about life on the dole in Bootle and the rest of Merseyside.

We knew Roberts is a left talker so we expected to get his support and sympathy — we hoped to find him prepared to take action.

Other commitments permitting, he agreed to speak at the Pier Head at the start of the march, and perhaps come some of the way with us. He even handed over 50p for his marcher's card.

We hope he turns up because there's a lot we could discuss with him. Undoubtedly he will work hard to fight local closures and to bring new jobs to Merseyside, but ultimately he looks to the return of a Labour government to solve the problems of unemployment.

'But', we asked, 'most of us became unemployed when there was a Labour government in power, surely its policies paved the way for the Tories?'

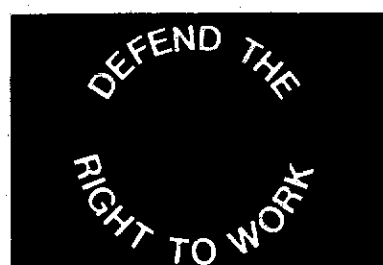
Is he prepared to fight anyone to remove the present Labour leadership? 'Yes I'm prepared to fight anyone inside and outside the Labour Party for the things I believe in. I think there are two battles to be fought, one against the Tories, and one within the labour movement.'

When asked whether he would support action against Tory attacks,

mass action to kick out the Tories now, as the miners did to get rid of the Heath government, his reply was that 'of course' he would support anyone fighting closures and so on, but he thought it wasn't the miners that got rid of Heath but the Labour Party. He thought we must wait until the next election for a chance to democratically change the government.

Allan wants to get rid of capitalism but he talks about 'peaceful, democratic means'. He says: 'I don't believe it's impossible for a democratically elected government to bring in socialism, if I didn't believe that I wouldn't be in the Labour Party.'

Come on the march and we'll explain to you why no Labour government can get rid of capitalism. The profit makers and exploiters won't give up and go away because of a few laws passed in Parliament.



The only power great enough will be that of the working class — it may not be peaceful but it will be democratic.

The Labour Party swallows up and swamps young hopefuls like Allan Roberts every year. He may say now that he's 'not here to defend the capitalist system or how it works', but that's precisely what he's doing by relying on the Parliamentary system.

Death in a Southall police cell

By Pete Grant

AT 10.30pm on Wednesday 1 August, Sarwan Singh Grewal phoned for a taxi from a public phone box in London's Southall. It was the last phone call he was ever to make. Three hours later Sarwan Singh was lying dead in Southall police station.

The police say he choked on his own vomit. But bruises found on Sarwan Singh's body suggest that the death was not that simple, and demands are growing in Southall for a public enquiry into the mysterious death.

What is known is that after making the phone call Sarwan Singh was arrested by the police for being drunk and disorderly. According to his wife, the police say they arrested him because they saw him putting the telephone receiver down the wrong way round.

What happened after that, no-one may ever know exactly. The police say that Sarwan Singh died at 1.30am, in the early hours of Thursday morning. What they have yet to explain is why it took them a further two hours to contact the victim's wife. And incredibly it was another nine days

before she and the family doctor were allowed to see Sarwan Singh's body.

When the doctor, Dr Mangat, finally did examine the body he noted bruises on the elbow and shin, and an exceptionally severe bruise on the head. The doctor has since said that there were definite signs of an assault.

Sarwan Singh has lived 13 years in Britain. According to friends he was a quiet, intelligent man. He was known to the police because he had a drinking problem, but he had never shown any signs of violence and the police were aware of his history. Sarwan Singh was also handicapped.

A 30-strong picket was held on 18 August outside Southall police station in support of the demand for a public enquiry into the circumstances of his death. Already support for this call has come from the National Association of Asian Youth, Southall Rights, Scope Southall, the Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party, and International Marxist Group.

One fact, however, is clear without any enquiry — if Sarwan Singh had not been arrested he would be alive today.



Picket against the immigration laws at Heathrow detention centre.

Backing sought for immigration law demo

By Mike Rodney
Campaign Against Immigration Laws

LAST week's issue of *Time* magazine informed its world-wide readership that Britain has a racial crisis on its hands. A nine-page feature included an 'exclusive' report that the Tory government wants to cut immigration to 5,000 a year.

If this is true it will of necessity involve the introduction of a whole range of oppressive measures, among them the introduction of a register of family dependants. The scale of such a reduction of immigrants can only be achieved by the breaking of various international

agreements — including the Treaty of Rome, which enables EEC workers to enter Britain freely.

The revelations in *Time* are an extension of the policy outlined by the present Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, in a speech in April 1978. The threats made then included the denial of the right of husbands and fiancés to join their spouses, the increased use of 'counter-measures' to detect 'illegal immigrants', and the 'encouragement' of those wishing to leave.

Since gaining office the Tories have already tightened up procedures. This is indicated by the increased use of deportations, the growing diffi-

culty 'new Commonwealth' citizens face in obtaining visas, and increased use of the prison cell as a means of detaining children who are considered illegal immigrants.

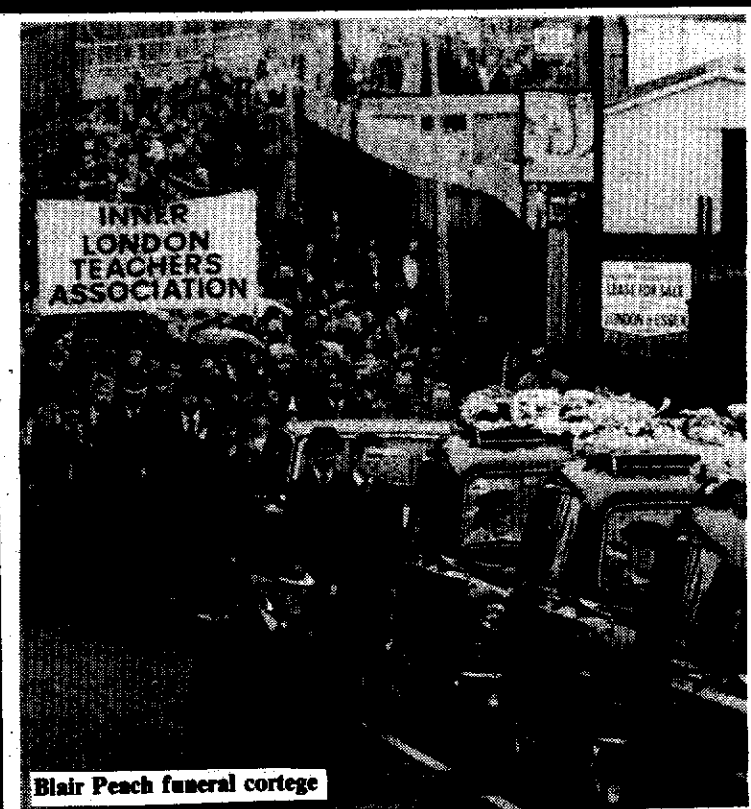
For the autumn the government is planning not just to tighten up the existing immigration laws but to introduce a new nationality Bill. This may render some people stateless and others could have their right to vote taken from them.

In the light of these developments the Campaign Against Immigration Laws is planning a country-wide speaking tour. CAIL also hopes that as many organisations as possible will mobilise for a

national demonstration planned for late autumn in central London.

CAIL started up a year ago specifically to demand the repeal of the 1971 Immigration Act and to oppose any future immigration controls. Regular newsletters have been published and during July simultaneous pickets were held outside 14 prisons housing 'detainees' under the terms of the 1971 Act.

CAIL believes that it is only by such expressions of opposition to racist immigration laws that the fight against the new Tory proposals can be won. For further details of the campaign write to CAIL, PO Box 133, Rising Free Bookshop, 182 Upper Street, London N1.



Blair Peach funeral cortege

Show trials near

By Oliver New

THE START of the Southall show trials is just over two weeks away.

The trials, arising out of the police invasion of Southall on 23 April, will put 342 anti-racists in the dock. One who could well have found himself in this situation, Blair Peach, will not be present, and as the trials draw near it seems more and more certain that his murderers will be left free to rampage around London in their blue uniforms.

The trials are the most concentrated attempt so far by the British state to 'criminalise' anti-racist activity. There are fears that anything up to 80 people may be sent to jail, while others could well face hefty fines.

The Southall defendants have made appeals for international observers to be present at the court, both to the recent Commonwealth conference and to Amnesty International.

The trials begin on 10 September at Barnet magistrates court, a venue well known for the rough treatment of black people. A picket on that day has been called by the Southall Committee and People Unite at which the largest possible attendance is required. Plans should now be underway to organise a massive show of strength by all anti-racists in London on that day.

Racial harmony - 'No thanks' say Tories

THE Tory-controlled Greater London Council has sabotaged a 'festival for racial harmony' in London's East End.

A highlight of the festival, planned for Leyton County Ground on August Bank Holiday Monday, was to have been two hours of music from new wave and reggae groups. But when the GLC heard of these plans they slapped on a series of regulations which the festival's organisers could not possibly meet.

Among them were:

- the provision of 62 extra toilets;

- the banning of all prams and pushchairs from the grounds;
- even banning hypnotism 'otherwise than provided for by Sections 2(1A) and 5 of the Hypnotism Act 1952'.

But what really floored the festival's organisers were the regulations the Tories imposed with regard to the stage. The design insisted on by the GLC would have cost £7,000 to construct — and the whole budget for the festival is only £1,400!

'The whole thing is ridiculous', said Marshall Colman, a spokes-

person for the organisers, the Waltham Forest Campaign Against Racism. Explained Colman: 'This is a community festival, just like dozens of others that have taken place all over London, but the GLC are treating it as if it were Knebworth pop festival.'

Between 2,000 and 3,000 people were expected at the festival, so the requirements imposed by the Tories were clearly out of all proportion to the event. Now the festival has to continue without the bands, although the Leyton Buzzards are planning to perform on an open lorry at the entrance. Events begin at 12 noon.

Free at last

PIERS Corbyn is free! This was the news brought to a cheering crowd of staunch supporters at Knightsbridge crown court after a two hour hearing. It was the end of a year-long campaign to defend the 14 people arrested during the Huntley Street para-military eviction of London squatters last summer.

The 28-day prison sentence against Piers — for resisting the Sheriff under the Criminal Trespass Law — was commuted to 200 hours community service. Piers was also ordered to pay £50 compensation for damage he caused to the Sheriff's suit by throwing a bucket of water.

On the steps of the court after the

hearing, Piers said: 'It's nice to be here. It's clear our message is getting through. We apologised for nothing we did at Huntley Street, we stood our ground and carried on campaigning. That's why 12 people got off in February, that's why the prosecution failed today to get the exemplary sentence they were after. Our message to all occupations and squats is that the best defence against eviction threats is to carry on occupying.'

The court's verdict came as something of a surprise. It was widely expected that the appeal would be turned down. But the campaign waged in defence of Piers and the other Huntley Street defendants — extending as far as solidarity

demonstrations in Holland and Sweden — goes a long way to explain the outcome.

The court bureaucracy was clearly worried that it could end up by making a martyr of Piers. This, combined with an excellent submission from his lawyer, secured the lighter sentence. Nevertheless it was a close shave, and as Piers said after it was all over: 'The question of support for so-called "peripheral struggles" and the defence of all militants hauled before the courts has to be taken a lot more seriously by the left.'

As for the £50 compensation, Piers says that the money will be handed over to the Sheriff — in half-pence pieces.

Crisis in the shipbuilding industry

These jobs must not be sunk

By Alan Turner

A FIERCE struggle to save the 10,000 jobs in the nationalised shipbuilding industry, threatened by the latest swing of the Tory axe, was promised last weekend.

In a lightning strike, 5,000 workers on the Clyde staged an immediate walk-out after the government announced plans to close five shipbuilding yards. A mass meeting declared there would be no further ship trials on the Clyde nor would there be any launches or deliveries. The meeting also called for a national campaign of action until the threats of closures and redundancies are lifted.

Plans

Among the yards affected by last week's announcement of the Tories' plans are:

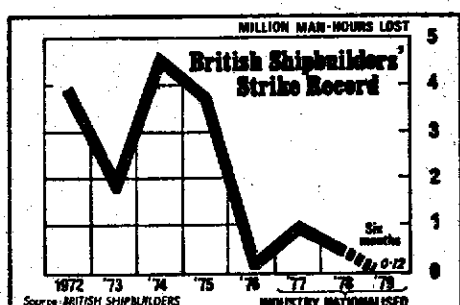
*Scotstoun Marine, part of Govan Shipbuilders on the Upper Clyde — 2,260 redundancies.

*Cartsdyke, part of Scott Lithgow on the Lower Clyde — 300 redundancies.

*Robb Caledon, Dundee — 1,100 redundancies.

*Scott and Sons (Bowling), part of Scott Lithgow on the north bank of the Lower Clyde — 226 redundancies.

As well as these closures, British Shipbuilders also plans to 'restruc-



The strike record (left) and how this 'moderate' approach hasn't worked (right)

ture' work, with redundancies at a number of yards this year and next.

*Smith's Dock Company on the Tees is to lose 150 jobs.

*North Sands yard, part of Sunderland Shipbuilders, is to lose 550 jobs.

*Cammell Laird at Birkenhead is to lose 1,000 jobs.

If the closures go ahead it will mean another layer of economic depression on areas which are already over-depressed. Govan and Scotstoun, on opposite sides of the Clyde, have suffered badly from closures in the last couple of years. Major employers such as Goodyear Tyres, Weir Pumps, and Beatties Biscuits have all recently closed, while Singer has cut its workforce to a fraction of what it was a few years ago.

Dundee, another Scottish city hit by the closures, has also had a lean time; one major local employer,

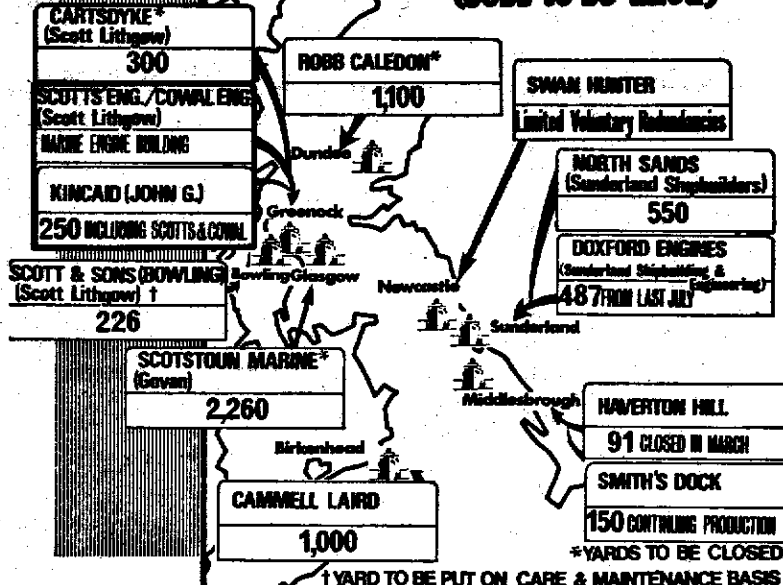
National Cash Registers, has created 5,000 redundancies in recent years. Two other areas hit, Sunderland and Birkenhead, already suffer from 12 per cent unemployment.

All this has meant nothing to Keith Joseph, the Tory Industry Minister responsible for the cuts decision. Nor was Joseph too impressed with the recent decision of workers at Scotstoun Marine and Govan yards to give up their holiday to meet management's targets for the completion of several Polish ships.

Such 'sacrifices' make it very difficult for the Tories to blame shipyard workers for the redundancies. Another usual excuse, the strike record, cannot be wheeled out either. Fewer hours have been lost through strikes in the last couple of years than for many years previously.

The fact is that the shipbuilding industry is experiencing a world-wide

WHERE THE SHIPBUILDING CUTS WILL FALL (Jobs to be axed)



recession. British industry is particularly hard hit because of appalling management and the half-hearted nationalisation measures taken by the last Labour government, which meant that what money was allocated to British shipbuilding went on running costs and meeting cash flow problems. None was spent on long term investment or on modernising the various yards.

All this is hardly the workers' fault. Indeed, the collaboration of the

union leaderships in accepting previous redundancies, urging that holidays be sacrificed, and policing a low strike record may have persuaded Keith Joseph that the shipyard workers were an easy picking. If the jobs are to be saved, such an impression needs to be immediately dispelled. All-out strike action, including seeking the support of workers not directly employed at the threatened yards, is the obvious answer.

Workers Action debate with the IMG

'REVOLUTIONARIES AND THE LABOUR PARTY'

Speakers: Brian Grogan (IMG), John O'Mahony (WA)

Fri 24 Aug, 8pm, Hemingford Arms, Offord Rd, London N1

NO CUTS HERE NO CUTS HERE

S London

PROTESTS continue to mount concerning the effects of the health cuts in South London now that the Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Area Health Authority has been stripped of its powers by the Tory government for refusing to cut its budget by £5.5m.

Examples of the effects of the proposed cuts have now been detailed by the King's Health District Management Team, which covers part of the area for which the banned AHA was responsible. The team is particularly concerned about one expected cut — the reduction of kidney dialysis patient levels to those of 1977/8.

Say the team: 'It could mean that funds for dialysis patients will run out approximately two-thirds of the way through the financial year. This means that patients from the South West Thames Regional Health Authority, where there is only one dialysis unit, are likely to die.'

Dr Roger Williams, consultant physician to the liver unit at King's College Hospital, says: 'Shutting the department could mean 900 people not getting treatment. What would happen to them is quite simple. The cuts will kill patients.'

Another threatened hospital in the Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham district is the Sydenham Children's hospital. The AHA rejected a move to close this hospital, but the five commissioners sent in to replace the AHA are not expected to feel so strongly about children's health.

Already a well-supported campaign is under way to save Sydenham. Doctors, nurses, union officials and 40 local organisations have pledged support for the hospital. Local Labour councillor Jad Adams explains that 'we want to develop so much popular feeling against this closure that it will become virtually impossible for the commissioners to carry it out'.

Feelings among trade unionists and medical staff in South London are perhaps best summed up by a comment from Angus Macarthur, a senior surgeon in King's cardiothoracic surgery department. Budget cuts would reduce open-heart operations and heart valve insertions.

Says Macarthur: 'I will go on operating until there are no more heart valves left. Then the commissioners will have to explain to the

next patient why he (sic) might die because he can't have one too.'

Portsmouth

TORY housing policies in Portsmouth are to come under the spotlight of a workers' and tenants' inquiry. Sponsored by Portsmouth Trades Council with tenants' and community groups from the city's major council estates and Havant Trades Council, the inquiry should provide a focus for growing opposition against the city council's increasingly vicious attacks on its tenants.

The Portsmouth Tory council has a long history of disregard for the needs of tenants. This is coming to a head with the announcement of the second rent rise within a year — at least £1.40 a week on top of a 17½ per cent increase already imposed. At the same time all council house building has been axed and housing maintenance slashed. Council officers admit that £1½m worth of 'essential' repairs will not be carried out.

On top of spending cuts called for by the Tory government, the council is demanding that tenants pay for a massive backlog of debts built up by their own Conservative policies. Many of the 400 flats at the 'prestige' Portsdown Park estate are uninhabitable because of damp caused by structural and building faults: the fruits of giving the project to private architects, builders and sub-contractors. On two city centre flat blocks sections of side walls have literally dropped off for the same reasons: shoddy work by private enterprise.

Militant demonstrations have been held against the council's housing policies. Occupations greeted bulldozers attempting to demolish houses in the Cumberland Road area to make way for a road. Although nearly 4,000 are on the waiting list, a road to benefit property speculators has priority over 400 houses according to the Tories.

Protests have been organised by tenants of pre-fab homes at the Paulsgrove estate, where it has been estimated that it would take only six minutes for fire to engulf a house completely. The council refuses to take action. It is the same story over the lack of safety on Portsdown Park balconies, where a child recently fell to his death, and the problem of damp at the massive Leigh Park overspill estate at Havant.

The inquiry, in which a panel of 'judges' will be brought to the city to hear the evidence of tenants and trade unionists, can help in the building of a united campaign against the Tory cuts and anti-working class policies.

Hull

By Keith Sinclair

TRADE unionists in Humberside have obtained a confidential document revealing the extent of the education cuts in the area. The document is an estimate from the Humberside County Council Education Committee and lists among the planned cuts a loss of 185 teaching posts, a complete halt to the nursery building programme, and the ending of all adult education classes.

But the cuts will not go unanswered. Last week a public meeting called by Hull Trades Council agreed to elect a provisional committee of trade unionists to co-ordinate the fightback. The plan is to work towards an elected delegate committee.

The public meeting was called on the suggestion of Socialist Challenge supporters who are continuing to build the anti-cuts committee and fighting to make it more representative and committed to action against the cuts. The next meeting of the committee takes place on 29 August at Bevin House, George Street. For further details phone S. Cunningham (trades council secretary) at Hull 224721.

Islington

By John Crofts (GMWU)

ON 15 August an action committee was formed to fight the proposed cuts in the Islington district of London's Camden and Islington Area Health Authority.

The district management committee of the AHA has proposed the kind of closures which are becoming all too typical in London. Proposed closures include the City and London Maternity Hospital, the Royal Northern Hospital casualty and intensive care units, and two nursing homes.

Local members of the General and Municipal Workers Union are planning to do all in their power to stop these closures. A picket of the next meeting of the Area Health Authority has been arranged for 3 September.

WHAT'S LEFT

ENTRIES in Whats Left are 5p per word. Display ads are £2 a column inch. Deadline: 5pm Friday before publication. All payments in advance.

SOCIALIST feminist seeks own room in Streatham/Brixton area. Phone Lindsay 9274-496780.

THE RELEASE collective is looking for an experienced co-administrator/general worker with an interest in one or more areas of our work — drugs, the law, immigration, abortion, etc. £3,700, generous holidays. Apply in writing to: Release, 1 Elgin Avenue, London W9.

NAMIBIA DAY. Selected viewing of films on Namibia to commemorate 13 years of armed struggle by SWAPO. Sun 26 Aug. 12.30-2.45pm, ICA Theatre, 12 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1. Tickets £1. Proceeds to SWAPO Medical Aid appeal. Details NSC, 388 5539.

RED NOTES. Just published: 'Workers' Autonomy and the Crisis: Italian Marxist Texts of the Theory and Practice of a Class Movement 1964-79'. 210 pages, A4, joint publication with CSE Books. Available £3.95 plus 54p postage from Red Notes, BP15, 2a St. Paul's Road, London N1. Also available: reprinted 'Red Notes Songbook' (together with the music) £1; reprinted 'Italy 1977-78' (together with Moro kidnap account), £1.

POLITICAL PRINTSHOP. London, needs person for design work. Printshop experience would be useful asset. Applicants must have had some experience in design, although training would be given. Applications to: Socialist Challenge (Print), PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

IRELAND: The Issues at Stake. Revolutionary Communist Tendency dayschool. Sat 1 Sept, 10am-5pm. The City University, St John Street, EC1. Speakers: Frank Richards, Phil Murphy. 5.30pm, 'Patriot Game' film. Entrance £1 all day, 50p evening only.

'LABOUR'S MISSENT YOUTH' by Jack Cleary and Neal Cobbett — an outline history of the LP youth movement from the 1930s to today. Contains a detailed account of the 1960-65 period which led to the 'Keep Left' (SLL) breakaway and during which the YS was the seedbed of all the present day far-left groups — A Workers Action supplement, 25p post paid.

WORKERS ACTION No 148 contains the sixth instalment of the first English language publication of the 1910 debate in the German Social Democracy between Luxemburg and Kautsky on socialist strategy. Covers all the main issues now raised by the 'Eurocommunist' current.

BOOKS for Southern Africa comrades — money is desperately needed for this vital field of international activity. Or send any books you can spare. Books for Southern Africa, Box 102, c/o Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1.

HACKNEY Socialist Challenge group meeting: Stop the Corrie Bill. Speaker: Penny Robbins (NAC). Thurs 23 Aug, 7.30pm. The Britannia pub, Mare St, London E8.

THE BATTLE ON

The shape of public sector pay to come

By John Suddaby
Secretary, NUPE Camden
General Branch

THE CLEGG Commission report on pay for 1.4m public sector workers ought to surprise no one. Who was under any illusion that it would concede the £60 minimum which we demanded?

It does absolutely nothing to abolish low pay. The lower grades in the local authorities and the hospitals will still be on under £50 a week, while differentials are widened. This does nothing to unite the workers involved.

Impossible

Before the strike, the difference between the lowest and highest grades was £5.85. On Clegg's recommendations, it would now be £13.02.

The commission also suggests to management that it should tighten up on over-time, bonus and incentive schemes, which — in the context of the cuts — is a green light to management to reduce pay and increase workloads.

Alan Fisher, NUPE's general secretary, describes the report as a

partial victory. He has little alternative.

Many of the union leaders in the public sector have argued that comparability is the way forward, because they are not prepared to lead mass struggle and because they are intimidated by the economic situation, in which the Tories have linked pay rises with cuts.

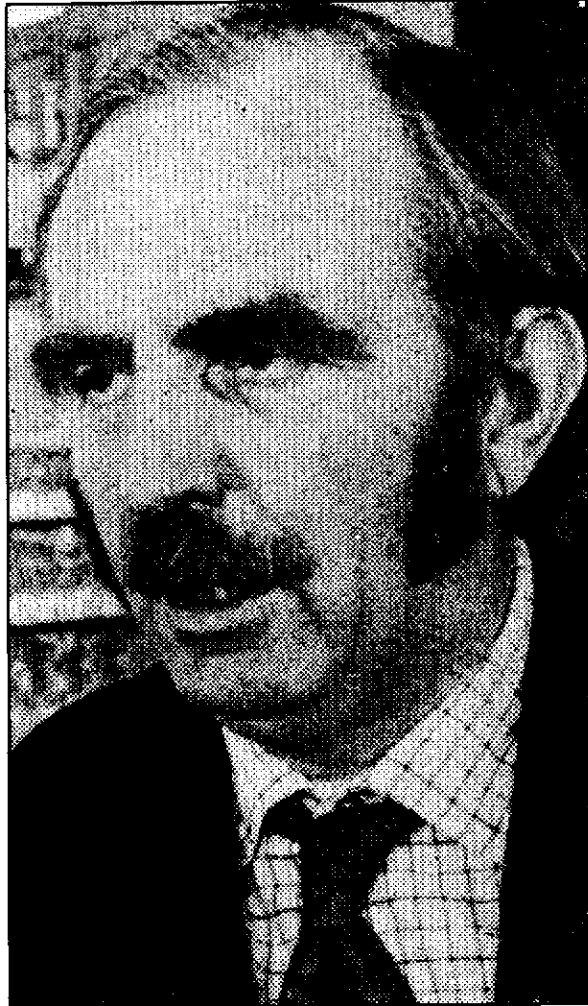
Timetable

In Camden, where we won a £60 minimum wage after an all-out strike, we showed that the problem of low pay will not be solved in committee rooms but on the picket line.

It was Fisher who in the middle of the dispute last winter came out with the proposal for a comparability study of the kind that had been conducted into the fire fighters' pay.

Strategy

That was Fisher's strategy, although it was never that of the union officially. When Clegg was appointed to head the commission, NUPE expressed its satisfaction. The effect of this union support for the commis-



HUGH CLEGG — handed out peanuts

sion is to disarm union resistance.

Among public sector workers generally, the wages struggle last winter was seen as a defeat; the action didn't come to anything, so there has been demoralisation. In the short term, we are unlikely to see any response to Clegg.

It will also affect how members respond to this year's claim. There probably won't be much enthusiasm for action. The leadership is anticipating this by remaining silent on the kind of claim that will be put, and doing nothing to mount a campaign.

Dichotomy

With the strict application of cash limits — a process begun by the Labour government — the union leaders will no doubt be very vocal about cuts, while keeping quiet on pay in case that brings more cuts.

It's a dichotomy the left has to avoid. We need united militancy on pay, which will also strengthen the union's ability to resist the cuts.

It means unity with stronger sections, not least within our own union, in which the water workers could spearhead the breakthrough on pay norms. The same goes for cuts, if we are not to be paralysed by these or demand rates increases, which the Labour left is inclined to do.

Banks

We need a broad strategy, with demands on councils to refuse to implement cuts; a programme of direct works, to take workers off the dole to build houses, hospitals, and the rest; and the nationalisation of the banks and finance institutions to fund these operations.

These are the traditional answers given by socialists, and the time is more than ripe for us to elaborate and fight for them in the labour movement.

How British Oxygen workers fought and won

THIS YEAR'S pay claim by British Oxygen workers is for a rise of £40, with an extra five days' holiday. Their track record over the past two years gives them confidence of winning this time round. Here's why

THE BRITISH Oxygen Company is a giant multi-national company with branches in more than 50 countries in all five continents. Last year its profits topped £115m and its assets were great enough to allow it to fork out £250m for the take-over of an American company, Airco.

Its main business is the manufacture and sale of industrial gases, medical gases and equipment, and welding products. These are essential for many industries and services in this country. Mining, steel production, shipbuilding, cars and the health service are all dependent on BOC's products.

The company's size and importance to the economy have attracted the attention of both the Monopolies Commission and the Prices Commission in the past. But BOC International has proved to be too tough a customer for civil servants to deal with.

Yet in 1977 workers in BOC's gases division brought this giant to its knees. Their four-week strike won pay increases of 20 per cent upwards, and drove a tanker through the Labour government's 10 per cent pay norm.

Last year, the company gave in to a large wage demand without even the ceremony of a strike, once again making BOC workers pace-setters in the wages struggle and the fight against pay policy.

Socialist Challenge talked to the convener of BOC's Hackney depot, John Walsh, and deputy convener Micky Boulter about this remarkable achievement. Had BOC workers always been so strong?

'No, not at all', says Micky Boulter, 'we used to be called "fifty bob BOC" because they used to give us fifty bob every year. Our union officials were weak and the company used to play off depot against depot and department against department. In this way they used to attack us day after day, year after year.'

These attacks came to a head in 1971, when the labour force suffered a very serious defeat. Two work study reviews resulted in productivity agreements which cost 800 jobs.

John Walsh explains: 'The company put in front of us £3 per person and the majority of people accepted the £3 for a reduction in staff. As for myself, I never agreed with it and never could.'

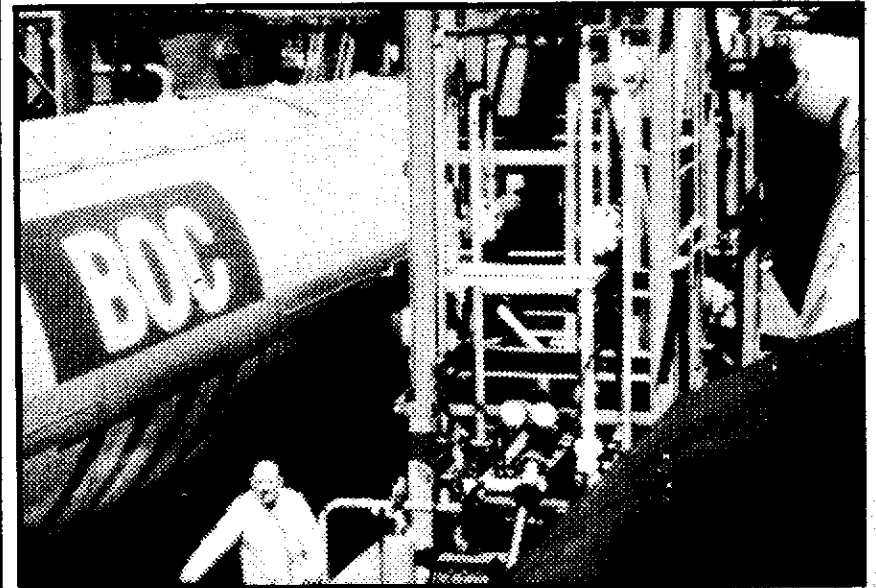
Neither could Micky, but both were very much in the minority. Together with a journalist from Red Mole (a predecessor of Socialist Challenge) they wrote a pamphlet explaining the effects of the productivity deal and stressing the need to organise nationally for a fightback.

The discussion which followed its sale helped them to strengthen the unofficial national shop stewards committee within BOC. Through the leadership shown by the committee, the stewards were able to stiffen organisation of the rank and file workers. A proposed third work study was never implemented.

In 1977, it was the national shop stewards committee which led the strike. John Walsh explains: 'The second work study review was the worst



ALAN FISHER — the call for a comparability study was his brainwave



THE PAY FRONT

settlement we ever had at
it weakened organisation.
on the company believed
was no way we could take

we had taken them on for
in 1977, they still would not
because they thought the
ould crumble. Then, in the
the national shop stewards
called an emergency meeting
ester.

company was preparing for a
work the following day by
at the flipping loads. But the
er vote was 37 to 5 to continue
From that moment onwards
any realised that the union
to be reckoned with. A week
d won.

mine

Manchester meeting was able to
high-level behind-the-
ves between the management
bureaucrats. Through the
the rank and file was to
own views about when the
ould end and under what

Boulter stresses the import-
his democratic organisation:
Manchester meetings, when
a rise in the pipeline, the
tiators met the company and
ou a couple of days later you
ce an hour, just like that.

no right of report-back, no
eptance or rejection. But the
op stewards committee was
the basis that it votes on
that everything goes to the
The decision-making power
the shop floor.

national shop stewards
now has effective recog-
the TGWU bureaucracy, in
s the lay delegates on the
negotiating committee are
of the shop stewards
which in practice also
the claim.

come about because the
n of the rank and file has
n combined with winning
unity of the work force
aking demands on the union

just the organisation of the
ers that had changed in the
een the acceptance of the
ductivity deal and the
on to fight in 1977. There
a changed political

come in between was the
experience of the fight
Heath government. BOC
ere involved in all the
struggles, like the marches
against the Industrial
ll and the campaign to free
ille Five.

an and Micky insist that
ences taught them many
h they later used in the fight
BOC management and the
erment.

poke at the recent Socialist
trade union conference,
er stressed that the defence
iving standards once again
orkers to face up to the

ed

ot to bring this government
ays. But he is quick to add
ht must include effective
with all those workers
defensive struggles. That is
nd Micky's TGWU branch
the recent Rank and File
Unions conference and
ill be campaigning for the
le Code of Practice.

to be supported', Micky
e can't turn back these
our rights and our
s, if we can't defend our
sister workers, how can we
Tories on anything else?
make socialism?



Engineers: 'We need maximum unity for maximum effect'

By an AUEW member, Leicester

WE HAVE been fighting for our national claim, which consists of a demand for an £80 basic wage; an hour off the week this year, with a 35-hour week by 1982; and two days' more holiday.

The response to the three one-day strike calls has been far better than Terry Duffy and the rest of the Confederation leadership desired.

There was no campaign to prepare the membership for the struggle, yet Duffy had the temerity to threaten the employers as early as last May that we are 'collision bound', hoping to win by bluff alone.

Yet despite the hope for an 'eleventh-hour reprieve' — to quote our union bulletin — indicating the reluctance of the leadership to fight, locally there has been overwhelming support for the strike action.

Three factories were given dispensation from the action — Metal Box, Dunlop, and Marconi-Radar, which has a reactionary staff agreement.

We feel that this is a divisive measure, because if there is advancement the factories which have given up nothing would still gain. We need maximum unity for maximum effect.

One Leicester factory, Goodwin-Barsby, scabbed on the first Monday. This plant is part of British Leyland, making quarrying equipment, and decided to come out for the other two days.

Dust Control Equipment, another local factory, is boycotting the work of one member who scabbed on one of the days of action. A Transport Union official is to hold an inquiry.

Tube Investments in Leicestershire, which has a thousand union members, is not striking and has told the union to 'get lost'.

Meanwhile, the mass media locally and nationally are doing their best to minimise the claim by saying that it's just about wages. The Engineering Union will be totally discredited if we do not gain the 35-hour week.

Token strikes leading to selective strikes are useless. Only an all-out strike can win the claim.

THE WAY TO BEAT THE PRICE INDEX RACKET

OUTRAGE from trade union leaders has greeted the government's attempt to paper over inflation with a rigged price index supposedly incorporating tax changes.

The TUC, which defends the existing Retail Prices Index, points out that if the new index were to be worth anything it should include changes in the provision of public services — that is, the cuts.

Socialists have long argued for a sliding scale of wages, so that pay automatically keeps pace with prices, and that workers' committees should determine inflation rates.

Here **MIKE EAUDE**, a member of the 3/256 branch of the Transport and General Workers Union, details the battle which has taken place in his union for the sliding scale. He writes in a personal capacity.

VOTES at TGWU conferences are always 'unanimous' or 'overwhelming'. This year tellers were called for the first time in memory. The composite which divided the conference was on the sliding scale of wages.

At two previous biennial conferences, in 1975 and 1977, several branches forced a

sliding scale composite to debate.

In 1977 Jack Jones was defeated on incomes policy when the Communist Party led an unprecedented conference-floor revolt in favour of free collective bargaining. A motion on the sliding scale, representing a 'third line' to that of both Jones and the CP, received about a third of the votes.

At this year's conference, the only fight against the leadership was waged by the tiny forces of the revolutionary left.

The issue of the sliding scale had particular resonance, both because of the hard preparatory work done in branches and at previous conferences on this question, and because it is the only policy that can defend workers' living standards against inflation.

In 1973, the Heath government brought in 'threshold agreements' of 60p for every 1 per cent rise in the cost of living. This distorted version of the sliding scale operated against workers' interests — the government cost-of-living index was false, and 60p was an inadequate rise.

Nevertheless the scheme proved inoperable for the bourgeoisie, given the

high rate of inflation. Most dangerously for them, it raised the bogey of a genuine sliding scale.

Just before the TGWU conference this year, Thatcher floated the idea of the government compiling a new cost-of-living index excluding the price of oil, which affects all types of production and transport costs.

Opponents of the sliding scale claimed we were playing into Thatcher's hands by tying wages to inflation. We were able to reply that we wanted flat overall increases as well, and to challenge the union leadership to respond to the capitalist index with its own index.

The widespread support for the motion meant that Moss Evans could not argue strongly for defeat of an 'ultra-left' proposal but only for its remittance. He was unable to argue that inflation-proofing was contradictory to free collective bargaining, as all speakers to the motion had emphasised its complementary nature.

Evans made a weak plea for remittance on the grounds that negotiators' hands could not be tied down. Nearly half the

conference clearly thought that it was high time negotiators' hands were tied down to specific policies.

Last week the TUC came out against Thatcher's new index, which supposedly includes tax changes. This response and the TGWU conference debate show that the proposals for a fiddled cost-of-living index allow revolutionaries to deepen the argument for a sliding scale.

We can provide a fighting answer to Thatcher by calling for a price index formulated and monitored by the unions. We should publicise the experience of the European working class in counter-posing their own idea of what inflation means to the bourgeoisie's false cost-of-living indexes.

We should call for a trade union price index to be controlled by elected committees of trade unionists and their allies.

Wages are not responsible for inflation. Wage rises must match price rises in order to defend working class living standards. And a union cost-of-living index is a step towards workers' control over the capitalist economy.

Indian politicians scramble for power

From Ahmed Yusef in New Delhi

THE FALL of the Desai government in India last month has opened up a new period of crisis for the ruling classes.

The Janata Party, a ragbag coalition of politicians ranging from the right-wing Hindu-chauvinists of the Jan Sangh to the ex-Socialists of George Fernandes, was forced together in 1977 by what is now called the 'authoritarianism' of Indira Gandhi's Emergency.

When Gandhi was thrown out in the general election the Janata politicians, much to their own surprise, found themselves in government under the leadership of 80-year-old teetotaler and eccentric Morarji Desai.

From the outset it was clear that this coalition would be unable to guarantee the interests of the alliance of industrialists and affluent farmers which shapes Indian politics. A wave of class struggles broke out in the countryside between the rich farmers and landless labourers, often taking the form of clashes between caste Hindus and Harijans ('untouchables'). Charan Singh, the man who replaced Desai, is the acknowledged spokesperson of the rich farmers of North India.

Squabble

At the same time industrial workers were not slow to take advantage of the removal of the Emergency restrictions on democratic rights. Important sections of the working class, such as the coal miners, won concessions from the employers and the government. This showed that the organised strength of the workers movement, far from being smashed by Indira Gandhi's repression, is intact, and there is plenty of confidence for the battles ahead.

In the absence of any clear perspective for the ruling classes, the Janata politicians did what comes naturally to them: they divided into factions and began to squabble for the spoils of



CHARAN SINGH (right), who resigned as prime minister this week, with President Reddy

office. These factions, which are also present in the two wings of the Congress Party, are not based on ideological considerations but on a network of patronage, corruption and personal loyalties to regional 'bosses'.

Any government will face its first major challenge from the railway workers, who are demanding that the 'bonus' system which prevails in the private sector of industry be extended to the railways. This would mean an

extra month's wages for the railway workers, who are the strongest section of organised labour in India.

They have a long record of struggle. In 1974 thousands went to jail and thousands more were sacked by the Gandhi regime, which was only able to break the strike after a long resistance. This time round the railway workers are determined to win. A mass meeting of the Northern Railwaymen's Union (headquarters branch) in New Delhi on 1 August unanimously condemned their former leader George Fernandes (who became a minister in the Desai government) and criticised their leadership for placing reliance on the promises of Janata ministers.

The entire spectrum of Indian ruling class parties is being torn apart by the mad scramble for office which is happening at national and regional level. The masses watch this squabble for spoils with a bewilderment which is fast giving way to cynicism as the Janata Party, which had stood for the restoration of democratic rights after the Emergency, finally disintegrates.

A tremendous opportunity is opening up to build a genuine socialist alternative to all the quarrelling bourgeois factions. The two Communist parties (CPI and CPM), however, are either unable or unwilling (or both) to take up the challenge. The crisis of the bourgeois parties has caught them unprepared, exploding their project of forming 'anti-authoritarian' and 'anti-fascist' alliances with ruling class forces. Both the CPI and the CPM gave 'qualified support' to the Charan Singh coalition.

So while the Janata and Congress politicians fight it out amongst themselves, the workers and the struggling masses of India remain tragically deprived of any independent political leadership, unable to intervene into the second-rate farce on the political stage, unable to produce the real historic drama of the socialist revolution.

Chinese Trotskyists released

By Chinese Trotskyists overseas

ACCORDING to reliable and confirmed reports, eight Chinese Trotskyists — among them Zheng Chaolin (Cheng Ch'aolin), a founder member of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) — were released by the Chinese authorities and restored to full citizenship on 5 June this year.

These eight people (apart from Zheng, the only other names we know for sure are those of Wu Jingru (Wu Ching-Ju), Zheng's wife, and Jiang Zhengdong (Chiang Chen-tung), a leader of the Shanghai workers' insurrection in 1927) were arrested along with over two hundred others on the night of 22 December 1952 by the CCP secret police. They have spent the entire period since then in prisons and labour camps, despite the fact that they were never publicly tried or sentenced.

As far as we know, over the last 27 years some of those arrested have been released under strict surveillance and returned to their places of origin, where they were forced under conditions of great hardship to participate in unpaid or badly paid manual labour, after spending five or more years in detention. Others died as a result of their sufferings in prison. Zheng Chaolin and the other seven now released probably represent the last batch of those fortunate enough to have survived this experience.

The Chinese Trotskyists originally constituted, and for many years remained, the Left Opposition of the CCP. This Left Opposition was originally formed around Chen Duxiu (Ch'en Tu-hsiu), founder of the CCP, who was elected or re-elected general secretary at each of the first five congresses of the party.

The Chinese Left Opposition, basing itself on the experience of the Chinese Revolution of 1925-1927 and the theories of internationalism and permanent revolution, directed its



ZHENG CHAOLIN in 1941

energies toward freeing the CCP from the grip of Stalinist nationalism and bureaucratism. After the defeat of the revolution, we advanced a revolutionary democratic programme and actively opposed the CCP's Moscow-inspired adventurist line.

During the Sino-Japanese war of 1937-1945, we resolved to support and actively participated in the anti-Japanese resistance, but we did not abandon our revolutionary position, and after the victory of the resistance we called for immediate implementation of agrarian revolution as a means of countering Guomindang (Kuomintang) repression, and eventually of completely overthrowing the reactionary rule of Guomindang.

During the period of the civil war (1946-1949) we participated in the struggle on all fronts, and played a special role in the big cities of east and south China, where we led struggles in workers' districts. After the victory of the revolution our main contribution was in the struggle for the democratisation of the new organs of government and for further advances along the road of socialist

revolution. All this, far from being a crime, was positively in the interests both of the Chinese workers and peasants and of the revolution itself.

However, the CCP leaders, especially the Moscow-controlled Wang Ming faction, all along saw us as their main enemy, and attacked us mercilessly. Their first step was to expel us from the party. Later they slandered and persecuted our supporters. They took all sorts of unscrupulous measures against us, not stopping short of murder. Finally, in December 1952, they crushed our entire organisation by arresting all our comrades throughout China.

The CCP's treatment of the Chinese Trotskyists over the past fifty years is the most flagrant of the 'false charges', 'frame-ups' and 'mistaken verdicts' currently being denounced by the Peking leaders. If the latter are sincere in their resolve to 'rectify' such abuses, then they should start by reversing the verdicts wrongfully passed on the Trotskyists, and completely rehabilitate them. They should not only restore them their freedom and their right to work, declare their innocence of any crime and restore their good name as revolutionaries, but also grant the Chinese Trotskyist tendency full legal rights.

Will the CCP authorities grant these demands? This depends on the struggle carried on by socialist revolutionaries both inside and outside China. In the past, not only did Trotskyists on a world scale protest on behalf of the comrades in China, but even the human rights organisation Amnesty International expressed its concern.

These protests and expressions of concern played at least some role in the recent release of Zheng Chaolin and the other comrades. We are grateful to these people for their past help, and hope that they will continue to give us support in our future struggles.



Latin American Solidarity

By Dave Kellaway

THE VISIT of an Argentine torture ship to London last week was met with protests organised by the British Argentina Campaign and the Committee for Human Rights in Argentina.

A dozen people managed to board the ship, the Libertad (Liberty!), and half-raise a banner calling for the release of the 8,000 political prisoners in Argentina. They were quickly bundled away by Special Branch plainclothes cops.

The BAC also got a good response when it leafleted the West India Dock (see photo) about the repression of trade unionists in Argentina. And a reception for the ship's company at the Argentine embassy was met by a 100-strong picket, including women bearing white scarves in solidarity with the women who go each week to President Videla's palace in Buenos Aires to demand information about their disappeared relatives.

As the Tories threaten to restore full military, political and trade links with Chile, Argentina, and other repressive Latin American regimes, the need to develop such solidarity action is increasingly important. Immediately vital is a big turn-out for the 16 September Chile solidarity demonstration — march behind the banner demanding 'Freedom for all Latin American political prisoners'.

KEITH SINCLAIR adds from Hull: The Chilean junta was put in a sticky situation last week when Hull dockers boycotted 180 tons of cargo bound for Chile — including a container-load of bubble gum. The ship Alange was forced to sail without the consignment — marked 'via Valparaiso' (Chile's main port) — when the dockers walked off after loading the rest of the cargo.

'I did not know there was a ban on cargo for Chile', said D. Webster of the Consortium Line on hearing of the dockers' action. It's up to trade unionists throughout Britain to make sure the bosses know in future!

By John Hunt

IT HAS GONE almost unnoticed that Andrew Young's resignation as US ambassador to the UN came just after a major tribute to his diplomacy — the Tories' adoption of proposals on Zimbabwe which are almost identical to those previously worked out by 'radical' Andy and Labour Foreign Secretary David Owen.

Thatcher's conversion from her original approach of proceeding towards recognition of the Muzorewa government is not an insoluble mystery. Both the Foreign Office and Commonwealth leaders pointed out that such a policy would mean backing a no-win war against the Patriotic Front, entailing a possible military commitment and the eventual prospect of political defeat. It just wasn't on. Hence her amazing turnabout at Lusaka.

The six-point plan agreed at the Commonwealth conference — including an all-party conference in London, new elections, and a new constitution — has the same objective as the Owen-Young plan: to split the Patriotic Front and draw a section of it into a settlement. In this way Britain hopes to prepare for the establishment of a neo-colonial government in Zimbabwe and the crushing of those in the Patriotic Front who wish to continue the struggle against imperialism.

Let's make some comparisons. Both plans propose free elections under external supervision. That-

Picket planned for London Conference

Hands off Zimbabwe

cher's version specifies Commonwealth or UN supervision. The way is therefore opened for a military force to be sent into Zimbabwe; for UN or British troops to be used against sections of the nationalist movement who reject this externally imposed settlement.

Like the Owen-Young plan, the Lusaka deal proposes to reserve a minority of seats in the new parliament for whites. Young's suggestion was 20 per cent of the seats (for 4 per cent of the population), and Thatcher is unlikely to be less generous in buttressing the power of the most reactionary section of the

population in the new state. Just to make sure, the British constitutional proposals also provide for a two-chamber parliament with an indirectly elected senate to act as a block on any radical change.

Both plans propose to protect the independence of the judiciary. Loosely translated, this means that Smith's judges — who have so industriously imprisoned and hanged the freedom fighters — will remain in office.

Another aspect of Thatcher's constitutional proposals — again envisaged by Owen and Young — is the setting up of an 'independent'

Public Service Commission. Effectively this means that the existing civil service structures would stay intact, with a few blacks brought into senior positions for cosmetic purposes.

Owen and Young proposed the setting up of a 'Zimbabwe Development Fund' to revive the economy — in other words, to bribe white experts to stay on, or to compensate them for their losses. Thatcher's plan proposes a £600m 'Commonwealth Resettlement Fund'.

In fact Thatcher has out-Younged Young through her success in winning the collaboration of the neo-colonial

'front line states'. Nyerere, Kaunda and other champions of the 'struggle against racism' agreed at Lusaka that the British government was responsible for a settlement, that the new constitution should include safeguards for minorities (i.e. the whites), that the British government could supervise the elections (i.e. intervene militarily if it wants to), and that the ending of sanctions was a major objective (i.e. they will keep quiet if Britain removes or weakens sanctions).

At the London conference on 10 September the Tories will have the collaboration of the front line states in attempting to dictate such a sell-out to the Zimbabwean people. This must be rejected. We defend as a principle the right of the Zimbabwean people to decide their own future. And we support any struggles that they undertake against racism and imperialism.

At a meeting of the Zimbabwe Emergency Campaign Committee in London last week, official representatives of both ZANU and ZAPU spoke strongly in favour of a picket of the London conference to express solidarity with the struggle against Muzorewa and oppose any attempts to send British or UN troops or advisers to Zimbabwe. This was agreed and details will be announced next week.

So let's greet Thatcher's conference with a massive picket that says 'Hands off Zimbabwe'. We'd do it for you too, Andy, if you were still around.

For world campaign to defend Nicaragua

BELOW we print the bulk of a statement issued on 15 August by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International on the basis of reports from its observers in Nicaragua.

ON 1 January 1959, the Batista dictatorship was swept away by the military offensive of the Rebel Army and the mobilisation of the Cuban masses led by the July 26 Movement. On 19 July 1979, the bloody Somoza regime in Nicaragua, installed and maintained by American imperialism for more than forty years, was overthrown by a massive nationwide popular insurrection that capped a co-ordinated offensive by the rebel armed forces of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

The popular insurrection led not only to the overthrow of the dictatorship but to the dismantlement of the old regime. The mobilisation of the masses in popular committees, as well as the revolutionary measures already taken in the short time since the overthrow of the hated regime, indicate the proletarian and plebeian dynamic of the process now unfolding.

The toilers of the entire world could not have hoped for a more magnificent celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Cuban revolution! The road has been opened that can lead to the victory of the second socialist revolution of the Americas.

But imperialism will be doing everything possible to try to prevent the toiling masses of Nicaragua from moving forward on this road. With the same cold-blooded brutality with which they propped up Somoza to the bitter end, the imperialists are now bringing into play diplomatic, economic, and military resources to try to stop the revolutionary upsurge. There is no more urgent task for the world workers movement than to mobilise in opposition to them.

Nicaragua has been devastated by the civil war. In his ruthless attempt to maintain power, Somoza ordered the bombing of neighbourhoods and factories. He plundered the monetary resources of the country.

More than 1 million people are in need of food. More than 300 tons of food are required per day. Tens of thousands of refugees are seeking to return to the country, and will have to be cared for. Agriculture has been totally disrupted by the months of civil war. Industrial investments were blocked. Hundreds of factories stopped production.

To defend the revolution and solve this crisis is an enormous task.



Masaya, 2 August 1979: Sandinista singing group — Pancazán — performs at a rally honouring those who were killed in the struggle against Somoza.

Imperialism's goal is to try to restore the weight and decision-making capacity of the bourgeois elements in the 'Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction' and other points of support for the bourgeoisie. It is trying to utilise the European social-democrats and some of the bourgeois democrats of Latin America as intermediaries for this policy. It seeks to pressure the FSLN leadership to renounce the economic inroads on capitalist property necessary to satisfy the elementary needs of the masses, and to stop the arming and mobilisation of the masses, in return for economic aid.

But imperialism depends above all on its own military striking force and those that it closely controls. It demonstrated this by organising the retreat of well-armed units of Somoza's National Guard into Honduras and El Salvador. It is currently preparing for a possible military intervention along the lines of Guatemala in 1954, the Bay of Pigs in Cuba in 1961, or Santo Domingo in 1965.

Following the Cuban road outlined by the Second Declaration of Havana, the road of permanent revolution, is the way for the Nicaraguan toilers to consolidate their victory.

In order to resist the pressures of Washington, to assert its complete independence of the imperialists, to press forward the agrarian reform, to expropriate all imperialist property and the big holdings of the national bourgeoisie, to assure control by the workers over industry and over domestic and foreign trade — to do these things the Cuban revolution had to break with the bourgeoisie, put an end to the coalition government installed in 1959, and set out on the course charted by the new workers and peasants government based on the armed and mobilised masses and organised by the July 26 Movement. In this way the Cubans were able to carry the revolution through to the end — the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of a workers state.

The road to socialist revolution in

Nicaragua is mined with obstacles. Imperialist pressures and attacks will oblige the FSLN leadership to manoeuvre. The difficulties created by the lack of food and goods of all kinds will compel this leadership to try to gain time.

But these obstacles can be overcome, as the example of Cuba has shown, if the tremendous power and energy of the masses is organised. The example of the Cuban revolution showed the close relationship between the upsurge and mobilisation of the exploited and oppressed classes, the development of their consciousness according to the rhythms imposed by the revolution, and the evolution of consciousness of the leadership of the mass movement itself. This will also be the factor that determines the future of the Nicaraguan revolution.

The Fourth International calls on the mass parties and organisations of the workers movement to build the broadest possible international movement — united and non-exclusionary — in support of the struggle of the Nicaraguan people and

the fighters of the FSLN, whose courage has become a most precious heritage of the world proletariat.

**Immediate aid to Nicaragua!
Imperialist hands off!
No threats against Cuba!
Solidarity with the Nicaraguan Revolution!**

THE latest issue of the weekly Intercontinental Press/Inprecor [Vol. 17, no. 30] contains a contribution on 'The Revolutionary Character of the Castro Leadership' by David Frankel and Larry Seigle as part of the debate on Cuba which the journal is carrying. Other features in this issue include a letter from the imprisoned Iranian Trotskyists and coverage of the struggle by women workers in Italy and Spain.

Individual copies cost 30p plus p&p, but subscriptions work out cheaper at £11 for a year (48 issues), £6 for six months (24 issues), or £3 for 10 weeks. Cheques/POs should be made out to 'Intercontinental Press' and sent to: IP/I; PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

Loyalist terror threat

The UDA— by British approval

By Geoff Bell

LAST WEEK the Ulster Defence Association announced a 'shift of emphasis towards a more paramilitary role', a euphemism widely interpreted as meaning that the Loyalist grouping intends to start a new terror campaign. Such threats need to be taken seriously, especially because the UDA has operated throughout its history with the connivance of the British authorities in the North of Ireland.

If that sounds like an exaggeration, consider the following:

*In the last six years the UDA has claimed responsibility for countless sectarian assassinations.

*Its military operations include bombs in Dublin and Monaghan in May 1974 which killed 31 people.

*It was described in November 1977 by a Belfast judge as 'an organisation repeatedly involved in criminal acts'.

*But Andy Tyrrie, the UDA's 'supreme commander', has never in his six years of office been arrested, let alone charged, by the British Army or the RUC.

Instead Tyrrie, a former shop steward who volunteered for redundancy money, has at times been courted by the British administration. In 1974 he was asked, though he declined, to join a government-sponsored committee for the welfare of released detainees.

The British Army has displayed a similar friendly attitude to the UDA. Its policy was spelt out in October 1972 by Brigadier Denis Ormerod, then head of the Ulster Defence Regiment. Said Ormerod: 'If a member of the regiment (UDR) belonged to the UDA no action would be taken.'

But what has being a member of the UDA meant? The organisation

was built out of various local Loyalist vigilante groups which sprang up in 1969 in Protestant working class areas of Belfast. By 1972 the UDA had become the largest of the Loyalist 'paramilitaries', openly parading in Belfast's streets wearing combat jackets and masks.

Such displays did not concern the British government too much. In June 1972 Willie Whitelaw, then the Tory minister responsible for the North of Ireland, held a full scale meeting with the UDA's 'ruling council'. It was around this time that the sectarian assassinations of Catholics began in earnest.



This campaign was called off in a joint communiqué issued by the UDA and the Ulster Freedom Fighters in October 1977. At the time the UFF was an illegal organisation, but in fact it was simply the UDA under another name. The UDA/UFF statement said that the organisations 'had abandoned the practice of carrying out sectarian assassinations'. The reason given was 'the successes of the security forces' — in other words, the



British Army was doing the UDA's job for it.

The violence perpetrated by the UDA from 1972-77 was not just directed against Catholics. A particularly horrifying episode was the murder and torture of Ann Ogilvy in 1974. She was 'punished' by other women in the UDA for having an affair with a married Loyalist paramilitary.

Violence has also been a feature of the power struggles within the UDA itself. Andy Tyrrie's rise to the top was assisted by the murder in 1973 of Tommy Heron, another leader of the UDA with whom Tyrrie was in constant conflict, and the attempted murder and subsequent flight in 1975 of Charles Harding-Smith, whom Tyrrie replaced as the UDA's 'brigadier'.

The whole record and history of the UDA was summed up this way in 1975. 'They have murdered Protestants as well as Roman Catholics in

the most sadistic and inhuman ways and have sought to intimidate people who carry out their business in a proper manner.'

The speaker was none other than Ian Paisley. Although he has since patched up his differences with the UDA, that Paisley could make such a criticism of the organisation shows just how violent the UDA is.

Since 1977 the UDA has concentrated on promoting its 'political solution' of an independent Ulster. But this has attracted little support from any significant section of the population in the North of Ireland, and the recent successes of the IRA and the failures of the British Army have apparently decided the UDA to go on the military offensive once more.

Just what that offensive will amount to is difficult to tell. In the last couple of months a number of Republicans have been assassinated or narrowly survived assassination

attempts, and the UDA is saying that this time it will concentrate on known Republicans rather than indiscriminately killing any Catholics available.

In many instances knowledge of chosen Republican targets will come from the files of the British security forces. In 1977 the UDA threatened to publish a list of 207 Republicans which it said had been handed over by the British Army. Although the list was never published, a report in the *Irish Times* confirmed that the list was from British military intelligence. The newspaper commented that 'the most useful source of information to Loyalist groups is the regular Army'.

Fortunately British Army intelligence is so out of date that it is unlikely to give the UDA much assistance. But the fact remains that the UDA's ability to hit at the Catholic population would be much diminished were it not for the assistance and, but its legality, the protection it receives from the British administration.

21-23 September 1979

MARXIST SYMPOSIUM

DAY ONE

10.30-1.30pm
CURRENT ISSUES OF MARXISM
Perry Anderson

2.30-5.00pm
Workshops
The Debate on English History, Alternative Economic Strategy, Bahro's Marxism
Speakers include: Perry Anderson, John Ross, Alan Freeman, Gunther Minnerup

7.30-10.00pm
RALLY
100th ANNIVERSARY OF TROTSKY'S BIRTH
Speakers include: Pierre Frank, Tariq Ali, the Voice of Leon Trotsky

DAY TWO

10.00-1.00pm
IS LENINISM OBSOLETE?
Dodie Weppier and two of the authors of Beyond the Fragments

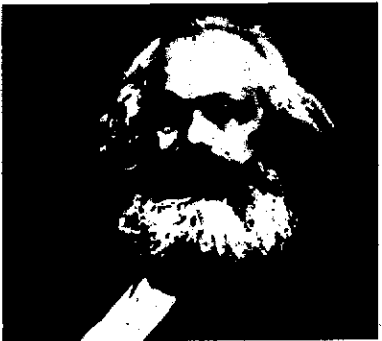
Workshops
Class Analysis and Political Strategy, Kautsky and Eurocommunism, The Communist International
Speakers include: Robin Blackburn, Pierre Frank

2.00-5.00pm
CULTURE AND POLITICS
Francis Mulhern
THE TRADE UNIONS TODAY
Richard Hyman, Steve Jefferys SWP, IMG speaker
Workshops include youth and revolution

Make Cheques and Postal Orders out to 'Socialist Challenge'.
Fill in the form below:

Name.....

Address.....



DAY THREE

10.00-1.00pm
TWO TRADITIONS OF MARXISM IN BRITAIN
John Ross

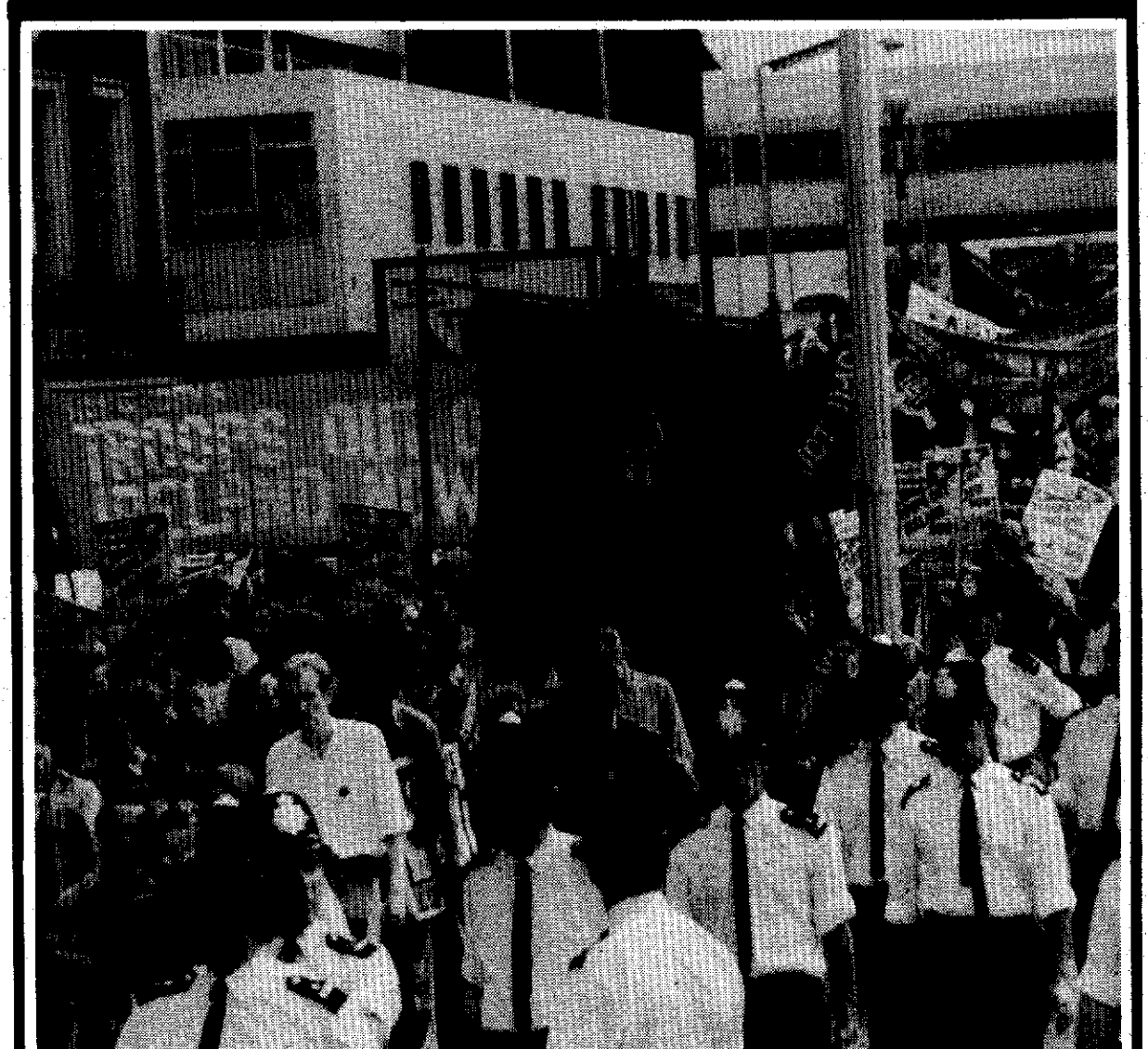
Workshops
Workers Plans and Workers Control, Women in Eastern Europe.
Speakers include: Hilary Wainwright, Dave Bailey

2.00-5.00pm
THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT IN EUROPE
Chris Harman [SWP], Tariq Ali [IMG]

Creche facilities
Refreshments available

£1 a session.
£5.50 six sessions excluding the rally
£1 for rally.
£5 for all the sessions except the rally (£6 including the rally) if paid before 1 September.

VENUE: Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London



JUST two days after the successful 12 August demonstration in London the Daily Mirror repeated its call for the withdrawal of Britain from Ireland. It would be too much to assume that the former led to the latter, but what was interesting about the Mirror's coverage was

the space it gave to its call, front page and centre-spread, and that the editorial statement was the paper's most radical so far. The Mirror ended its editorial by attacking the 'cowardice' of the British politicians of 1920 who agreed to the partition of Ireland.

Theory may have its limits, but . . . We still need Marx

BEYOND the Fragments is likely to be received by most of the organised left with a sigh of irritation and treated with disdain if not outright hostility. It would be a great mistake to react in that way.

The three essays in this collection raise questions and criticisms which we can no longer afford to ignore. Even if the answers suggested here are inadequate or inappropriate, it will no longer do — as it once might have — to treat them as closed questions, settled long ago in the formative years of the Third International.

We seem no nearer our goal of socialist revolution than we were a decade ago. Are the structures which the organised left has offered in part to blame? Are they based upon a manipulative politics which is doomed to fail?

What Hilary, Lynne and Sheila share is a conviction that the experience of the women's movement in particular over the last ten years can point to new ways of organising and, more broadly, to new ways of *being* a socialist. I shall concentrate here on Sheila's contribution, which tries to focus the lessons of this experience in a sharp critique of the practice of the left, though I shall return to the other two later.

For Sheila the traditional Leninist (and Trotskyist) approach is bound to fail. It must be challenged in a whole number of ways — in terms of how it conceives theory; how it assumes that consciousness changes; how the party is seen to relate to other movements; how the scope of politics is defined; how individual socialists relate to themselves and to other people.

Underlying all these points is, Sheila believes, a manipulative politics, springing from the supposedly superior knowledge that leaders of revolutionary groups presume to possess.

Theory

Drawing on the Lenin of *What is to be Done?* Sheila sees theory for Leninism as a knowledge of truths brought from the outside, discoverable by a purely cerebral activity — 'thought comes from thought in Leninism' (p. 63). It makes theory *above* experience rather than an integral part of it. It ought to be, as Sheila puts it, a little elliptically perhaps, the attempt 'to sum up the relationship of what we have travelled to the whole journey' (p. 27).

There are clear weaknesses with this approach both philosophically and politically. All forms of knowledge can't be reducible to direct experience. How for instance could you explain the making of Marx's *Capital* in this way? And could you argue that Marx's economic theory is irrelevant to grounding revolutionary political activity in anything other than a purely subjective preference for one kind of world rather than another?

But the view that theory has to connect to experience has a real strength when we turn to Sheila's second theme about consciousness and how it changes. Here her critique hinges on the criteria used to distinguish between 'advanced' and 'backward' consciousness. Those elements with advanced consciousness tend, inevitably, to be those who find their way into the party. But it is only the party's prior 'theory' which identifies them as advanced. Thus a self-justifying circularity is introduced, one which blinds us to the real ambiguities of consciousness in daily life.

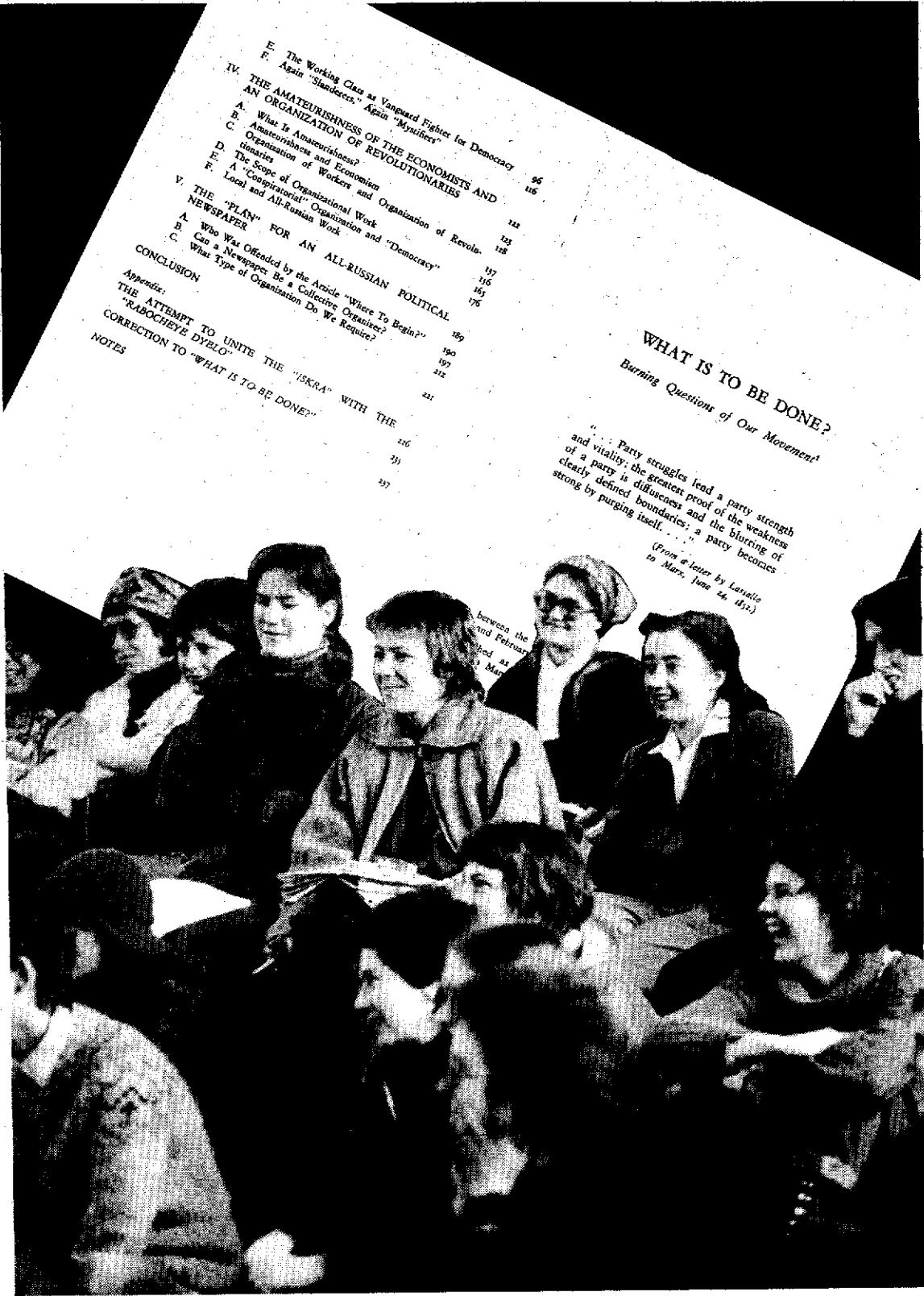
Vanguard

The contrast is posed acutely. 'The feminist approach to consciousness perceives its growth as many faceted and contradictory. The model of the vanguard doesn't fit into this way of thinking. It's not even like trying to put a square peg into a round hole. It's like dropping it into a well.' (p. 59) Exaggerated, certainly, since just a little earlier Sheila stresses the danger in the women's movement of *not* having 'any historical and social estimation of different kinds of consciousness' (p. 56). But at the same time it is of tremendous value in stressing how uneven consciousness can be, how individuals can be advanced and backward *at the same time*, how consciousness spills over boundaries.

In describing this, Sheila draws on the experience of women's groups, and an insight, grasped abstractly perhaps by many on the left, comes across with tremendous force and vitality. The left has too easy a hierarchy of

'*BEYOND the Fragments*', a pamphlet by Hilary Wainwright, Sheila Rowbotham and Lynne Segal, raises a number of points of controversy on the left. We have invited a number of contributors to give their views on the questions raised by the essays.

This is the second one to be published by Socialist Challenge, and is by RICHARD KUPER, a member of the International Socialists Alliance.



arenas of struggle (factory struggles, near the top; struggles over schooling or community issues, way down). The way in which consciousness emerges out of an understanding of the intertwined nature of power relations in various spheres of social life is something the left is often blind to. The left prefers to seek the key link and pull in the hope that the rest of the chain will follow. Maybe, Sheila is suggesting, it isn't a chain at all...

Sheila's third theme is about how the party relates to other movements. She believes her argument dislodges 'the superior relationship of the party to the movements of the working class and other radical autonomous movements' (p. 64). It is hard to see how she establishes this point. Even if autonomous movements have taught us to contest the 'lived relation of subordination' wherever it is to be found and 'requires that changes in feeling and desire become part of the movement of

resistance' this does not imply what Sheila suggests.

Somehow the various understandings of exploitation, oppression, domination and so on gained in the autonomous movements have to be synthesised and generalised. Obviously this can happen to some extent within these particular arenas (and in this sense class political consciousness does *not* have to be brought from the outside). The analysis of how consciousness spills over boundaries establishes this point, which regrettably still needs arguing (there are still Neanderthal men who would confine the autonomous movements to the social realm and make politics the preserve of the party).

But is no synthesis needed? Can any autonomous movement (or indeed a number of them), depending on circumstances, provide the vantage point from which all the relations of power and domination in society can be

grasped? Having a party is no guarantee this will happen. But unless Sheila denies the need for such a synthesis she must face up to the concrete problem of how and where it can happen. The need for a party *in this sense* is destroyed by her argument.

Labels

Her fourth theme is the need to extend the concept of the political. She highlights the dangers of using labels like centrist, ultra-left, reformist as a substitute for thinking. She discusses cogently the problems of actually responding to the challenge of the women's movement. The formal grafting of women's caucuses onto a Leninist party need in reality change little if the content of what people do remains unaltered. What is involved is indeed not a conflict 'over political line, but over what politics is about' (p. 41).

This leads straight into her concern with the need for 'a politics which enables people experience different relationships' (p. 7). Sheila attempts to recapture the concern of the pre-Leninist movement in Britain with 'brotherhood', 'solidarity', 'fellowship'. What is clearly limited, bound up as much of it was with assertions of masculinity and craft pride, stressed the importance of values and culture in ways which the women's movement has recently discovered for itself.

All these arguments and insights are of great importance to all of us on the left questioning in fundamental ways what it is to be a socialist. But there are also crucial absences in Sheila's work. Themes like the seizure of state power, the smashing of the state, and the dictatorship of the proletariat are vital in understanding how the Leninist concept of the party arose. They cannot be wished away and any critique which ignores them is obviously flawed.

In Sheila's concern — with the means and modes of relating — the ends can get lost from sight. Many of the values which she wishes (rightly) to foster are compatible with reformist practice. How they can be integrated into a total revolutionary practice has still to be explored.

Both Hilary's introduction and Lynne's discussion of 'A Local Experience' contribute to the beginnings of such an exploration. Our own experiences with local socialist centres in Newcastle and Islington, they are able to raise alternative ways of organising as a more practical choice.

Learning

They are neither of them blind to the problems and limitations of what has been achieved. But at the same time they restore proper respect for learning from forms of organisation and struggle which have evolved over the last ten years.

For Hilary, coming out of many years in the IMG, the project is the creation of a wide network of links out of the existing struggles to make a political rather than a single issue movement. Her conclusion is that *at this stage* the local impetus will be crucial.

Lynne, having come up against the limitations of dealing with just personal relations and personal oppression, describes her move first to general political work at a local level with the *Islington Gutter Press* and then the Islington Socialist Centre. And out of this has come her recognition of the need for a national organisation — but for an organisation which can work out a supportive practice in relation to autonomous groups and activities. She has joined Big Flame and kept an open mind.

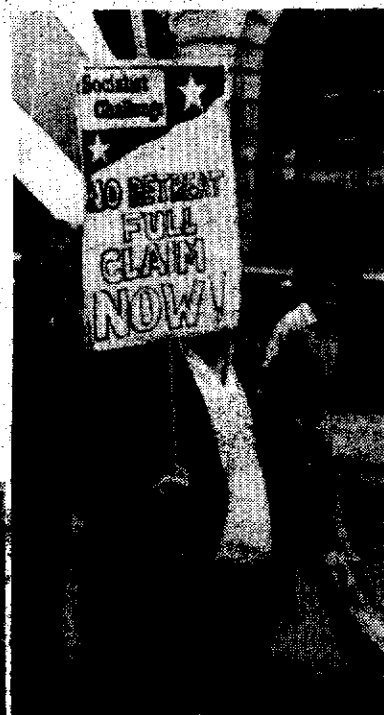
Beyond the Fragments, then, is an attempt to point the way out of the morass in which sections of the left find themselves, if for different reasons. It is an indictment of an approach which fails to connect to the needs and desires of real individuals, exploited and oppressed in a myriad of different ways and trying to find their own defences against the batterings they are subjected to in capitalist society. Disagreement with its answers is excusable for not facing up four square to criticisms and questioning.

Beyond the Fragments, Feminism and the Making of Socialism by Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright.

Socialist Challenge

ENGINEERS

ALL OUT ACTION NOW!



All photos: D J SWINGLER

By Pat Hickey,
Deputy senior steward, Rover SD1

THE INDUSTRIAL action being carried out by members of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions in pursuit of the national claim has met a breadth of support from the rank and file which has surprised even the bureaucrats who called it.

It's ironic that the Bible-thumping right wing which annihilated the Broad Left leadership elections should now be doing what Scanlon failed to do — calling national action in support of the annual claim, instead of passing the buck to shop stewards at the local level.

No doubt the motive of Duffy and Boyd is to consolidate their position in the AUEW, the dominant union in the Confed, to further advance their High Court approach to democracy. The immediate question for us is how do we win against the Engineering Employers' Federation?

There are two problems to gaining the united support of all engineering workers at present.

The claim itself — details on page 7 — is inadequate. It will make little difference to conditions in the industry. The two-tier structure of wage negotiations, with a national

settlement setting minimum conditions and local negotiations providing the real pay packet, makes the Confed's demands marginal.

Secondly, the policy of one- or two-day strikes coupled with an overtime ban has an extremely uneven effect. Some manage to work 32 hours, others get a lot less. With dispensations in process plants, such as paint shops in the car industry, some get more.

This presents the danger of a backlash from the membership, which can best be confronted by two demands: for the reinstatement of the full claim, and all-out national action now.

The full claim, which includes the 35-hour week, lay-off provision, 18 weeks' maternity leave, and extra holidays, would make a significant difference to engineering workers.

Such demands cannot be won by limited actions, which have so far been three one-day stoppages, with two-day strikes to come next month. It means an all-out national strike now, with pickets of plants which continue to work, and of docks and warehouses to prevent the movement of engineering products.

Mass meetings will be needed to win the support of the membership, with regional and local conferences of shop stewards and delegates to spread the fight. The membership has to be

involved in the pickets, meetings and demos to maintain their support. Such action would very much strengthen the left in the AUEW

A victory by the engineering workers would be a major blow to the government and set the pace for the winter wage round. It would considerably upset the employers, who are aiming for speed-ups and redundancies.

*Two thousand marched in Birmingham during the one-day

engineering strike on Monday. A resolution passed at a mass meeting congratulated the Confed for its stand, and called on it to keep up the pressure.

The chair refused to accept a motion from Pat Hickey calling for all-out strike action, although those who spoke in favour of this position were loudly applauded.

*A mass meeting of engineering workers in Hull on Monday voted 228 to 220 against a call for all-out action.

SUBSCRIBE NOW

Domestic: 6 months, £5; 12 months, £10
Abroad: Airmail, £16.50. Surface, £10 per annum.
Multi-reader institutions: double individual rate

Name

Address

I enclose a donation for the Fighting Fund of

Cheques, POs and Money Orders should be made payable to 'Socialist Challenge'.
Complete and return to: Socialist Challenge, 328 Upper Street, London N1

Penny for our thoughts

HACKNEY Socialist Challenge supporters staggered into our office this week carrying heavy bags full of small change. £11.55, in fact, in 1p, ½p, and 2p pieces, patiently collected in a jar over the past months.

Rather than being weighed down by this relatively useless small coinage, which is capable of buying next to nothing in these inflation-ridden days, why not save the pennies for the fund drive?

Other supporters have done us proud, too. Oxford raised money for the paper via a picnic, second hand booksale and a bar billiards tournament, making £80 in all.

And some Camden IMG members donated one day's income each. How many other supporters groups have discussed doing similarly? Or how about a Bank Holiday fund-raising picnic?

Whatever else you may be doing over the holiday weekend, spare a thought for Socialist Challenge and help us to the £20,000 target by the end of September.

Our thanks this week to:

Brent IMG	£15
Bath IMG	40
Leeds IMG	18
Swindon IMG	12
Anon	20
Hackney pennies collection	11.55
Camden IMG	83
Brighton SC sponsored walk	8
E. Mahood	10
Oxford IMG	80

This week's TOTAL £397.55

OVERALL TOTAL £13,477.55