

# Socialist Challenge

## Has orange terror come to Britain?

A WELL-financed witch-hunt has been launched against five Oxford left wingers.

But this is no normal witch-hunt; it is an incitement to the type of violence associated with extreme Loyalists in the North of Ireland.

The five victims are Pat Lally, Alan Thornett, Peter McKintyre, Tony Richardson, and Dave Simpson. Their photographs and names appear in posters being widely circulated in Oxford.

The posters publicise the participation of the five in demonstration in Oxford on 20 October in support of political status for Irish Republican prisoners and the immediate withdrawal of British troops from the North of Ireland.

The poster is designed in such a way as to suggest the five are members of the IRA.

The poster's headline reads 'Do you know these people?' It goes on: 'On 20 October people marched through the streets of Oxford in support of the IRA (the latter in bold, large letters). Most of us looked on in disgust and amazement and wondered who were these IRA sympathisers.'

Then, in large, bold letters: 'Well we thought we would tell you!'

The names, addresses, telephone numbers, union positions, and workplaces of the five then follow under photographs of each of them.

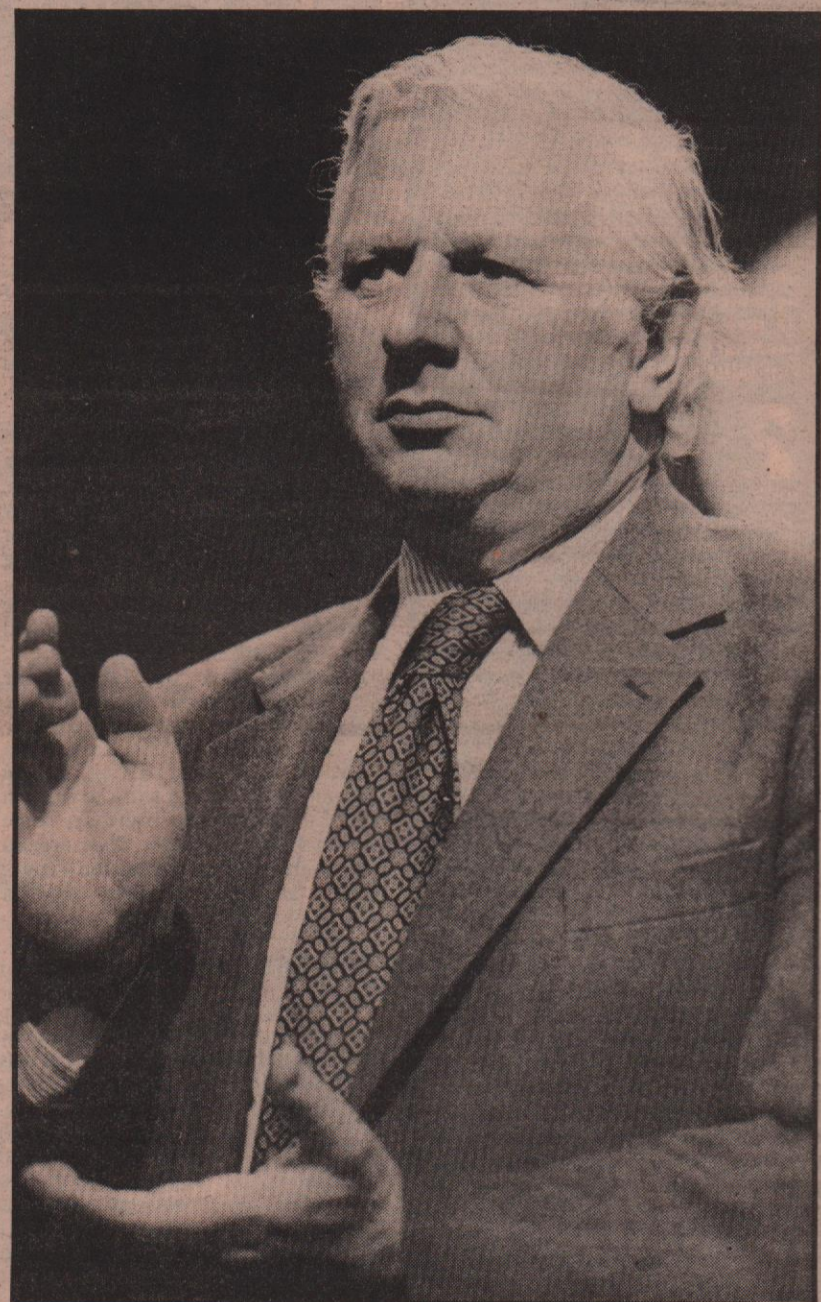
Whoever is behind this poster is spending a lot of money. Thousands were distributed outside the workplace of the five by individuals paid £10 to do the dirty work. The posters were also mailed to every house in the street where the five live.

There are a number of obvious suspects with regard to the leaders of this witch-hunt — fascists, Loyalists, even right-wing management outfits.

That four of the five photographs appear to have been taken from a video film of the demonstration may even suggest that a more 'official', state institution could be orchestrating the campaign.

Whoever is responsible, one fact is clear: the more people and the more times the issue of Ireland is raised in the labour movement the less effective any 'greens under the bed' campaign will be.

# WARNING!



# These men are after our rights

THESE men are supposed to represent the two different sides of British industry — capital and labour. But they have one thing in common.

They agree that the power of the shop stewards movement needs to be curbed. This is what James Prior's proposals on the unions aim to do.

James Prior: Ex-public school boy, ex-army officer, a farmer and director of several companies, he was a close friend of Ted Heath. His

associates in the Tory Party describe him as a 'moderate' because he thinks Heath tried to change things too quickly.

But as Secretary of State for Employment, Prior is firmly committed to attacking shop stewards by stopping effective picketing, encouraging postal ballots in the unions, and cracking down on the closed shop.

Terry Duffy: Born in one of the poorest areas of Wolverhampton, a

boxer in the army, he first became a shop steward 30 years ago in a cycle factory.

But Duffy doesn't seem to remember much about his past. He, too, was an admirer of Ted Heath, whom he described as a 'Very, very honest man'.

The kind of 'moderate' trade union leader that Prior's reforms are out to boost, Duffy — as president of the AUEW — has shown just how the right-wing union leaders defend their

members' interests.

Duffy has openly aided the bosses' attempts to victimise Derek Robinson, convenor at Leyland (see pages 8 and 9) and now a shop steward at Charing Cross Hospital (see page 2).

We need shop stewards and effective picketing if we are to defend our jobs and living standards against the Tories. Prior and Duffy must be stopped.



## 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.

These should be of a character 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 by Socialist Challenge supporters in your area, fill in the form below and send it to us.

I am interested in more information about activities in my area.

I would like additional literature and enclose 50p to cover costs. (Delete if not applicable)

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## EDITORIAL

# Heckling Callaghan is not enough

IT'S been a busy week for the Labour Party, particularly for Jim Callaghan.

Ten days ago we saw Tony Benn denouncing Whitaker's White Paper on immigration and talking about the importance of the international fight against capitalism.

Wednesday of last week saw Dennis Skinner receive a standing ovation for his speech on the anti-cuts demonstration when he told the leaders of the Labour Party to listen to the mood of the rank and file. He urged Labour councils to follow Lambeth's lead and refuse to implement the cuts, and suggested that the movement today should follow the Pentonville dockers' example and force the Tories out of office.

Jim Callaghan, not really at home in demonstrations of this kind, did not receive such a warm welcome. When he refused support to sacked

Leyland convenor Derek Robinson he was heckled loudly despite the attempts of stewards to silence opposition.

Wednesday 23 November also saw another humiliation for Callaghan. The Labour Party National Executive meeting voted down by 15 to 7 his supporters' attempt to increase the representation of right wingers on the commission inquiring into democracy in the party.

A 'series of crushing defeats' indeed, as the Guardian explained. But what happens now? The Tories are giving the Labour lefts plenty of opportunities to bare their teeth and Jim's prestige is declining rapidly — but will the pigeons come home to roost? Will Callaghan be given the boot or not? A number of obstacles have to be confronted here.

The right wing in the Labour Party are not

going to sit by and let the lefts have things all their own way. The disaffiliation of the Falmouth & Cambourne constituency party shows that — as does the sympathetic reaction of many trade union leaders, the Manifesto group, and figures like Denis Healey. Furthermore, the central role of the Parliamentary Labour Party gives an in-built bias to the right-wing.

Finally, the attitude of the Labour lefts is itself a problem. Skinner calls for 'unity' while Benn urges 'closer' co-operation between the commission of enquiry and the PLP. The timidity of the Labour lefts in a real contest means that no reliance should be placed on them.

Only by harnessing the power of the labour movement with the base of the Labour Party can we ensure that Callaghan is forced to go and Healey does not end up in his place.

# Charing Cross — the management was 'callous'

By Valerie Coultas

THATCHER accused the pickets outside Charing Cross hospital of 'callously disregarding humanity' in the House of Commons last week. As nurses, doctors and blanket-draped cancer patients clashed with pickets, she hinted at the use of troops.

The real story of the dispute shows that far from trade unionists placing patients' lives in jeopardy, it was the hospital authorities who deliberately provoked this confrontation in order to smash trade unionism at Charing Cross.

Charing Cross is a new high rise hospital which requires skilled engineers and electricians to run it. They look after the boilers, the heating and electrical systems, and are a vital part of any modern hospital.

But these workers have long suffered from understaffing, and in January they began a work to rule. In July they refused to transport some air-conditioning filters. They argued that their job was fitting the filters, while transporting them was a labourer's job.

## No enquiry

Seven weeks ago, after a further refusal to do this job, management fired two engineers, one of whom was an Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers shop steward.

No enquiry was conducted. No notice was taken of the normal procedures for complaints of this kind. Management was adamant in its refusal to reinstate the two.

But when the case was referred to the AUEW the executive reacted as it did over Derek Robinson and refused to give its support, claiming that this would infringe the Code of Conduct agreed between the government and unions during the lorry drivers' strike last winter.

For seven weeks the 40 men stayed out on unofficial strike, living off



PATIENTS protest — but choose the wrong target

funds donated by fellow workers and keeping a picket going for 24 hours a day.

They were not doing this because they were bloody minded. In fact management was far more stubborn than the workers.

The Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow Area Health Authority is notorious for union bashing. It attacked union organisation at the West London and Hammersmith Hospital and was responsible for physically removing patients from Hounslow Hospital without prior notification.

At Charing Cross it was using the engineers' and electricians' stand on

staffing levels to try to whittle down opposition to cutbacks.

On 26 November the workers decided to escalate their action and stopped an oil lorry going through. Their action at no time threatened the closure of the hospital, because the engineers made sure that there was one full week's supply of oil.

Despite this management closed the casualty department, refused to heat the child development centre, and put a rumour around the hospital that it was to be closed because of the pickets' action. They then threatened to lay off all part-time staff indefinitely.

It was management which was risking patients' lives to force the unions to accept the sackings. It was never necessary to threaten to close the hospital.

Last Friday the unions came to an agreement with management to recommend a return to work if an appeal was allowed for the two men on full pay. They are to continue the work to rule.

What's at stake at Charing Cross is not trade unions disregarding other working people's lives but the right to fight back against staff cuts which threaten proper health care in the NHS.

# Licence to kill or self-defence?

By Valerie Coultas

**JUNE GREIG, jailed for six years for killing her brutal husband, lost her appeal two weeks ago at the Court of Criminal Appeal in Edinburgh.**

There are various expedients open to a woman regularly subjected to rough treatment by her husband, but a licence to kill is not one of them,' said Lord Wheatley, one of the appeal judges.

He went on to express the court's displeasure at the unnecessary spending of public money on this appeal, pointing out that he thought the sentence was rather lenient. He finished by criticising 'pressure group activity' while an appeal was pending.

The pressure group he was referring to was Scottish Women's Aid, which has decided to seek a Royal Pardon for June as part of their

campaign for a 'better deal for Scottish women'.

But perhaps Lord Wheatley has got a point. Can judges 'give women a licence to kill' as the popular press in Scotland emotively suggested?

June Greig had suffered a 'life of hell' for nine years, as her relatives testified at the time of her trial. Her husband continually beat her. He burnt her with cigarettes and even slashed her with a knife. Like many battered women June feared the violent retaliation of her husband if she took any steps to protect herself.

The legal system in general has double standards for men and women. If men brutalise, rape or degrade their wives this is a private affair which the police and courts ignore. If women in an act of desperation dare to retaliate this becomes a matter for public concern

and legal punishment.

June's 'crime' was to attempt to stop her intimidation in the only way she knew how — by self-defence.

The 'various expedients' that Lord Wheatley refers to are particularly lacking in Scotland. Courts regard wives as their husbands' chattels and despite the high incidence of wife assault in Scotland there is no Domestic Violence Act. Katherine Potter, who retaliated in a similar fashion to June was given three years probation by a judge in Newport, Wales. June and Aileen Mitchell from Edinburgh said:

'Misguided faith in the advice of lawyers and the manipulation of courts has led to missed opportunities to consolidate the wide public support that exists for June's case.'

'A motion about domestic violence was discussed at the STUC Women's

Conference. The next step must be a mass demonstration to win a pardon for June.

'Only last week a woman from Dunfermline in Fife, Margaret Crichton, received five years imprisonment on a similar charge.'

We see this campaign as a fight to win freedom from suffering for all battered women, whether at the hands of their husbands or their lover.'

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Socialist challenge xmas party

# 50000 STRONG ANTI-CUTS DEMO



Roy Hattersley addresses the crowd of over 50,000



Shirley Williams is spotted among the demonstrators

## Industrial workers in the lead

By Steve Potter

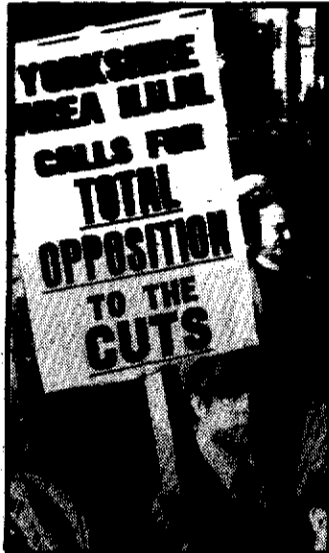
TENS of thousands of workers streamed into Central London on Wednesday of last week to support the national demonstration against the cuts. Right-wing leaders of the Labour Party who addressed marchers were given a rough reception as they tried to put on their anti-Tory clothes.

The demonstration topped 50,000 people as London workers joined in towards the end of the afternoon. Marchers were still waiting to leave Hyde Park way after the speeches started at Westminster at the afternoon's rally.

Anti-Tory feeling ran high on the demonstration. Eric Heffer's call to bring down the Tories as quickly as possible was echoed by every section of the march.

One hospital shop steward remarked on how different this demonstration was from that in 1976 when 70,000 marched against the Labour government's cuts. 'Then it was just the public sector workers who took the cuts really seriously', she said, 'now it's everybody'.

And in truth everybody was there.



The demonstration was led by the miners. Huge contingents came from Yorkshire and South Wales, as well as the other major mining areas. The most popular slogan among them was 'One more cut — Maggie's throat!'

Other sections of industrial workers, including engineers, railway workers, and electricians, followed close behind with their slogan of 'Kick out

the Tories!' reviving memories of the mass demonstrations against the Heath government.

### Firefighters

Of course, public sector workers were there, too, with big contingents especially behind the NUPE banners. Campaigns against hospital closures figured largely among the ranks of the health service workers.

But the most noticeable sections came from the firefighters, showing that they were unbowed after their strike.

Youth were to the fore in the inventiveness of slogans and the vigour with which school and technical college students took up not only Thatcher, but also the right-wing leaders of the Labour Party who had paved the way for the Tories.

### Womens' Aid

The women's movement was represented by scores of Women's Aid groups marching to protest the likely effects of the cuts on women's refuges.

But nearly all the marchers

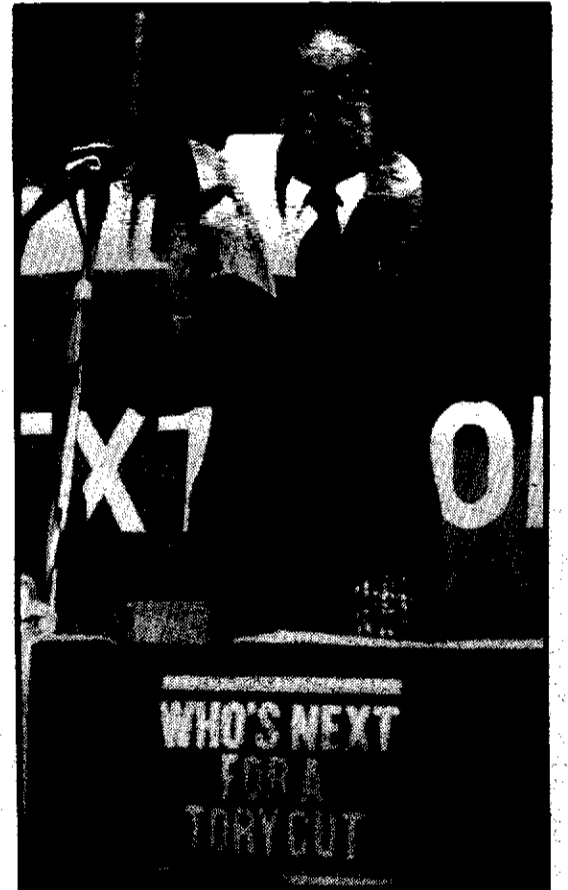
were outraged by the massive presence of the police, who tried to diminish the militant impact of the march by dividing sections from sections. Marchers attending the rally in Central Hall had to run the gauntlet of lines of police in the corridors.

Many militants had last been so close to so many police at the Grunwick picket lines, and the slogan raised by some young Scottish workers — 'Help the police. Beat yourself up' — raised a cheer from the ranks of the demonstration and a snarl from the superintendents.

### Thumbs

Some marchers declared their intention of putting down resolutions to ensure that the next labour movement demonstration would be stewarded by the labour movement and not kept under the thumbs of the Metropolitan Police.

Action was the theme of the demonstration. The trade union leaders who marched will be left under no doubt that unless they name the date for strike action against the cuts, then others will be willing to start without them.



## CALLAGHAN COULD BARELY GET A WORD IN

By Patrick Sikorski

THE two meetings held in Central Hall on Wednesday of last week were as militant as the march had been. The reception given to the Labour leaders who had paved the way for the present Tory onslaught on the public services was implacably hostile. Former Labour ministers Jim Callaghan, Stan Orme, Michael Foot, and Peter Shore, who have suddenly discovered compassion for the elderly and sick, were drowned out in booing and heckling.

There were some surprising faces. Strange, for example, to see Albert Spanswick, general secretary of COHSE, daring to show his face after he and Alan Fisher had been thrown off the platform at the low pay rally last January. This time the union leaders took the precaution of staying out of the main hall and splitting the rank and file into two meetings. Spanswick was inaudible as he was heckled about his role in the low pay dispute.

Dennis Skinner saved the day for the platform. His record of fighting for the reform of the Labour Party gained him a standing ovation before he'd spoken.

'We've got to get rid of the Tories and we're not going to wait five years to do it, either' Skinner declared. 'How do we do it? At the TUC, the Furniture Makers' resolution, which was only narrowly defeated, called for days of action. We don't just need days of action, we need weeks of action as well.'

'Labour councils,' he added, 'must follow Lambeth and refuse to implement the cuts. We need actions like those at Clay Cross, and around the Pentonville docks; like the actions of the miners and the actions against the Industrial Relations Act. We must unite

to get rid of Thatcher and build a socialist Britain.'

The next Labour government, Skinner continued, must implement socialist policies which are drawn up for it in a manifesto not written by the people who had led us up the garden path last time.

He explained the fate of the 1974 Labour Party manifesto in terms of the attacks on the Labour government by the CBI, which launched an investment strike; the IMF, which dictated to the elected government; and by the unelected House of Lords, which wrecked Labour's legislative programme.

Skinner called for maximum unity, adding that Spanswick and Foot [who was in the chair] had something to offer in the fight. 'The leadership,' he said, 'has got to listen to the mood of this demonstration and meeting.'

The problem is that the leaders represented on the platform alongside Skinner gave no sign of listening to the rank and file the last time they got into office, let alone using the sort of demonstration we had just seen to fight against the international bankers and the ruling class when they wrecked the Labour programme [with hardly a murmur from those who were supposed to be implementing it].

What now? 'Do you support Derek Robinson?' Callaghan was repeatedly asked by one militant — to sustained applause from the meeting. Sunny Jim declined to comment. Part of ensuring that there are no repeats of the disasters of the last Labour government must be to get rid of Callaghan and his supporters throughout the movement.



Dennis Skinner won a standing ovation

# STOP US WAR THREAT

PRESIDENT CARTER is threatening war against Iran and the revolution which overthrew the Shah. A fleet of American warships are standing off the Iranian coast and the seizure of Iranian holdings abroad continues apace.

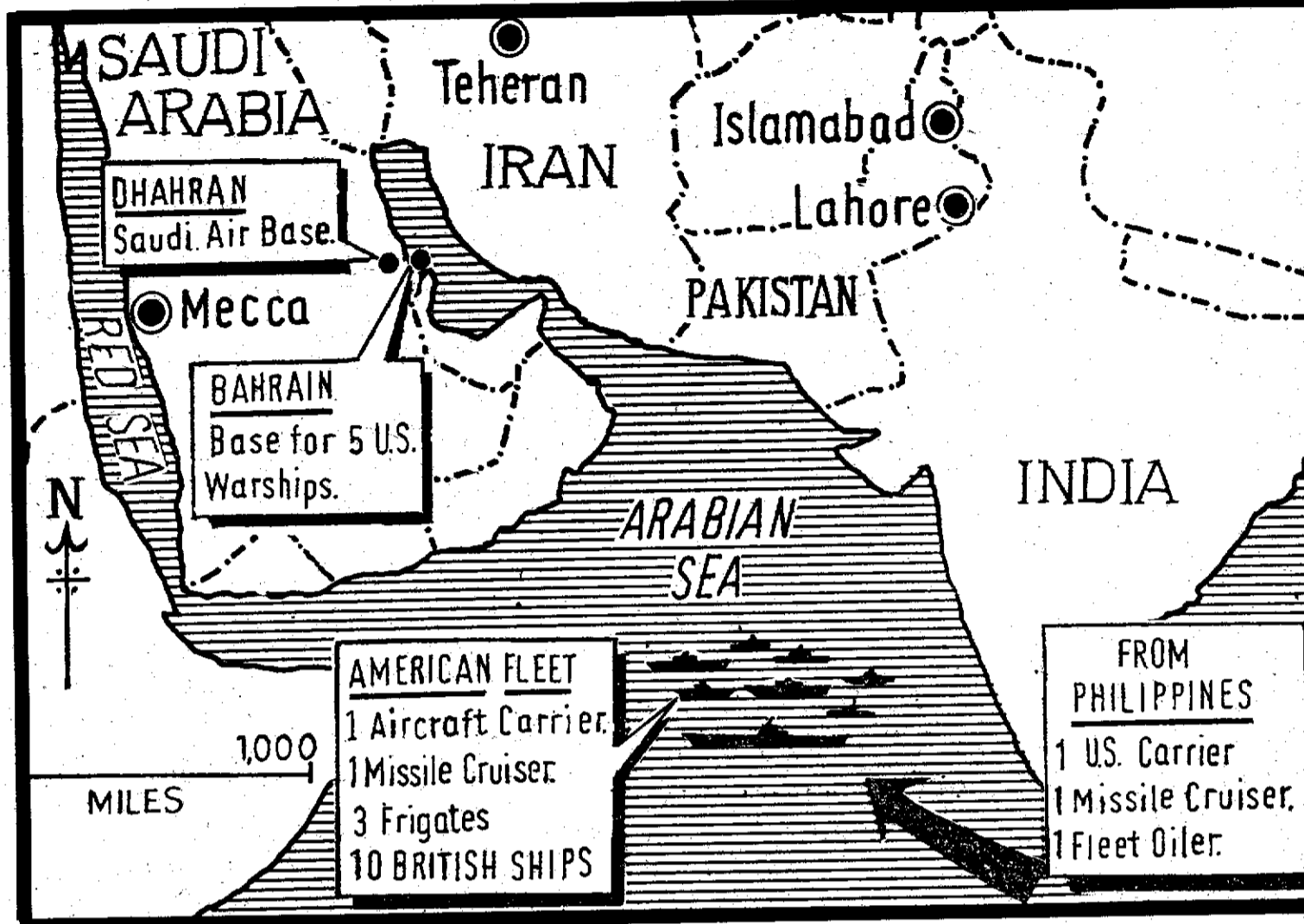
The United Nations' condemnation of the occupation of the US embassy in Tehran — a condemnation to which the Soviet Union also gave its assent — is intended to isolate Iran further in the face of Carter's threats.

But Washington has to move carefully. It underestimated the reaction when it allowed the Shah to enter the US. Mexico now says he won't be allowed back, and the rumour is that he may end up in South Africa — a favoured recipient of Iranian oil before his overthrow.

The ability of the US to act as world policeman in defence of imperialist interests has been seriously eroded by its defeat in Vietnam and a series of subsequent setbacks (Angola, Iran, Nicaragua). The slightest wrong step and the whole Middle East could blow up — particularly as it now seems clear that the mosque seizure in Mecca reflected internal unrest against the Saudi regime sparked off by the events in Iran.

International solidarity with the embassy seizure and the demand for the return of the Shah to Iran is vital to further tie imperialism's hands. To do this it is necessary to counter the media's smears that the overthrow of the Shah heralded a return to 'an age of darkness' in Iran.

Below we look at the different aspects of this conflict, and the continuing history of US interventions since 1945.



## The bloodstained hands of US imperialism

### Why Moscow stays silent

THERE is one big reason why Carter is holding back from military action against Iran. Yet it is hardly mentioned publicly. That reason is the USSR.

Imperialism's hold on the globe has been mortally weakened by the removal of one-third of the world's population from its control. The abolition of capitalist property relations in the USSR and other workers states means that they exert a powerful attraction towards the oppressed masses of the world.

The existence of the workers states acts not merely as a deterrent to the American warmongers; it provides a basis for further shifting the balance of forces against imperialism.

Yet the Kremlin bureaucracy has taken a position of studied neutrality towards recent events in Iran. Worse, its representatives at the United Nations actually voted for the US-sponsored resolution demanding release of the embassy hostages, thereby sanctioning continued US protection of the Shah.

They also refused to support the initial demand of the Iranian government for a special meeting of the UN Security Council to discuss the American imperialists' threat of war against Iran, insisting that the hostages be released before any meeting would be held.

Why has Moscow ducked such a golden opportunity to put the US government in the dock before world public opinion and expose its record of three decades of support to the Iranian Hitler?

The answer lies in its policy of 'peaceful co-existence' with capitalism. Rather than jeopardise the ratification of the SALT treaty with the US, the Kremlin bureaucrats refuse to come to the aid of the Iranian revolution.

In other words, starting from the premise of 'building socialism in one country', they put the interests of their own privileged caste above those of the workers of the world. And there can be no doubt that the latter will increasingly draw their own political conclusions.

By Geoff Bell

US PROPAGANDA about the situation in Iran most resembles one of those Hollywood Westerns.

There they are, the innocent white hostages, surrounded and threatened by a mob of screaming brownskins. The drama unfolds with the question: can the cavalry make it in time? In this case the cavalry are 160 planes waiting on aircraft carriers to bomb Iran into 'civilisation'.

But the US film industry rarely makes movies these days allotting the 'baddie' role to Indians and the 'goodie' role to the white settlers. The emergence of the truth — a war of genocide against the original American settlers — has made the John Wayne syndrome less convincing.

In that sense some comparison can be made between the real story of the American West and that of the US in Iran; the truth being that the United States of America has a record of 'hot wars', 'cold wars', and war by subversion which makes the Iranian people understandably suspicious about what those American 'diplomats' in Tehran were really up to.

### Peace-terms

In August 1950 Francis Matthews, US Secretary of State, put it this way when justifying the US invasion of Korea courtesy of the United Nations: 'We should boldly proclaim our undeniable objective to be world peace. To have peace we should be willing, and declare our intention, to pay any price, even the price of instituting a war, to compel co-operation for peace.'

Or, to put it another way, if any country in the world fails to agree with what America means by 'peace', then it will be invaded or bombed to smithereens until it does.

This principle has not just been verbally stated. The Iranian people

know to their cost that it was US support for the 1953 coup which saddled them with the Shah until the beginning of this year.

### 'Glorious chapter'

The US president at the time, General Eisenhower, was later to boast of this adventure. He said in 1954: 'We have done some damn good things — in the economy especially, and overseas too, in Iran, Guatemala.'

By Guatemala, Eisenhower was referring to the overthrow of a democratically elected government and its replacement by a right-wing dictatorship — thanks to the CIA. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles described Guatemala as 'a new and glorious chapter in the tradition of the American states'.

It was by no means the last chapter. In 1965 the US landed 22,000 marines in the Dominican Republic to defend a right-wing dictatorship which two years before had overthrown an elected left-leaning government.

Four years earlier there was the US-sponsored invasion of Cuba, which ended disastrously for the Americans at the Bay of Pigs. The aim of that particular action was described as follows by one of its leaders: 'We emphatically assure those who have been unjustly dispossessed that all their assets will be returned.'

Those who had been 'unjustly dispossessed' were the US companies which had been kicked out by Castro, and also the Mafia — which had suffered the same fate and worked hand-in-glove with the CIA in plotting to bring Castro down.

### Revelations

Revelations by an ex-CIA agent last year show that Washington's efforts in this direction did not end at the Bay of Pigs. Numerous attempts have been made by the US to assassinate the Cuban leader, including sending him a cigar laced with explosives.

US interference in the affairs of others has not always been so

unsubtle or direct. In 1977 a list was published revealing that political leaders throughout the world had received secret hand-outs for acting in American interests. Among them were King Hussein of Jordan, Willy Brandt of West Germany, President Makarios of Cyprus, Kenyatta of Kenya, Mobutu of Zaire, and Forbes Burnham of Guyana.

Just before the story broke, 'human rights' champion Jimmy Carter called in the editor of the newspaper concerned and demanded it be censored. The editor refused.

### Mercenaries

Perhaps one of the most significant recent exposures of US foreign policy relates to the role played by the CIA in Angola. William Colby, CIA boss from 1973 to 1976, admitted that US military 'advisers' fought on the side of the pro-imperialist FNLA, and that the CIA organised the recruitment, payment, and delivery of European and American mercenaries.

Colby also stated that the Cubans would not have entered Angola if the CIA had not launched its secret operations against the left-wing MPLA forces, because the MPLA could have won without them. That statement just about sums up the hypocrisy of the present utterances coming from the Washington warmongers.

### 'Territory'

The Iranians, like the Cubans in Angola, are simply responding to an American foreign policy which is steeped in mass murder, coups and assassinations.

For a state which has done what the US has done in Vietnam, Cambodia, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic and many other places to turn round now and protest about the occupation of a couple of acres of its 'territory' in Iran is... (expletive deleted).

# TO IRAN

## Iranian masses move to centre stage

THE MEDIA have tried to portray Iran as being in the grip of a fanatical regime more reactionary than even the Shah. The reality is somewhat different.

It is true that last summer Khomeini launched a wave of repression against all those opposing the Islamic Republic. The main targets were the Kurds and other nationalities, socialists, women, and also press freedom. But this onslaught couldn't be carried through.

The reason: Islamic ideology alone doesn't feed people and answer their daily needs. And because of the overwhelmingly popular nature of the revolution that overthrew the Shah, there was no social base independent of the masses that Khomeini could lean on.

The Kurdish people beat back the Islamic Revolutionary Guards (Pasdaran), who had to bear the brunt of the fighting because many of the army ranks were unwilling to be involved in repression of the national struggle.

On 14 November a mass demonstration in the Kurdish city of Saqqez combined support for the embassy occupation with demands for withdrawal of all Pasdaran from Kurdistan and an end to radio and TV censorship of their struggle. Similar solidarity demonstrations have occurred in Mahabad, Bukan, and other Kurdish cities.

On 17 November Khomeini was forced to go on television and acknowledge that the Kurdish people had been wronged, as had other people in Iran, and promise major economic reconstruction.

The council formed in Kurdistan to coordinate negotiations with the delegation from central government includes the previously outlawed Kurdish Democratic Party and the Revolutionary Party of Toilers of Kurdistan.

Another sign of how the regime has been forced to draw back is the fact that almost all the newspapers and magazines which were banned during the summer, including the Trotskyist paper *Kargar*, have now been allowed to reappear legally.

The way in which the struggle for the extradition of the Shah has begun to embrace more thoroughgoing anti-imperialist demands can be seen in the slogans raised by some of the workers' contingents who have come to the US embassy in Tehran to express their solidarity with the occupiers.

Persian Gulf shipbuilding workers, for example, carried a banner with the slogan, 'The permanent struggle against imperialism is the key to the unity of Iranian nationalities'. Car workers from the Khaver plant called for the abolition of all military treaties with the US, while steelworkers demanded the nationalisation of all US-controlled holdings.

A similar development was a sit-in on 18 November by more than 4,000 drilling workers in US companies in Ahwaz to demand the creation of a national drilling company.

On the same day peasants from outside Tehran also came to the embassy for the first time. In addition to calling for extradition of the Shah, they carried banners demanding the

nationalisation of all land belonging to the US imperialists, the Pahlavi dynasty, and those connected with them. One of their slogans was: 'Long live the unity of the workers, peasants, and oppressed of Iran.'

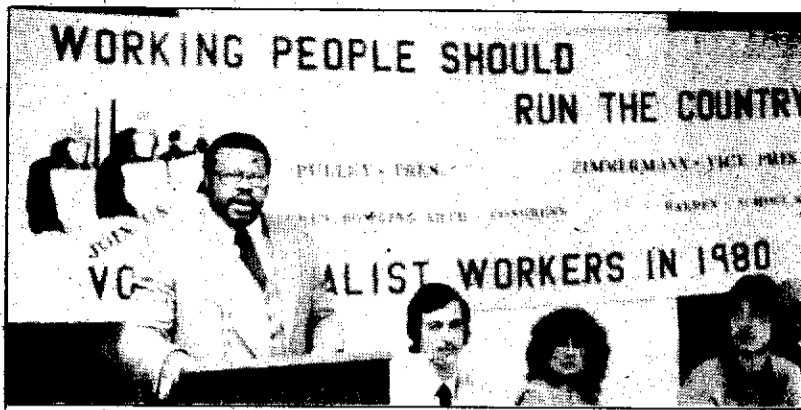
Sooner or later these aspirations will come into open conflict with Khomeini's plans for an Islamic Republic. But the present mobilisations can only assist the class combativity that will be needed in such a test.

### Solidarity picket

A PICKET of the US embassy in Grosvenor Square, London W1, has been called for this Saturday (8 December) at 1pm by the Committee to Defend Democratic Rights in Iran under the slogans 'US hands off Iran! Down with US imperialism!'

Last Saturday over 300 people, mostly Iranian students, marched through Edinburgh. Slogans raised included 'Iran the next Vietnam? — US get out of Iran', 'Support the masses — send the Shah back'.

Members of the International Marxist Group supported the march and were able to speak in the meeting held afterwards. This Saturday (8 December) they are holding their own public meeting to demand 'Hands off Iran' at 2pm at Edinburgh Trades Council, Picardy Place. Speakers will be a local trade unionist and an Iranian Trotskyist from the HKS.



## SOCIALISTS CHALLENGE CARTER'S WARMONGERING

CARTER's warmongering against Iran is being challenged within the heartland of imperialism by the American Trotskyists of the Socialist Workers Party. The SWP candidate for the 1980 presidential elections, former GI Andrew Pulley, had this to say at a campaign meeting in Detroit on 18 November:

'American working people have no interest — no interest whatever — in a war against the Iranian people. Only the oil companies and the rest of the billionaires that run this country — and, of course, their loyal servant the Shah — have an interest in fighting the Iranian masses...'

'You know, it's inscribed on the Statue of Liberty: Send me your downtrodden, your exploited, your oppressed. But the US government does not follow that principle. Just the opposite. That inscription should say: "Send me your murderers. Send me your Shahs. Send me your Somozas. Send me your Thiess and your Kys and your dictators the world over..."'

'The reason they won't extradite the Shah is because they know that if he is convicted of the grave crimes he committed, they also stand convicted before the world and before the American people. That's because the government of this country represents the Rockefellers and other imperialist rulers who benefited from the policies of the Shah. The Shah was their puppet!...

'A war with Iran would only benefit the Rockefellers, the tycoons. The interests of the American working people are the same as the interests of the working people of Iran.'

### Who is being 'kicked around'?

'Just think about some of the things the Iranian people are fighting for. To nationalise the big industries. To win workers control over these industries, to curb inflation, provide jobs for the unemployed, give land to the peasants. Ensure the rights of oppressed national minorities. Aren't these the kind of things we need too?'

'The rulers of this country want us to believe that "we" are being "kicked around" by the Iranian people. Well, I'm not being "kicked around" by the Iranians. Nor by the Cubans, nor the Vietnamese. I own nothing in Iran. I didn't lose any sugar mills in Cuba and I have nothing to lose if the people of Indochina establish their independence and deepen their revolution. And I'm sure the overwhelming majority of the American people are like me.'

'No, it's not us that are being "kicked around" by the Iranians, the Cubans, the Vietnamese, by the black African masses, by the Nicaraguans. It's Rockefeller and the DuPonts. And we should welcome their getting — as they see it — "kicked around" by people who are simply trying to get them off their backs.'

'We should join with the Iranians, the Cubans, the Nicaraguans, the Vietnamese, the black Africans and help them "kick around" some more. The world will be a better place for it.'



IRANIANS jailed in the United States as part of Carter's witch-hunt.

## How to deepen the revolution

KHOMEINI has tried to use the US embassy occupation as a national rallying point to divert attention from his failure to solve many of the most pressing problems facing the Iranian people.

But it is a double-edged sword. Although utilising Islamic slogans, the mass mobilisations are directed against US imperialism; and the regime's failings stem precisely from its refusal to make a thoroughgoing break in practice with imperialism and its native backers.

Iranian Trotskyists have been quick to intervene in the mobilisations to point out that only by extending and deepening the revolution can it be defended against the threats from Carter and the Shah. They have therefore demanded:

\*That the entire population be armed and provided with military training through the councils of workers, peasants and students in order to defend the country. This is particularly necessary because imperialism's main long-term hope lies in rebuilding the shattered remnants of the Shah's professional army [Iranian officers are still being trained in the USA].

\*That all secret documents showing US government complicity with the Shah's crimes be published before the eyes of the American people and the world.

\*That the mechanisms of US domination be decisively broken by nationalising all imperialist-owned industries and banks and placing them under the control of the shoras [workers councils]. The same should apply to the property of native capitalists who have collaborated with imperialism.

\*That all government debts be cancelled without compensation. For a state monopoly of foreign trade.

\*That the right to self-determination of the Kurds and other oppressed nationalities be recognised in order to unify the masses in the fight against US imperialism. All government troops should be withdrawn from Kurdistan.

\*That a planned economy be instituted free of imperialist control and favouring agriculture, health, education and housing.

\*That a government representing the majority forces of society — a workers and peasants government — be set up to resist the imperialist offensive and act in the real interests of the mass of people in Iran.

## FREE IRANIAN TROTSKYISTS!

FOURTEEN members of the Iranian section of the Fourth International, the HKS [Socialist Workers Party], are still imprisoned in Khuzestan province.

They were arrested in May and June for distributing leaflets and at one time were threatened with execution until a worldwide campaign to save their lives forced the Khomeini regime to retreat.

In a recent letter demanding their release, the 14 wrote that they supported the mass mobilisations against US imperialism. But 'authorities in Ahwaz demand that we denounce our ideas and the HKS. Because we refuse to do that, they still keep us in prison.'

The international campaign to win the release of the HKS 14 continues. Protest telegrams should be sent to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Qom, Iran. Copies should be sent to the Tehran daily *Baamdad*, Hafez Avenue, 24 Zartoshtian Alley, Tehran, Iran; to Ettala'at, Khayam Avenue, Tehran, Iran; and Kayhan, Ferdowsi Avenue, Tehran, Iran.

# CUTTING UP ROUGH

## Teachers conference

A SPECIAL conference of the National Union of Teachers is to be held on Saturday to discuss how to respond to the cuts imposed on education by the Tories.

To date, the NUT executive has failed to launch an effective national campaign by teachers, and has refused to work jointly with other unions. It opposed teachers participating in the 28 November demonstration on the pretext that it was 'political'!

Union branches led by the left have put forward a series of amendments to the executive's motion for the special conference. These branches are demanding: joint action with other unions; a one-day national strike; no cover for staff made redundant; no extra work-load; and national implementation of the union's class-size policy — which would highlight the fact that 55,000 teachers are needed now to reduce class sizes to a maximum of thirty.

With a decline in union membership of 4.5 per cent this year it is clear that the NUT could suffer even greater setbacks unless it changes course.

A hopeful sign are the votes achieved by Bernard Regan, of the Socialist Teachers Association, and Dick North, from Rank and File, in the recent election of national officers.

Regan polled 7,079 votes against 26,000 by his right-wing opponent — the highest vote ever achieved in the union by a left candidate. North polled 4,670 votes in an election with five other candidates — the top candidate accumulated just over 12,000 votes.

## Scottish students march

By George Kerevan

OVER 1,500 students marched through Edinburgh on Wednesday of last week to protest against the Tory cuts. The demonstration, which was called by Scottish area NUS, drew support from universities and colleges all over Scotland. The Scottish TUC also sponsored the march, and a number of NUPE banners joined the students.

Militancy in the Scottish colleges has been at a low ebb in the past three years, and this was the first sign of a revival. At some points the entire march was chanting in unison: 'No cuts, Tories out!'

\*Tory councillors in Lothian have taken legal action to stop the Labour-controlled Lothian regional council from paying the wages of council employees who attended the 28 November anti-cuts demonstration in London.

Lothian is one of the few councils to have declared that it will not implement the Tory cuts, and agreed to pay the wages of any trade union delegate to the London march. The Tory councillors have taken out an interim edict (equivalent to an English injunction) to stop these payments.

## Sit-in at Preston poly

BY a vote of 105 for and only one against, students at Preston Polytechnic decided to occupy the administration building last week against the increase in overseas students fees.

The spur to this action was a visit to the poly by the Education Secretary, Mark Carlisle. When Carlisle arrived on Friday he was greeted by some three

hundred people chanting 'Tories out' and 'The Tories, the Tories, we've got to get rid of the Tories'.

Support for the occupation and opposition to the racist fees increase has come from TGWU members at the Poly, together with the NALGO and NATFHE branches there.

With the support, too, of Preston Trades Council's executive committee, the students now aim to visit local factories and union branches.

## Southampton lobby

By Mike Tucker, Southampton NALGO

OVER eight hundred public sector trade unionists and students marched in Winchester last Thursday to lobby Hampshire county council against its proposed cuts in education and social services.

Called by the Hampshire Joint Trade Union Committee, the lobby was supported by all the public sector unions, together with the trades councils in Southampton, Portsmouth and Havant, and Wessex area NUS.

The lobby had little effect on the Tory-controlled council, which decided to raise the price of school meals to 50p, ban the sale of milk in schools, and cutback the already limited nursery education programme.

If we are to reverse these measures, firmer action will be required than simply sending workplace delegations to lobby the council, as happened last Thursday. We should build for strike action.

And if we are to secure the support of industrial workers in the area, we will need an alternative strategy to cuts. Several of the trade union officials who spoke on the lobby said that they oppose rate increases, which indirectly cut wages.

## Claimants under attack

By Alison Cooper

THE government has just produced a White Paper on the 'Reform of the Supplementary Benefits Scheme', and has introduced a Social Security Bill in Parliament. These proposals offer little to the five million people who are on SS. The changes recommended include:

\*Knocking 20-30p a week off the 'poverty line' of supplementary benefits to bring these into line with National Insurance benefits. This will result in a loss to claimants of about £30m a year.

\*Denying supplementary benefits to school leavers until the end of the holiday following their last term at school, thus keeping them dependent on their parents for even longer.

\*Making sponsors of immigrants liable in law for maintaining them.

\*Benefits will be increased in line with inflation, rather than with prices or earnings as at present.

Although there are some advantages in the proposals, such as bringing claimants on to the long-term rates after one year instead of the present two years, they are also packed with dangers.

The secret 'A Code', which allows for discretionary benefits, is to be abolished, but the legislation which will replace it also abolishes several of these benefits. At the same time, the Supplementary Benefits Commission is to go, removing even the fig leaf of 'independent' scrutiny of the social security system.

Claimants are not in a strong position to resist these measures. That's why they need the support of the labour movement.

IN 1970 there were two thousand workers at the Meccano factory in Merseyside. Last Friday, the remaining 931 workers at the plant were handed their cards. But they decided to stay put.

With management now locked out, the occupying workforce expected to have production underway by the middle of this week; and to hold a toy fair at the factory to unveil the 1980 models.

FRANK BLOOR, convenor of the General and Municipal Workers Union at Meccano — which has the largest number of members there — told John Sexton and Geoff Carrole about the decision to occupy.

It was at 3.45pm last Friday that the managing director of Airfix, the owning company, called in all the senior stewards here to tell us that in three-quarters of an hour the firm would cease to function.

When we raised the question of 90 days' notice, the managing director said "you'll have to take us to court", and while we were sitting in the meeting management was issuing everyone on the shopfloor with their redundancy notices.

That was it. Our first decision was that we'd work the 90 days' notice whether management liked it or not, and that we wouldn't allow them to move anything out of the factory. Practically the whole of the workforce was at the meeting which decided to occupy.

We've got a very good product and a workforce which wants to work. Some of the figures the management is giving out — they're living in cloud cuckoo land. They're just not for real. We've got the people on the shopfloor who can pull this company round.

We're trying to point out to the company that we are a viable concern and that with our new 1980 product range we can make a good investment.

They've put out in the media that we have been disruptive and have had disputes. It's not true. We've co-operated with management all along the line. This is a stab in the back, and we're not taking it lying down. They've definitely hoodwinked us.

We've had redundancies before, in 1976-77 for example. We thought at that time that it was the best thing to do because it was saving the majority of peoples' jobs.

We've realised that's not the right way. You get stabbed. You get killed. So anyone else who's in a position like us, don't accept redundancy. Fight it all the way!

As far as we're concerned, if any more factories close on Merseyside they may as well drop a bomb on it.

# MECCANO WORKERS OCCUPY 'If any more factories go on Merseyside, they may as well bomb the place'



We were with the workers at the Speke No 2 plant and all the other places which closed. We feel that this is the last stand for Liverpool.

The first basic step was to occupy the plant, to ensure that we have enough people on site to secure the plant for ourselves. We intend to keep the workforce informed everyday about developments.

We would like the help of the trade union movement throughout the country to assist us in this struggle. And we'd be very pleased if anyone who has been through this experience of occupation would get in touch with us.

The only thing that management has asked of us is if they could use the computer to get the wages out. We said certainly, but we'll have one of our computer people with them to make sure it's only the wages.

# SNOOKERED



MARCH				
Mon	3	10	17	24
Tues	4	11	18	25
Wed	5	12	19	26
Thur	6	13	20	27
Fri	7	14	21	28
Sat	1	8	15	22
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THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES



WHEN women were banned from playing snooker at the City Working Men's Club in Wakefield it was the last straw for one woman.

Despite changes in legislation the rules of the Clubs and Institutes Union, to which many clubs are affiliated, prevent women having a vote.

Women in Wakefield organised a petition and picketed the club's committee to demand their rights. Although the committee eventually accepted the petition they remained intransigent about the snooker table.

Given that most members of these clubs are trades unionists and Labour Party members, it seems high time that these bastions of patriarchy were invaded by women who have every right to be full members. Or have these committees forgotten that women work both in and outside the home?

The Equal Rights In Clubs Campaign for Action is fighting for the following in working men's clubs:

1. Full membership rights for women.
2. The right to affiliate to the Club and Institute Union.
3. The right to vote in clubs.
4. The right to vote at CIU conferences.
5. The right to use all club facilities.
6. The right to introduce visitors to clubs.
7. The right to nominate and stand for club executives and committees.
8. To change the name of working men's clubs to workers' clubs. Contact Sheila Capstick, 26 South Street, Wakefield if you want to know more.

# RE-INSTATE ROBINSON

ON MONDAY 19 November BL management announced the dismissal of Derek Robinson, convenor of the British Leyland shop stewards combine. Three other leading combine members received official warnings from management. Their crime was that they distributed a pamphlet attacking BL's plans to make at least 25,000 workers redundant.

The victimisation led to a series of walk-outs and unofficial strikes. An example was a mass meeting at BL's Canley plant where 6,000 workers voted to take indefinite strike action.

By 22 November 37,000 BL workers were on strike and many thousands more had been laid off.

A week after the sacking 5,000 people took part in a demonstration in Birmingham in support of Robinson. The same day the leadership of the Transport and General Workers Union said they intended making the strike

official but were waiting 'out of courtesy' for the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers to do so first. Robinson is a member of the AUEW.

The next day the executive of the AUEW broke up their own meeting to have a secret one with BL boss Michael Edwardes. Led by right-wing president Terry Duffy the executive gave in to Edwardes. They announced their own internal enquiry into Robinson's activities and ordered their members to return to work. Robinson remains sacked but will be paid by BL until the results of the enquiry are announced. BL said that even if the enquiry declared Robinson 'innocent' he would not be reinstated.

The next day Terry Duffy said Edwardes had threatened to close down BL for good if the strike had been made official. All employees at BL are now back at work.

A battle has been lost, but the war need not be. Now read on ...



ROBINSON — no backing down from the fight

## Dare to struggle...

By Pat Kane

WHAT was behind Michael Edwardes' 'survival plan' has become clear with the company's recently issued five per cent pay offer and the 85-page productivity deal which was attached to it.

In order to implement this, Edwardes had to take on the unions. Since the Combine Committee had opposed the plan, they had to go. Inside British Leyland the Combine Committee was the only nationally organised trade union body that had the potential of focusing opposition to Edwardes.

The sacking of Derek Robinson is the first major attack on the rank and file leadership inside the unions that we have seen under the Tories. Edwardes has set a precedent for every other employer.

The events that followed the sacking clearly showed the strength of the organised trade unions. The unofficial stoppages of over 30,000 workers were the result of the spontaneous opposition to the management.

But inside the plants there were divisions. In many plants the long years of participation and the success of BL in closing down factories like Speke had left sections of the workforce demoralised.

In every plant there was a minority work. In other plants, like Canley and Castle Bromwich, the decision for strike action was overwhelming.

The division between the workers was between those who wanted to fight and those who wanted to support Edwardes. Terry Duffy's betrayal gave a massive boost to the right wing in the plants.

During the strike the leadership of the Combine Committee set themselves very limited goals. Their strategy was to contain the dispute to wherever they could get support easily — and to wait for the unions to make it official.

### Official

With official backing from the TGWU and the AUEW, victory was clear.

But to rely on this alone — not to call for all-out strike action and to organise mass meetings and flying pickets — meant that the AUEW officials could get away with it.

The success of the Edwardes/Duffy partnership has meant that the first phase in the struggle has been lost. It will be a hard fight to reinstate Robinson.

The outrage that was initially expressed by thousands of Leyland workers can be rekindled. The



MARCHING through Birmingham last week Combine Committee must be forced into action.

The recently formed Leyland Action Committee will be fighting for action from all union members to defend Robinson whether the enquiry cooked up by Duffy finds in favour of him or not.

It will also be arguing for the only policies that can defend jobs in Leyland — the 35 hour week, worksharing with no loss of pay, no



MICHAEL EDWARDES

transfer of work from one factory to another (as was attempted with the TR7), nationalisation of the car industry as a whole with a plan to safeguard jobs.

Edwardes has no intention of saving Leyland as it is. He simply wants to safeguard the profits of Leyland and his own fat pay cheque.

He's out to sack workers, speed up the line and give the lowest pay rise possible. A massive fight by the trade unions is the only way he'll be stopped.

## How to fight the blackmail

By Rich Palser

TERRY Duffy's excuse for giving in to Edwardes was the threat the Leyland boss made to close down the entire company if the strikes were made official.

But — this is the oldest management trick in the book. Almost every time a major strike breaks out, the bosses offer some sort of similar threat.

But — even if Edwardes was serious, could he have got away with closing BL? Remember that not only do 100,000 people work at BL but at least that many again work in companies which are dependent for their survival on Leyland. Would Michael Edwardes really have got away with throwing that many people on the dole queue? Would hundreds of thousands of workers have taken the sack without a fight?

But — if Terry Duffy had told Edwardes that the AUEW did not accept the victimisation of its members, if he had reminded the BL boss that the TGWU was just waiting for a word from the AUEW to make the strike official and that the AUEW intended doing the same, would Edwardes have risked such a confrontation?

But — even if Edwardes had not backed down would the Tory government have allowed Edwardes to invite such a confrontation, which could have grown into immense proportions involving even wider sections of the trade union movement? Remember Jim Prior is about to announce his own plans for union 'reform', and he might not have welcomed such a struggle in which 'right' was so clearly on the side of the unions.

But — it is said that the government 'gives' BL millions and millions of pounds and that the Tory government was threatening that it would give no more if Edwardes gave in. The fact is that BL has been 'giver' nothing. The state owns BL and has also lent the company large sums. But on the money it has lent the government is getting high rates of interest — up to 15.5 per cent. The money is lent not to pay 'idle workers' but to invest in a company whose plants are full of outdated machinery.

But — most of all, remember what trade unions are for. They are for fighting for higher wages and conditions for their members. A union is needed to ensure that workers have the strength and power to fight back. That involves defending those members who do struggle. That's what Duffy and the rest of the AUEW executive did not. In so doing they took away one of the primary reasons for workers belonging to a union.

And that is what Terry Duffy should have told Michael Edwardes.

## DUFFY MUST GO

MOVES have already begun to force Duffy and the rest of the scabbing AUEW executive out of office.

Last Thursday a demand for the removal of the executive came from the Northfield branch of the AUEW in Birmingham. The overwhelming majority of the branch work at the Longbridge plant where Robinson has worked.

In demanding the removal of the executive the Northfield branch are citing rule 15, para 5 of the union rule book. It reads:

'The executive council, or any member thereof, may be removed from office by a ballot vote of the membership of the union provided that such a ballot is demanded by 10 per cent or more of the branches and that not less than two-thirds of the membership are in favour of such removal.'

The Northfield branch demand a ballot because of the executive's treatment of Robinson, who was 'victimised in a completely unconstitutional manner'.

A drive should now be made in AUEW branches up and down the country to have similar motions passed in order to obtain the necessary 10 per cent for a ballot on the executive.

The truth is that the strength of the AUEW has always lain with the shop stewards movement. This has allowed the active involvement of many thousands of workers in the running of the union. The result has been a higher level of democracy and accountability over full-time officials than exists in many other unions.

A removal of Duffy is one means of defending the shop stewards movement.

But in any ballot the first question AUEW members will ask is, who will replace the present right-wing leadership?

That is why it is important to make sure that in the fight to remove the Duffy scab machine a new leadership emerges that doesn't support the interests of the employers and government against the needs of the AUEW members.

A united campaign is needed which can unite all militants. For this an open conference should be held as soon as possible for all those opposed to Duffy who are dedicated to re-building the left in the union. The aim should be to win sponsorship for such a conference from the Broad-based Engineering Charter.

IF IT is possible to pinpoint one occasion in the past five years when the victimisation of Derek Robinson became a dot on the horizon, it was a time — paradoxically — when Robinson's compliance with management wishes was never more complete.

That date was 1 February 1978. The place, Kenilworth, in Warwickshire. The event, a meeting of 650 trade union representatives and management from British Leyland. This was four months after Michael Edwardes had been appointed as the new Leyland boss.

The Kenilworth meeting was the first real opportunity Edwardes had to explain his strategy for managing Leyland. He put forward a seven-point resolution to the meeting, which involved — among other things — the loss of 12,500 jobs through 'natural wastage, redundancy programmes, plant closures, and some combination of these'.

On the day of the meeting, Derek Robinson, writing in the *Morning Star*, called on the labour movement to 'close ranks, unite and fight the plan to carve up Leyland', but at the meeting itself Robinson, together with the vast majority of the other stewards present, voted acceptance of this, the first Edwardes 'survival' plan.

The next day, the *Morning Star* declared it would have been 'irresponsible to vote against'.

## Job loss

From that meeting onwards Michael Edwardes has never looked back. He has presided over a 20,000 job loss in the past two years, and his most recent 'survival plan' has promised 25,000 more redundancies, although the real figure will probably be nearer double that.

The latest plan has been opposed by Robinson and the rest of the Leyland stewards movement, and it is this opposition which has led to the sacking of Robinson. But in a deeper, if more indirect sense, it was that Kenilworth vote which prepared for the sacking.

The vote at that meeting accepted the logic of what Edwardes did when he demanded the latest round of sackings, and Robinson's vote at the Kenilworth meeting argued that indeed opposition was 'irresponsible'. Michael Edwardes has now punished such irresponsibility with the dismissal of Robinson.

In another way, the Kenilworth meeting allowed for the success, temporary though it may be, that Edwardes has had in carrying through the victimisation. For at Kenilworth the Leyland shop stewards movement presented itself, bound hand and foot, to the company management.

It gave in to a management strategy which had incorporated the leadership of the trade union movement into plans to weaken that movement and lose its members' jobs.

## Workers' interests

It would be an exaggeration to say that the union leadership represented at Kenilworth had agreed to become a company union, but it certainly lost its ability to act independently on the sole basis of workers' interests.

Kenilworth may have been the low point, but the process had started three years previously with the publication of the Ryder report into British Leyland. Ryder promised a bright future for the Leyland workers, a future which politicians at the time were only too happy to emphasise.

Prime Minister Harold Wilson declared: 'We are confident that if the recommendations of the (Ryder) report are implemented it will lead to no loss of jobs and that the Leyland workforce ... in the 1980s will be as great as it is today.'

The Ryder report was part of a government rescue of Leyland which involved the company being run by the state-owned National Enterprise Board.

As with the Ryder report, great things were promised with the creation of the NEB. The 1974 Labour Party manifesto vowed: 'It will for the first time provide an instrument for exercising control in the area of profitable manufacturing industry. It offers the opportunity to pursue new paths in job creating.'

## Dream

In pursuit of this dream, a whole host of trade union leaders were placed on the board of the NEB. Among them was Hugh Scanlon, Duffy's predecessor as president of the AUEW. It was 'participation' at the highest level, while 'participation' in the Leyland context was another carrot offered by Ryder to the trade union leadership at Leyland.

Among the foremost to promote this participation was Derek Robinson. In 1976 he said: 'If we make Leyland successful it will be a political victory. It will prove that ordinary working people have got the guts and



# THE MAKING OF A LEYLAND VICTIM

TERRY Duffy, president of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, and the rest of his union's executive, reneged last week on a founding principle of trade unionism — defence of members victimised for union activity.

By ordering to go back to work those of its members at British Leyland who had been on strike over the sacking of Leyland convenor Derek Robinson, Duffy made one of the biggest sell-outs the trade union movement has

witnessed for years. But like all such occurrences the sell-out was not unprepared for; neither was it an isolated incident.

What happened at Leyland last week has been signaled by any number of warning signs over the past five years.

To protest and organise against the sacking of Derek Robinson is vital; but to appreciate how and why it happened is the best insurance against a repetition. GEOFF BELL reports

determination to run industry.'

That was rather an exaggerated vision of the participation scheme introduced by the Ryder report. There wasn't even provision for workers' representatives to be placed on the Leyland board, and the provisions that it did make involved a watering-down of the traditional functions of trade unions.

Frank Chapter, a division organiser of the AUEW, put it this way: 'Radical changes in workers' attitudes are needed if employee participation within the new British Leyland is to succeed.'

'Participation means that we'll now be involved in decision-making with the responsibility that brings. Employee representatives will no longer have to answer just to their members. Their actions will also have to be acceptable to the public.'

In shorthand, what Chapter was saying was that the trade union leadership at Leyland was now in the business of serving two masters. On the one hand was their members, on the other 'the public'.

But what exactly was 'the public'? The assumption was that because Leyland had been nationalised it was now to be run in the interests of 'the public'; that no longer would it be run in the interests of its owners, and that accordingly management attitudes towards the workforce would change.

That looks somewhat sick today. The criterion by which Leyland was run under the auspices of the NEB was the same criterion by which it was run under private ownership. As Edwardes put it in his recent letter promising his 'recovery plan', the aim was to ensure that the

company was 'operating at a profit'.

The trade union leadership inside and outside Leyland was reluctant to acknowledge that it was this good old capitalist principle which participation was meant to serve.

## Did it willingly

On the contrary, Communist Party members in particular were quick to promote and to praise the new arrangement. Ironically, one of the men warned when Robinson was sacked, Jack Adams, said the following of a participation sub-committee on plans for the new Mini which involved new working practices:

'In my experience, never before in our movement has so much information been revealed. Almost everything that we requested was made available.'

'Obviously the company was very keen to get our co-operation. I think it is fair to say that it is only in cases where trade unions have been faced with confrontations or plant closures that they have indicated they are willing to talk about changes this big.'

'And we did it willingly and voluntarily,' Adams added, 'convinced that we were acting in the best interests of the company and our members.'

Indeed, much was done willingly and voluntarily by the trade union leadership at Leyland and the national — especially the AUEW — leadership outside. The most obvious example concerned the continual struggle waged by toolmakers and other craft workers at Leyland over their own rates of pay. Robinson's

attitude was summed up by what he said during toolmakers' strike in February and March 1978:

'The worst thing that can happen to British Leyland and the country is for groups of workers to think that they have the God-given right to take sectional action in defence of their conditions. We can't afford a toolroom strike any other strike.'

The expression of such sentiments shows how far management had used Robinson's participation philosophy to its own advantage. This is further testified by an article Robinson wrote in *The Times* in February 1978:

'The trade unions understand as clearly as I do that productivity must be raised to the level of our international competitors ... I fought so hard to recover that competitive position after the unofficial and damaging strike by some toolmakers in March ...'

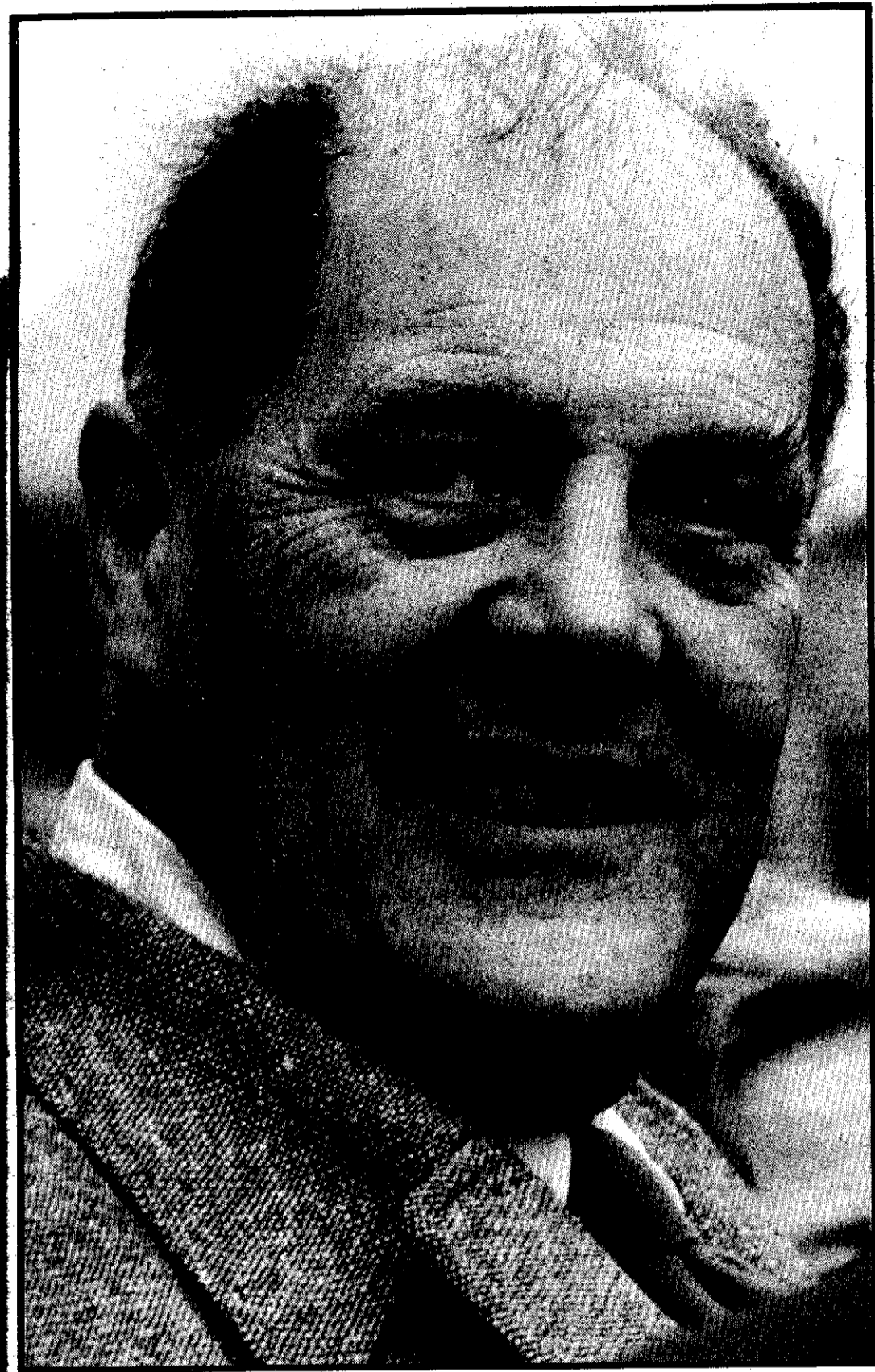
'We have taken an unprecedented initiative to try and improve output and quality.'

The drive for productivity meant anything which came in its way tended to be denounced. A productivity and parity agreement of December 1978 was enthusiastically backed by Robinson. The anti-Communist witch hunt being launched against Robinson and others, an unfortunate precedent when Robinson denounced those who opposed this agreement: 'the lunatic left, the Trots and their henchmen. We are prepared to be reasonable.'

Included in this 'we' was Len Brindle, chairperson of the combine, and another of the militants disciplined two weeks ago by Edwardes. Just before his formal 'warning' Brindle wrote indignantly:

'Over the last two years we have negoti-





and passionately appealed to his members to play their fullest part in making the state-owned financed rescue (of Leyland) a success'.

Leyland are among the most efficient, concerned and reliable.'

## Toolmakers

But what did making a 'success' of Leyland mean? For the AUEW it was most starkly interpreted in the spring of 1977 when the union executive voted for a resolution which effectively allowed Leyland to sack the toolmakers during one of their disputes.

The consequences of such actions were not confined to Leyland; they affected the entire Broad Left in the AUEW. For instance, among those who voted for the toolmakers' sacking was Les Dixon, a member of the Communist Party. When the time came for the Broad Left to put up its successor to Scanlon, and Bob Wright was chosen, it was Dixon who was the key-note speaker at a Broad Left national assembly in November 1977.

The subsequent defeat of Wright and the election of Terry Duffy owes much to the dismal record of Scanlon, Dixon and others in the Broad Left in the years preceding the election. At Leyland and elsewhere they had sought to outlaw trade union militancy and to preach the value to their members of 'participation' with management.

It was hardly surprising that when Scanlon's successor was eventually elected, it was Terry Duffy, who had merely taken the Broad Left propaganda to its logical conclusion, who emerged successful.

## 'Responsibility'

Scanlon, Dixon, Robinson, and Brindle had in the years before denounced strikers and 'Trots', and had demanded 'responsibility' from their members. Therefore, Terry Duffy was adding, vote for me.

And because the Broad Left had itself 'educated' AUEW members on the dangers of militancy, they did indeed vote for Duffy, or if they didn't they found little reason to vote for Wright.

## Nonsense

In Leyland itself the price workers paid for such leadership kept increasing. In supporting the productivity demands, the trade union leadership has echoed the ruling class propaganda of 'lazy' car workers as being the reason for all Leyland's ills.

Such a diagnosis is nonsense. As the Ryder report itself said, 'under-investment is the main reason for the low productivity'. But Ryder changed nothing. From 1976 per capita investment at Leyland has been £375 per worker, Vauxhall's has been £1,030, and VW £1,110.

Other prospects presented in the Ryder report have gone the same way, and by early 1977 The Times was declaring that the plans for expansion outlined in Ryder were 'in ruins'. The bulldozer to sweep away the ruins came in October 1977 in the shape of Michael Edwardes.

## Token opposition

One indication of the nature of the new regime was seen in a meeting Edwardes had with national union officials in January 1978. 'I am not here to negotiate,' he said, 'merely to tell you what is on my mind and to hear your views.'

What was on Edwardes' mind soon emerged when he announced his intention to close Leyland Speke No 2 plant in Liverpool. Although the unions offered a token opposition little was done to save Speke, either by the national union leadership or by the Leyland stewards.

As late as February 1979 Michael Edwardes was telling the Daily Mirror: 'If anything I would say that the Communist shop stewards in

By then the participation rainbow which the leadership of the Leyland stewards had been chasing for three years had completely faded from the sky.

In September 1978, four hundred stewards had arranged a meeting to discuss their disillusionment with participation. They were suddenly called to an emergency session of the cars' council — the top tier in the participation machinery. There they were told that they had to endorse a letter from Edwardes threatening striking toolmakers and promising a 'slimming down' of Leyland.

The stewards were not consulted about the letter, they were merely told it had been written and sent out. 'Participation' staggered on for some more months, but it was the meeting in September when Edwardes effectively withdrew from it.

## Already happening

It would be easy to blame all this on Michael Edwardes; that he has overturned the participation machinery, or, in Robinson's words, the 'limited workers' control' established in 1976.

But in effect Edwardes did no more than accelerate what was happening at Leyland before he arrived. Toolmakers were attacked by their own union before and after Edwardes arrived; 'Trots' were denounced before and after he arrived; there were speed-ups and redundancies before and after Edwardes came. It mattered little to the victims whether they were abused or sacked in the name of participation or in the name of an Edwardes 'survival plan'.

There is little use pretending that Leyland management has not gained a number of notable victories in the last couple of years. The reason it has is that through a fake 'nationalisation' and a fake 'participation' they tempted the trade unions and their national and plant leadership into collaborating with management plans.

This union identification with management so weakened and confused the left at Leyland that when Robinson finally protested and said enough was enough, Edwardes decided that sacking Robinson was a gamble he stood a chance of winning.

Leyland justified that sacking by saying that Robinson and the others disciplined were 'deliberately undermining the company's recovery programme, threatening market share and confidence in the company's future.'

## Tragedy

The expression for such sentiments is not new from Leyland management; the tragedy is that similar priorities have been stated by Hugh Scanlon, Terry Duffy, Eric Varley and, yes, Derek Robinson in the past four years.

Could things have been different? Could a successful fightback have been organised?

It would have meant fighting Edwardes from the very beginning. It would have meant discussing concrete proposals for an alternative which could have saved jobs. It would have meant using the weight of the shop stewards to campaign inside the factories and show workers that another way was possible.

Socialists can never offer guarantees of success. But they can and they should point to the road which avoids defeats. Victory always depends, in the final analysis, on the consciousness and mobilisation of the rank and file.

If Robinson, Brindle, and the rest had rejected 'participation' and sought to popularise such actions which involved real workers' control and raised the possibilities of an occupation to defend jobs, they might well have lost at that time.

But they would have been in an infinitely stronger position today.

agreements with the company that give British Leyland management mobility and flexibility; change of working practice agreements; virtual elimination of inter-union rows on who-does-what.

'We have clearly defined agreements on productivity that go far beyond any other employer of labour within the (car) industry in Great Britain. So how can myself and convenors like me throughout BL be accused of being saboteurs?'

## Scaffolding

The protest is a justified one, but what Brindle does not appear to appreciate is that his and others' notions of an identity of interest with management meant that they had erected a scaffolding from which any who broke from such an identity of interests could find themselves hung.

Not that it was just a case of the individual views of Robinson, Brindle, or other trade union representatives within Leyland. They reflected a philosophy which gained wide acceptance in the labour movement. The threats which Edwardes now makes against anyone who strikes at British Leyland are merely a repetition of what others have said before.

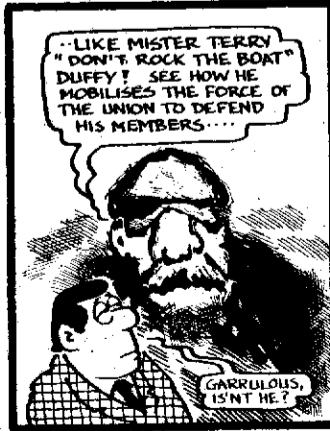
In March 1977 it was Labour's Industry Secretary, Eric Varley, who offered himself as a management mouthpiece: 'I want all workers at Leyland, including those on unofficial strike, to be quite clear that their employment and the future of their company is now in their hands. They can kill it or they can save it. They have no one else to blame or thank.'

Varley went on to call for 'an early return to work, higher levels of output and a radical improvement in industrial relations'.

Similarly the threats that Tory Industry Secretary Keith Joseph made over the Robinson walk-out — that public money would be withdrawn if the strike continued — was a warning taken from another Varley script when the Labour minister said this February:

'BL cannot sustain a long strike, nor could the government sustain a long strike on the basis of providing public funds.'

The 'public funds' directed through Leyland were channelled via the National Enterprise Board and on that body Hugh Scanlon fully backed the Varley line. As the Financial Times put it in August 1978, Scanlon had 'frequently



## SOCIALIST CHALLENGE EVENTS

**ABERDEEN:** SC sold Saturdays outside C&As — for more info phone Colin, 574068.

**EDINBURGH:** SC on sale every Sat, Princes St, 12.30-2. For more info phone 554 0196 or write: Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, 45 Niddry St.

**PADDINGTON** SC on sale every Sat 11.30-12.30pm at the Westbourne Park Road Junction, and every Thursday at 5.15pm at Ladbroke Grove Tube Station.

**BRISTOL:** SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. For more info contact Box 2, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Road, Montpellier, Bristol 6.

**LEEDS** SC on sale Sats 11-1 Shopping Precinct, Armdale Centre Headingley, Harehills Shopping Centre.

**BIRMINGHAM:** SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.30, Sat. 10-4. For more info phone 643-9209.

**BRIGHTON:** For more info phone Nick, 605052.

**BATH:** SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.

**EDINBURGH** IMG public meeting: 'Defending abortion rights and the fight against the Tories'. Wed 5 Dec, 7.30pm, Trades Council Rooms, Picardy Place, Edinburgh. Speaker Penny Duggan (NAC steering committee).

**BRADFORD:** SC available from Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.

**COVENTRY:** SC available from Wedge Bookshop. For more info about local activities phone 461138.

**LEICESTER** SC group meeting 12 Dec. Highfields Community Centre 8pm: 'Marxism Today'.

**OXFORD:** SC sold Fri, Kings Arms, 12-2, Sat, Cornmarket, 10-2. For more info phone 47624.

**S.W. LONDON:** SC on sale at Oval tube kiosk, Herne Hill BR kiosk, Tetric Books (Clapham High St.). Also on sale Sat 11-1, and Thur/Fri mornings at Brixton tube.

**GRAVESEND:** SC Group meets regularly. Details from Gravesend Tigers, Box 13, Gravesend.

**HAMILTON** — supporters sell SC every Saturday in the Hamilton shopping centre, 1-5pm. For details of local activities contact John Ford, 53 Elliott Crescent, Hamilton.

**TEESSIDE** — SC sales: at Newsfare shops in Cleveland Centre and on Linsthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, and at Greens Bookstall, upstairs in Spencer Market, Stockton High Street.

**DUNDEE** — SC available from Dundee City Square outside Boots, every Thursday 4-5.30pm, Friday 4-5.30pm, Saturday 11-4pm.

**GLASGOW** — SC on sale Sats 11-1 outside Central Station, Thurs, Fri 5-6pm same place.

**NORTH WEST** IMG trade union school. Topics: building a national opposition workshop and union branch organisation; New technology and unemployment. For details contact Manchester Centre.

**CRAWLEY** SC forum: discussion on 'Beyond the Fragments' with Hilary Wainwright and Val Coultas (IMG). Sun 9 Dec, 7.30pm, West Green Community Centre.

**TOWER HAMLETS** IMG public meeting: 'Women's Liberation and Socialism', Speaker Valerie Coultas, 10 Dec 8pm, Queen Mary College, Students Union, Bancroft Rd, E1.

**TOWER HAMLETS** SC supporters sell papers every Fri 5-6pm, Sat 11-12.30, Sun 10.30-12.00 Brick Lane.

**HARINGEY** SC public meeting: Clive Turnbull speaking and showing slides on Nicaragua. Highgate Wood, Lower School, Thurs 6 Dec, 8pm.

**LIVERPOOL XMAS SOCIAL:** Fri 14 Dec, bar till 2am. 'Better Frights' Disco plus food. Stanley House, Upper Parliament St. Creche available: Tel 051-727-1748.

**LIVERPOOL XMAS FAYRE:** Sat 15 Dec, Caribbean Centre, Upper Parliament St. Food, Xmas gifts, books and jumble — starts at 2pm.

**LIVERPOOL** SC meetings: 20 Dec 'The Tories and the Immigration Controls', speaker from Merseyside Campaign Against the Immigration Laws; 10 Jan, 'The Cuban Revolution', speaker John Kirby; meetings start at 7.30pm at 15a, Richmond St (off Washington Square).

**PADDINGTON** SC group presents: Alain Tanner/John Berger's *La Salamandre* (1971 Sw. 129 mins.) An earlier film from the makers of *Jonah Who Will Be 25 in the Year 2000*. How a young woman worker (Bulle Ogier) confounds attempts by both a Marxist intellectual and a libertarian poet to find out why she shot her stepfather. At 1 Thorpe Close, W10 under the Westway flyover and 2 mins from Ladbroke Tube (buses 7, 15 and 52). Followed by social at Basement Flat, 24 Powis Sq., London W11. A film not to be missed, rarely available in London, Friday 14 December, 7.30pm. Paddington SC group can be contacted at PO Box 50, London N1.

**WINDON** SC on sale 11-1pm every Sat., Regent St (Brunel Centre).

**SHEFFIELD** SC on sale every Sat. 12-1pm Fargate.

**HARINGEY** SC public meeting: 'Nicaragua — a eye witness account' plus slides. Thurs 6 Dec, pm, Highgate Wood, Lower School, Crouch and N8.

**OLDHAM** SC Group: 'How to fight the Tories', speakers from NUPE and NALGO, Tuesday 11 Dec, 7.30pm, Sergeant-at-Arms, King Street opposite Co-op). SC sales every Sat 11-1pm outside Yorkshire Bank, High St.



THATCHER lays down the line at Dublin

# When the CAP doesn't fit....

By John Marston

A MAJOR CRISIS faces the Common Market after last week's Dublin summit failed to reach agreement on the budget dispute between Britain and the other eight countries.

The dispute is over the difference between what Britain puts into the Common Market and what it gets back. This is expected to rise to £1.2 billion next year.

The deficit arises because the vast bulk of the EEC budget (75 per cent) goes on farm spending under the common agricultural policy (CAP) — and Britain, as the least agricultural country of the Nine, suffers accordingly.

But if these are the 'facts' of the dispute, they don't explain why it can't be solved in the usual give-and-take way. The answer lies in the

developing international recession.

As the capitalist world faces slump once more, each national ruling class begins to feel the pressure. And none more so than the British. The crisis-ridden state of the economy means that such a drain on public expenditure is unacceptable. Furthermore, it plays into the hands of the anti-Marketters.

But the other main countries in the EEC aren't over-inclined to play ball and help Thatcher out of her difficulties. The recession will affect them too, and they already have their own problems: the French government is in disarray after a series of scandals, while Chancellor Schmidt faces a bitter election campaign next year.

So Thatcher stands firm; even at the price of jeopardising the fragile institutions of the EEC which the capitalists look to in the long run to

safeguard their profits. British capitalism faces problems whichever option it takes.

But Thatcher has one advantage. By waving the Union Jack she disarms the Labour lefts whose only solution is to get out of the EEC and pull up the drawbridge.

The need for a socialist alternative has rarely been clearer. Instead of lining up in this confrontation to defend the 'national interest', it is necessary to show that this is a conflict between different sets of capitalists over how best to screw the working class.

By fighting for increasing working class unity across Europe — starting with issues like the EEC-coordinated plan for steel closures — we can begin to pose the only viable alternative to the Common Market: a United Socialist States of Europe.

# AFGHANISTAN IN CHAOS

By Charles Lister in Kabul

WHEN the People's Democratic Party (PDDA) overthrew President Daoud in April 1978 there was total consternation and surprise in the West. Was it a revolution or a coup? And the debate continues.

The takeover was the product of a fragile alliance between two PDDA factions, Parcham (The Flag) and Khalq (The People), which rapidly crumbled. The Parchami ministers were sent abroad as 'ambassadors' and then recalled for consultations — a classic scheme to which few if any responded.

This left the way clear for Khalq leader Nur Mohammed Taraki and his deputy Hafizullah Amin to 'socialise' the country.

It is difficult to assess what happened in Afghanistan between April 1978 and the early months of this year. It appears that the 'countryside' sat still, passively observing. The previous regimes had also relied heavily on Soviet aid, so the Russians weren't anything new.

## Growth

But some economic growth seems to have taken place. According to figures released by the Ministry of Planning, 'Total volume of gross agricultural products increased by about 6 per cent; total volume of gross industrial production increased by 4 per cent; and the total gross production of public and mixed enterprises increased by 6 per cent.'

The land reform, however, has run into considerable problems in the form of Afghan traditionalism. The typical peasant response to the government's gift of parcels of land is to refuse to sow, fearing that the government officials will return and take back both land and crops — meaning that the work would all have been for nothing.

The feudal relationship between the landless, the sharecropper and the



landlord (based on clans, blood ties, backwardness and a particular form of patriarchy) has been challenged but so far not weakened at all. The vast scale of the rebellion in the hills is sufficient proof of that. And time is running short.

To win back the countryside, the Soviet Union has been pouring in vast quantities of farm and factory aid. And the government has embarked on a bold five-year-plan, stating: 'Planning is an important instrument for the implementation of the programme of the PDDA to create a society where exploitation of man by man shall never exist'. But the future remains uncertain.

Most confusion has been sown by the as yet unexplained purging of Taraki and his replacement by Amin. One minute Taraki was 'The Great Leader of the People of Afghanistan, General Secretary of the CC of the PDDA, President of the Revolutionary Council, and President of the Homeland's High Defence Council'; the next minute his death was being announced in an eight line column at the bottom of the back page of the *Kabul Times*.

The atmosphere here in Kabul is very strange, quite unlike that normally associated with a repressive regime. People are usually very willing to talk politics with a foreigner, but few have a kind word for the PDDA. Even students sporting the Khalqi insignia are unwilling to discuss the merits of their party.

Even in the ministries, probing questions are often met with cryptic and ambiguous answers. On one occasion I was talking to a government employee when we were interrupted by an 'impromptu' demonstration. He said he had to go. 'What is it about?', I asked. 'I don't know', he said. 'I'll shout whatever they want me to shout.'

Division seems to be the order of the day in Afghanistan. The government's purges don't conceal internal dissensions; but the Islamic rebels (the majority of whom don't even both to soften their outright reactionary views) are also divided. Therefore chaos reigns supreme.

The socialist movement in Afghanistan is living dangerously. If the government can claim any mass support at all, it is only in the purged

and pampered army. Even this has seen unrest and defections; as a social base for the revolution it is certainly no substitute for the masses.

Amin is desperate for time. But it will require a considerable amount of work, sweet-talking and material evidence to persuade the great majority of Afghans to forget old feudal values and forgive the regime's ruthless acts. And so, since fierce 'tribesmen' cannot be expected to respond to mere requests for patience, the napping of villages goes on.

Revolutionary Marxists will argue that the solution to the crisis is not a military one, whatever wonderful promises (of doubtful credibility) accompany it. The solution is essentially political: the first steps being a healthy nationalities policy and conditions of workers democracy which extend beyond paper declarations.

Unfortunately for the Afghan people there is no group or party willing to fight on these questions. Yet without them a genuine independent socialist Afghanistan remains a pipe dream for the few disconcerted idealists in Kabul.

## Intercontinental Press/Inprecor

THE background to the overthrow of the Gairy regime in Grenada is one of the features in the latest issue of the weekly *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor* (Vol 17, No 44). Other material covers the Trotsky centenary commemoration in Mexico, and Cuba in the twentieth year of revolution.

Single copies cost 30p plus 10p p&p, but subscriptions work out much cheaper: £11 for one year (48 issues), £6 for six months, 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.

## IRELAND

# NO CHRISTMAS TREES IN H BLOCK

JOE is a blanket prisoner. He is 19 years old, and by this Christmas he will have spent two years and two months in H Block, Long Kesh. He is serving 19 years altogether. As a member of a staunchly Republican family, Joe was singled out by the 'security forces' for arrest. He was first charged when he was just 16 with a hoax bombing and membership of Na Fianna Eireann (the IRA's youth wing).

Joe refused to sign a statement and refused to recognise the no-jury court. He got five years. On bail prior to his first court appearance, he was taken to Castlereagh and badly beaten for three days. He signed a statement admitting burning a bus depot. Once again he refused to recognise the no-jury court. He got 14 years.

In September 1978, Socialist Challenge published an article by Joe's mother describing what had happened to him and how it felt to visit a son in H Block. She said that when Joe was charged a Special Branch officer told her: 'He'll see no more Christmas trees.' Blanket men are allowed one 30-minute visit each month.

Here Joe's mother describes a visit to her son in H Block last Christmas.

I HAD received a pass to see Joe on 23 December; that was a Saturday, the day before Christmas Eve. I hadn't seen him then for nearly three months. My friend had seen her son about three days before that and she wouldn't hardly talk about it. She just kept saying: 'Thank God it's over.'

When my daughter Sarah, my friend Kevin, and I went down on the Saturday morning we didn't know that Joe had already been force-washed. It was very, very cold. It was freezing. And we tried to make ourselves as bright-looking as we could because it was Christmas. We had Sarah's baby with us and we had her dressed in her good clothes.

We didn't recognise Joe. We didn't even know who he was. I says to Sarah: 'You go first.' She walked past him and he called her. She looked at him and I looked and I didn't know who he was — and I didn't want to know that that was my son sitting there. I says: 'Oh, Jesus Christ, what have they done?'

## Holocaust

He was blue, blue with cold. I had never seen before with the dirt and all the hair that was on him just how thin he was. He was like Belsen, like what you see on Holocaust on television.

And he was all bruised, and his hair was shaved right into his head, with big lumps shaved right into the skin and other bits all sticking out. His skin was scrubbed off his neck and you could see all the raw skin. And his ears had big blackheads inside them. His cheekbones were like two razor blades sticking out.

The screws laughed at us. You see, we couldn't disguise our faces when we saw him, because it was such a dreadful shock. You couldn't even try, it was such a shock. You couldn't disguise the horror. I just said: 'Jesus Christ. Oh, Jesus Christ.' That's all I could say. Well, when the screws saw our faces they just stood and they laughed.

And the baby had a wee blue suit on her, blue with red-and-white check, and one of the screws said: 'Lovely colours for a blanket man.'

With the massive screws behind me I couldn't speak to him, and Sarah couldn't speak very much. She only says to him: 'What happened, Joe?' And he says: 'We got this done', and then he started telling us what happened.

I couldn't listen. I kept just sitting looking at him. And Sarah just sat and looked at him. She just kept looking over at me and shaking her head. So Kevin just kept on talking to him to make it not so bad.

He wouldn't talk above a whisper. He just kept on saying: 'It's brutal, it's brutal, it's brutal.' Now, our Joe always used to say: 'Magic, no problem. Magic, no problem.'

## Kicking

He couldn't move his back, and I knew there was something wrong with it. We asked him what was wrong with his back and he says: 'Well, we got a bit of kicking in the middle of the night last night.' And he says: 'Ma, don't be looking round, it was him behind you done it.'

I says: 'I've got a stiletto-heeled shoe on me. I'll put it in his eye and he'll never see again.'

He says: 'Ma, please don't, for I couldn't take no more of a kicking.'

So I says to him: 'Look, son, let me tell you enough's enough. There's no man should even try to suffer this.'

Sarah says: 'Joe, this is awful. How dare they do that.'

He says: 'Let them do whatever they like. They can do this and worse. And if I have to go on hunger-strike I'll do it. For they're not going to beat me.'

Well, I thought I was going to break down in front of him then. I couldn't ask him, but Kevin asked him what happened.

Joe said: 'They came in and said, "Come on", and we said, "No". So they just grabbed us by the hair in the nude and they trailed us up the wing.' Joe told us that the screw shouted: 'Hey, you', at Joe's friend, and he turned round and the screw just smashed his boot right into his face and smashed his nose in.

## 'Happy Christmas'

It was like a nightmare. I couldn't believe that was my son. I just couldn't believe that in any country, any civilised country, especially in Western Europe, it would be allowed.

Our Sarah, she was in an awful state. I'll never forget it till God calls me. I think I could take anything now.

Joe gave Sarah a kiss and then he put his arms round me. I put my hand on his hair, where they had shaved it, and it was like a yard brush, or a deck scrubber, rather. And he had lovely hair — though it doesn't matter if he had lovely hair or not. But he said he wasn't thinking of himself, and he says: 'Now, mother, wish everybody a happy Christmas.'

When I looked at him I thought I was going to die, and Sarah ran out.

A man was sitting there with his son and he jumped up and ran out and started on the screws. He started shouting: 'God curse you. I'm not starved and I'll take you on myself.' But I wasn't able to start on them.

And a woman was sitting there when my Joe was standing. Joe says: 'Don't worry about me, Ma, I'm all right.' And the woman looked up at him and tears ran down her cheeks.

When that's your own son and people you don't know are starting to cry, you can guess the state you're in.



Well, I came out of it and I didn't know what day it was. I never was as angry in my life, and I was numb.

Everybody was waiting to hear what the visit was like when we came back in the district, because everybody was hearing the stories of it. When I got off the bus I was so stunned with what I had seen I couldn't speak. So Sarah had to go round and tell the different people what it was like. That night I cried from 11 o'clock to 5 o'clock the next morning.

The next day was Christmas Eve and every time anybody said, 'Christmas', I thought my heart was going to break in two.

I really thought he was going to die, and so did Sarah. I thought that either he would have died, or that he would have come off the blanket, one of the two. I was worried sick about his physical condition, and still I knew that they were right to do what they do.

Now January was an awful month for cold. I got one wee note from him and it said: 'Ma, I hope you are praying for me, because we

thought we were going to freeze to death without any clothes, especially on New Year's Eve.'

When I next went down to see him I says: 'Did you get any Christmas cards, my son? You got over 50 sent to you.'

He said: 'They let me see three.' You can't give them anything at Christmas. Nothing, absolutely nothing.

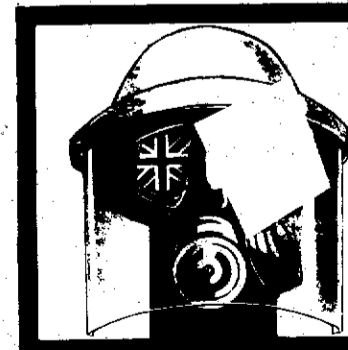
I said to him: 'How long do you think this is going to last?'

He said: 'I don't care how long it's going to last, but I'm not going to put on any prison gear for nobody.'

I've always felt the same about the British being in this country. They have no right to be here, and while they're here there will never be peace. They destroyed this country and destroyed half of the people in it. No matter how many Irish people die for it, no matter how many mothers sit with broken hearts, it will make no odds, because the Irish will still fight against the British.

which is  
why you  
should  
come  
to this

## BUILD THE MOVEMENT TO GET THEM OUT NOW



## National Conference United Troops Out Movement

### December 8/9 City of London Poly

Student Union, Fairholt House, Whitechapel High Rd E1, Aldgate East Tube  
Open to all members and supporters of the UTOM. Food and creche provided.

# INTERNATIONAL

## Ford workers lead new strike wave in South Africa

By John Hunt

SEVEN hundred Ford workers have been sacked after going on strike over the issues of victimisation and racist insults from white foremen in Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

The strikers are members of the black Automobile Workers Union, which has won recognition from Ford management because of its widespread support among black workers. Ford workers are also the mainstay of the powerful Port Elizabeth Black Civic Association [Pebca].

It was the sacking of Pebca president Thozamile Botha by Ford two weeks ago because of his political activities that started the dispute. Complaints by a racist foreman that black workers had made the integrated canteen 'dirty' led to a further sharpening of the struggle.

Ford's 'enlightened' multinational management responded in typical fashion — by calling out the riot police to disperse a mass meeting of strikers and sacking the entire black workforce. This is the reality behind the 'liberalisation' of South Africa's trade union legislation.

The Ford strike is just one of a number of major struggles in the Port Elizabeth area. Major battles for trade union recognition are taking place at the multinational General Tire and Crosse & Blackwell factories, and at the Adamas Paper mill.

Elsewhere, too, workers are refusing to bow down before the house arrests, imprisonment, harassment and killings which the apartheid regime has inflicted on trade unionists in recent years.

In Capetown, a heroic six-month strike against redundancy at Fatti's and Moni's food factory has gained tremendous support from black organisations. Even black shopkeepers have been forced to boycott Fatti's and Moni's products.

The F&M strikers are raising a comprehensive set of demands which suggest the growing confidence of black workers: an eight-hour day; health care; and a minimum wage. There can be little doubt that this is the beginning of the biggest wave of

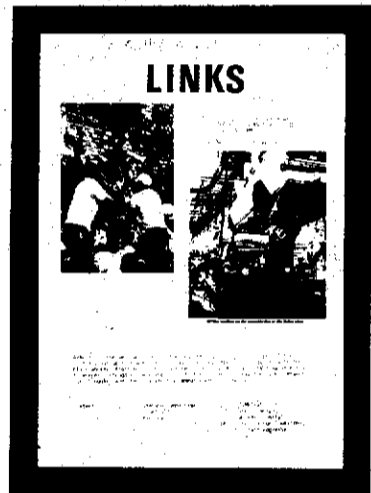
struggles by South African workers since 1976.

Workers in multinational companies in Britain should take note. If your employers can run non-union plants in South Africa, the effect is the same as that of having non-union plants in this country.

The workforce is divided in the face of management attacks. The heaviest burden is placed on the least organised. Management places its capital where the workers are least able to defend themselves.

That's what ICL workers found out recently when management proposed to close the Dukinfield plant in Britain and open an identical one in... South Africa.

In 1977 Rover trade unionists organised a week of action during which no parts from Solihull went to British Leyland's South African operations. That is the kind of practical support needed now by South African workers facing the alliance of Botha and the multinationals. The word is — solidarity.



AN example of trade union initiative in solidarity with South African workers is the formation of the North West Trade Union Anti-Apartheid Liaison Committee. It has now started to bring out a regular bulletin, Links. Further details from NWTUAAALC, 59 Tintern Avenue, Manchester M20 8ND.



HOW many more massacres like this?

## LANCASTER HOUSE PROPOSALS The shape of things to come in Zimbabwe?

By Richard Carver

SALISBURY, 29 FEBRUARY 1980: The British Governor of Southern Rhodesia today rejected calls for the postponement of the election because of repeated ceasefire violations.

The most serious was the massacre last week of 257 ZANU members by Bishop Muzorewa's auxiliaries. The ZANU supporters, unarmed under the terms of the ceasefire agreement, were attending a pre-election rally in a Salisbury suburb. The auxiliaries were on routine policing duties as members of the armed forces.

The Governor expressed his sincere condolences to the relatives of those killed and of the victims of a similar incident a fortnight before when several dozen ZAPU members died. But he said that if these deaths were not to be in vain it was vital that the election went ahead as planned.

'Zimbabwe Rhodesia has seen many long years of bloodshed and murder,' he said, reading from a prepared statement. 'Now is the time to bury the old rivalries that divide us and return to the ballot box.'

The Governor also pointed out that a postponement would be 'grossly unfair' on those parties which had been campaigning for so long, some starting even before the formal signature of the Lancaster House agreement.

'We have all of us suffered greatly as a result of the Rhodesian tragedy,' he said. 'But we have also all made a firm commitment that this settlement should work. I am sure leaders of all parties agree that the Lancaster House agreement stands above petty partisan interests.'

However, the Governor did admit that special measures would be necessary to deal with ceasefire violations. Extra troops were to be

flown in from Britain to strengthen the Commonwealth force, presently engaged in keeping the two sides apart.

Five hundred men of the 2nd Parachute Regiment and advisers from the Special Air Services Regiment will leave Lineham, Wiltshire, tomorrow. The Governor has also agreed to requests from Mr Nkomo and Mr Mugabe that the reinforcements should be strengthened by the addition of 30 Nigerian military observers.

Like the other British, Australian and New Zealand forces posted in the sensitive bush areas, the new arrivals will have instructions to shoot to kill if they see guerillas straying from their pre-designated assembly points.

The Governor paid special tribute to the Southern Rhodesian Air Force, of which he is titular head, for the regular reconnaissance flights it has made, which have been 'invaluable' in helping the monitoring force to detect ceasefire violators.

In the face of hostile questioning from African journalists, the Governor denied that some of these flights had been made by South African Mirages flying under Rhodesian markings and dismissed allegations that South African personnel had ever seen active service in the country as 'absurd'.

'The Prime Minister, Mr Botha, and the Foreign Minister, Mr Botha, both assure me that they are well pleased with the Lancaster House agreement. Their sole military activity in the last month has been a completely routine combined operations exercise, involving 30,000 men, on the southern banks of the Limpopo (the border with Rhodesia).

'Although they are not required to, the South African government is nevertheless adhering to an informal



JOSHUA NKOMO

understanding that all border areas should be demilitarised.'

The Governor added: 'If the gentlemen of the press do not believe me they can go and see for themselves. Glossy brochures describing the activities of the ceasefire monitoring force are available here in the Government Press Centre and the army organises regular trips for journalists. You don't have to take my word for it.'

'Thank you for your cooperation, gentlemen.'

**NAMIBIA**  
Oppose the British government's pro-South African deals  
Wednesday 12 December

MASS PICKET 6-7pm outside South Africa House, Trafalgar Square

PUBLIC MEETING with SWAPO speaker, 7.30pm, National Liberal Club, 1 Whitehall Place

Organised by Namibia Support Committee [388 5539]

## FOURTH INTERNATIONAL HOLDS WORLD CONGRESS

THE ELEVENTH WORLD CONGRESS (Fifth since reunification) of the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution, was held in Belgium in the week of 17-25 November. Delegates represented sections and sympathising organisations in 48 countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania, and North and South America.

The discussions at the World Congress were held in the context of the deepening of the international class struggle exemplified by the revolutions in Iran and Nicaragua. Of special note was the presence of delegates from the Iranian Socialist Workers Party [HKS], an expression of the geographical extension of the forces of the Fourth International since its last World Congress in 1974, as well as its deepening roots in the worldwide revolutionary struggle.

The World Congress is the highest body of the Fourth International. Delegates were elected to the congress from each national section after extensive, democratic debate and discussion, including an international written discussion, representing the various points of view in the International on the matters under consideration. The Congress adopted by majority vote resolutions on the following points: (1) the world political situation and the main overall tasks of the Fourth International; (2) building the Fourth International in capitalist Europe; (3) Latin America; (4) the international women's liberation movement; (5) the revolution in Nicaragua.

To prepare for the major class battles to come, the congress also decided to make a radical turn to place in industry a majority of the cadres won to the sections of the International in the previous period.

The adoption of the resolution Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women's Liberation marked the first time the Marxist movement has developed such a comprehensive programmatic document on this question.

Indicative votes were taken on resolutions on the conflicts in Indochina, and on the relation between socialist democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Discussion on these points will continue, and a definitive decision will be taken on them at a later time.

The congress elected an International Executive Committee, which is the leadership of the International between world congresses. The IEC will meet once a year. Immediately following the congress, the IEC elected the United Secretariat, a smaller body which acts for the IEC between IEC meetings.

# SWP CONFERENCE

## Which way forward?

By Davy Jones and Rich Palsler

THE Socialist Workers Party is the largest revolutionary organisation in Western Europe or North America. Of its 3,600 members, 33.5 per cent are members of manual unions, 34 per cent of white collar unions and 14 per cent are students. A quarter of its members are women. Its weekly paper, *Socialist Worker*, has a paid circulation of 13,000, the monthly *Socialist Review* sells 4,500 copies, and the quarterly *International Socialism* has a print order of 3,000 copies.

The national conference of the SWP was held in mid-November. Whereas the last two conferences had essentially rubber-stamped the line of the leadership, the 1979 conference was preceded by a sharp and lively internal discussion on three major issues: the character of the period; Leninism and the autonomous movements; and inner-party democracy.

In passing it should be noted that the political debates were unfortunately not reflected in the pages of *Socialist Worker*. It seems pointless to conceal the richness of the discussion from a wider audience which could benefit. Far from being a sign of 'softness' or 'liberalism', such a move would demonstrate the confidence and strength of the organisation.

The ultimate logic of hiding differences could be seen in the bland report of the conference which appeared in *Socialist Worker*. On this front, at least, even the Communist Party is much more open in admitting and debating differences in public.



### The character of the period

The central debate of the conference was a discussion on the state of the class struggle in Britain. This debate has been going on in the SWP for some time and the two leading protagonists, Tony Cliff and Steve Jeffreys, ventilated their thoughts in public (and at great length) in the last two issues of *International Socialism*.

Cliff, supported by a majority of the Central Committee, argued in the pre-conference debate that there had been a sharp downturn in the class struggle. He ascribed this to certain structural changes in industry — typified, in his opinion, by the partial bureaucratisation and incorporation of shop stewards. Hence struggles would be limited, essentially defensive in character, with a clearcut logic for the practice of the SWP.

Some of Cliff's more exuberant supporters argued that there had been a decisive defeat of the working class: 'Grunwicks defeated, the firemen sold out, the low paid betrayed, the miners divided, Deep Duffryn closed, Leyland demolished, the shipyards smashed, Fleet Street flattened, solidarity seldom, collections puny, pickets tiny, lock-outs back, lay-offs normal, sell-outs expected but not prevented. The catalogue is endless.'

Jeffreys accepted that there had been a downturn, but explained this by the coincidence of a sharp economic crisis and a Labour government in office. In other words, it was the ideological weaknesses of the working class and the lack of a viable socialist alternative that paved the way for setbacks, culminating in the return of a Tory government.

Jeffreys and those supporting his political positions denied that these setbacks constituted a fundamental shift in the relation of class forces. They pointed to the recent engineering workers' struggles, denied that the miners had been

defeated, pointed out that *The Times* management had capitulated, and argued that the situation was much more complex than the one-sided view of the majority.

Jeffreys explained that from 1977 the level of struggle and wages had risen, but within the framework of reformism. Expressed in a different way the point being made is an axiom of Leninism: industrial militancy does not automatically lead to a growth of socialist consciousness.

In the course of the debate there were continual references to the 1974 decision of the SWP to 'steer left' — the phase when the politics of the SWP reached a peak of ultraleftism. While the majority defended that orientation, the Glasgow leaders of the SWP argued that 'the success of the steer left policy sometimes seemed to be measured by how isolated you could make yourself'. They explained that a significant number of workers had left the organisation as a result and that a repeat performance would be suicidal.

In the final resolution put to the vote the majority conceded that there had been no defeat of the working class as such. The vote revealed a 60-40 division in favour of the CC majority.

### Autonomous Movements

The most heated discussion was on the vexed question of *Women's Voice* and the relation of WV groups to the SWP. At its last conference the SWP had evolved the formula of 'organisational but not political independence'. This was an attempt to avoid taking a clear decision and it resulted in bitter internal wrangling inside the WV groups and the WV conference. A similar debate took place on the relation of *Flame* to the SWP.

To many readers of *Socialist Challenge* these debates will appear rather strange. As far as we are

concerned there is no counterposition between building a socialist feminist current inside the women's liberation movement and building our own revolutionary organisation.

The formal position of all currents in the SWP is to counterpose themselves organisationally to the women's movement. The CC majority argued that *Women's Voice* should be explicitly seen as an SWP journal intervening to build a base for the SWP amongst working class women. Those opposing this position made many correct political points on women's oppression, but counterposed an independent revolutionary women's organisation to both the SWP and the existing women's movement.

A similar discussion persisted on the question of independent black organisations — although given the non-existence of a black liberation movement in Britain today, the debate essentially boiled down to whether or not it was a priority for the SWP to make a permanent political intervention inside the black communities.

The majority felt that the membership returns so far did not justify such a priority at the present time. On both *Women's Voice* and *Flame* the CC majority won the day by a substantial margin.

### Internal democracy

The internal regime of the SWP has, since 1974, resembled that of an organisation operating in conditions of clandestinity under a military dictatorship. Less than a dozen militants (all full-timers) constituted the leadership of the organisation after the 1975 expulsions of some former leaders who resisted being steered to the left.

According to Martin Shaw, writing in the 1978 *Socialist Register*: 'Faced with a strong political challenge, the leadership had changed the rules and made itself into a

self-perpetuating, exclusive and virtually monolithic body, whose discussions were not even reported in any detail to the membership.'

Shaw predicted: 'It was simply not conceivable that the membership could change it (the leadership) in any way, and any alterations would have to come from the top.'

This year a small but significant change took place. Under heavy pressure from the delegates the outgoing CC was forced to accept constitutional changes. A National Committee of 40 with decision-making powers on 'general policy' was elected directly by the conference, and the Central Committee was also elected by the conference.

However, an important Leninist principle of ensuring minority representation on all leading bodies was studiously ignored. It was only a rank-and-file revolt which ensured that Steve Jeffreys was added on to the official NC slate adopted by the conference.

### Conclusions

The 1979 conference of the SWP revealed both the weaknesses and strengths of that organisation. Its ability to assess the present period was clearly aided by the base which it still retains in the manual unions. On the other hand pragmatism and 'Cliff's instincts' are not going to be sufficient in this period.

There was little or no discussion on ruling class strategy and tactics — a major weakness given the Tory victory and its aftermath. The discussion on Labour was essentially limited to organisational tips on how to relate to workers under Benn's influence. There was no discussion of a long-term strategy required to construct a revolutionary party in Britain.

ENTRIES are 5p a word; semi-display £2 a column inch. Deadline: 5pm Friday before publication. All payments in advance.

'WHAT'S LEFT for Hackney' conference 2 on socialist strategy and local objectives. Speakers inc. Ted Knight, Sheila Rowbotham, Stuart Weir, David Green. Workshops. Sun 9 Dec, 10.15am to 5pm, All Nations Club, Martello St, E8.

NICARAGUA BENEFIT, Tue 11 Dec, 7pm, Art College, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh. Film: 'Nicaragua — Free Country or Death'. Sponsored by Art College SU, Chile Action Group, MIR, IMG, WEA.

BOOKS for Southern Africa comrades. Money desperately needed for this vital field of international activity or any books you can spare. To 'Books for Southern Africa', Box 102, Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.

MANCHESTER Regional TU Conference on Abortion Rights, 15 Dec 1979, Small Assembly Room, UMIST, Sackville Street, Manchester 1. Starts 10.15am. To discuss the way forward for the fight for safe, early and free abortion facilities and services. Registration: £1 individuals, £2.50 TU delegates, unwaged — donations. Creche available. For more info phone Manchester NAC, 061-224 4392.

'FREE ABORTION on Demand' and 'No means No' badges are again available from The Week, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Singly 25p each, bulk 12p each. Make cheques or POs out to 'The Week'.

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'NICARAGUA: Another Cuba?' Spartacist Public Forum, Birmingham, 7.30pm, Fri 7 Dec. Labour Club, Bristol St. (For further information ring 021-472 7726).

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IF YOU can translate from any East European language (esp. Russian and Hungarian) and would like to contribute to the work of the Trotskyist movement by helping to translate some short texts, please send your name and address to: Alternatives in Eastern Europe, PO Box 50, London N1.

PICKET Bow Street magistrates court in London in support of the two women arrested during the second reading of the Corrie Bill. Thurs 6 Dec at 2pm.

OUT NOW! Issue No 4 Bulletin on Social Policy. Articles on radical social work and social policy in Northern Ireland. Available from: 89 Mitchell St, Rochdale, Lancs. Price 60p.

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INTERVENTION No 3 out now. Ernest Mandel in focus; critical reviews; four essays on crisis, education, permanent arms economy, 'long waves', and more. £1.20 inc. p&p, from: Intervention, c/o 60 Loughborough Rd, London SW9.

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LETTERS published on this page will normally be cut to at least 400 words, to ensure that the maximum number of readers can express their views.

Anonymous letters will not be published unless there is a very special reason, but real names will be withheld from publication on request.

## Miners on the cheap

I AM forwarding this letter on the miners' pay claim for publication in *Socialist Challenge*, because I live in a mining area and work on a coal face. I feel that we have to explain the implications of the pay-deal involving the present Tory government and the National Union of Mineworkers.

On 30 November there will be a pit-head ballot to decide the outcome of the £140 per week pay claim for face-workers. This would be scaled down by work differentials to give a minimum of £80 per week to surface workers.

The NCB has offered only 20 per cent, stating that this is their final offer. The national executive of the NUM has requested a measly 5 per cent more. But this was refused on the grounds it would cost a further £55m on top of the £180m already offered — as if a further 5 per cent would be adequate anyway.

Sir Derek Ezra, for reasons of marketing coal, has said: 'It is a very, very sad day in the life of the coal industry.' *Guardian* 22 November. He is right — but his reasons are not.

For the past two years the miners' pay claims have been for £110 and £135, now it's for £140 per week. Even last year's claim of £110 would not be achieved if the 20 per cent offer is accepted. The face-workers' basic pay, at present £15.79 a shift, will only be £94.75 if the offer is accepted.

Those who argue that the 'bonus system' will increase this figure are unaware of the unfairness of the productivity scheme.

The 'magic' £23.50 extra in every face-workers pay packet was hammered home in the media but in reality some pits have been on a lot less bonus than this. On the other hand, some pits have been paying much higher bonuses.

This is only to be expected when geological and working conditions vary so much between different pits. Development workers (who drive new roadways for new panels of coal to be worked) have been on the highest bonus rates of all.

These only outline the unfairness of the miners' bonus scheme and so they should not be taken into account in any wage claim at all. Basic pay for a basic week is what we need.

If the miners believe, as many do, that 20 per cent is the best offer ever made to them by any government then they had better look again.

If the 20 per cent is accepted it will mean a drop in living standards for the miners with inflation running at nearly 19 per cent. When the tax is deducted from the 20 per cent rise we'll be losing money.

Sir Derek Ezra has also stated that: 'When the mineworkers know all the facts and bear in mind what is at stake they will feel it worth carrying on', *Guardian* 22 November. Again he is right, but only for our reasons.

Selling cheap coal does not mean cheap labour and falling living standards. During the Labour government the miners accepted 10 per cent here, £6.50 across the board there and negotiated a productivity deal. These did not achieve the original demands and it is obvious that the 20 per cent offered during the Tory (cut the services — raise the profits) government will not achieve our aims again.

On 6 December the result of the pit-head ballot will be known. 55 per cent is needed for national strike action.

The only way to combat such offers and safeguard wages is by having a 'sliding scale of wages' (index linked with inflation) determined by the trade union movement for all workers. This would protect the 'buy power' of our wages and prevent a further fall in living standards.

PH Wilson, M Alsop (NUM North Derbyshire), H Alsop (NUM North Notts)

## Sexist garbage

AS A feminist I would never presume to talk for the 'vast majority of women', (Tommy Cusack's letter, SC 22 Nov). Tommy Cusack obviously thinks he has such a right. Not only this, but he can also define what a feminist is!

When the hell will men on the left get off our backs, and stop defining what they think women to be, in order that they can dismiss us and our politics? What access does this particular man have to the WLM that he can decide who and who is not a feminist?

Naturally, though, being able to claim to be such an authority enables some people to go on to spout the biggest load of crass and sexist garbage.

Isn't it marvellous, for what some have been struggling to analyse for years, has all of a sudden been summed up in a nutshell: 'the material basis for sexism is quite simply class society.'!

Such a crude analysis is what the WLM is constantly fighting against. Perhaps the comrade will inform us where patriarchy fits into his neat little clichéd statement?

I am glad, however, that Cusack does not want us to leave the fight for women's liberation until after the revolution; some of us came to that very conclusion quite some time ago. LOUISE SMITH, Leeds

## Tracking Blunt

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE'S coverage of the Blunt affair (SC 123) seems to have missed out on what is the most revealing aspect of the Philby-Burgess-Maclean-Blunt saga, ie. the role of the Stalinists.

The whole network was recruited at the time of Popular Fronts and Moscow trials, when all pretences of building revolutionary parties were being abandoned. Only in these circumstances is it explicable how a number of intellectuals, attracted towards socialism and mistakenly seeing it embodied in the Stalinist regime, were so easily manipulated by the bureaucracy.

If revolution was off the agenda, and defence of the Soviet Union was the key task, then what better way of helping than by exposing bourgeois secrets. Much more useful than devoting one's time to building a revolutionary party that was no longer needed.

Stalinism succeeded in demoralising a whole number of intellectuals by turning them away from the task of building a revolutionary leadership for the working class, some to build a Stalinist party in Britain, others apparently to practise 'entryism' into the state.

Blunt is just one tragedy among many. Perhaps if he'd realised the real meaning of the Moscow trials he might today be art critic for *Socialist Challenge*!

PETE EVANS, Stockport

## 'Roots' reviewer deserves night out

I AGREE with Gerry Kelly's view (SC 123) that *Roots: the Next Generation* had limitations. This arose from the constraints of its narrative structure centring on a family over 100 years. Therefore it concentrates on the America black experience of racism and consciousness in a restricted way.

Similarly to maintain narrative continuity there seemed to be an obsession with births, marriages and deaths.

But to dismiss it in Gerry Kelly's terms as a black 'Waltons' is to offer merely a superficial response. The series might not have had as much misery as he would have liked but it did attempt to allude to problems of class and race in American society.

The coverage of blacks' campaigns for the vote, of the political nature of the KKK's anti-semitism and anti-black views, of the question of participation in the

First World War, of the struggle of black and white sharecroppers, of the growth of black consciousness epitomised by Malcolm X, cannot be dismissed as soap opera 'wholesomeness'. Further the portrayal of women as not simply wives and mothers but as oral transmitters of black culture was surely positive?

He is also mistaken in thinking that the last episode suggested open racism was confined to the American Nazi Party. Racism was shown as a continuous presence from the KKK, rednecks, Nazis, racist motel owners, to white liberals who invited token blacks to parties.

The point of Marlon Brando's appearance was missed. Here was an actor known for his liberal stance on the oppression of American Indians and his opposition to the Vietnam war acting a Nazi leader in a deliberately exaggerated and distanced style. Rather than being an isolated example of racism, Brando's condensed appearance drew together many of the themes of racism presented earlier.

We also have to ask what effect did the series have on working class awareness? Was it better than the normal Sunday fare of God and the Onedin Line?

When a 12-year-old student writes me a powerful essay explaining that *Roots 2* was a history of racism in America and that it was showing black people their history and why they should be proud of it, I begin to wonder whether Gerry Kelly would have been better off sticking to the pub on Sunday nights!

RANDALL THOMAS, London E5

## Workers' states re-visited

I WOULD like to add my voice to Ailean O'Callaghan (Letters, 8 November) for a release of major resources for a full debate over Kampuchea and the urgent questions it raises about the criteria for a workers' state, proletarian democracy, and permanent revolution.

The recent political developments in Iran, Latin America and Southern Africa, as well as in Kampuchea, and the recent disagreements and disastrous splits within and from the Fourth International relating to these developments, have surely put the old state capitalism/degenerate workers' state debate back on the agenda for reconsideration and reformulation.

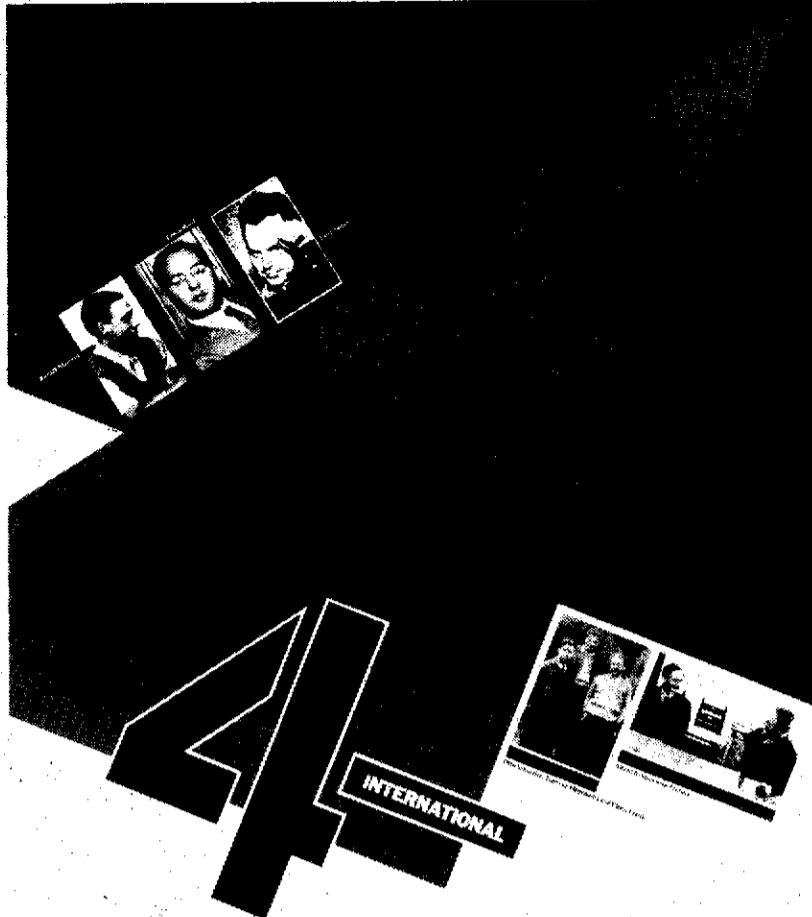
In trying to follow these debates, I find the strongest elements of each position are its criticisms of the weaknesses of its opponents' position. Ailean O'Callaghan's statement of the FI's 'theoretical gains' over the criteria of a workers' state — private capital eliminated, a nationalised and planned economy, monopoly of foreign trade — is fundamentally inadequate because it only specifies economic features.

The concept workers' state requires political criteria that specify the location and exercise of power. A workers' state is a state in transition towards socialism, ie. towards the self-emancipation and direct self-government of the working class etc.

Within a nationalised economy, to expropriate the workers politically is in no very long run to expropriate them economically. Socialist relations of production cannot exist without proletarian democracy, ie. soviet power.

The existence of some form of Marxism-as-it-were-Leninism as a party or state ideology, the ruthless primitive accumulation of capital at the expense of the working class although in its name, even passive popular support for various anti-imperialist measures, cannot constitute a workers' state if the working class as such do not exercise a significant degree of power through its own political organs. In what so-called Marxist state is this the case?

Surely the FI must respond to the criticism that to abandon the organised political activity of the working class as a fundamental feature of proletarian revolution and the resulting workers' state, as



OCTOBER 1980														
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Mandel seems to have done in his *Intercontinental Press* article, is to abandon the proletarian basis of Marxism?

Does the logic of the American comrades' analysis of Kampuchea in *Intercontinental Press* lead to a form of bureaucratic state capitalist model as the recent IS critique claims? The state capitalist must also answer Mandel's demands that the operation of the law of value be demonstrated in the nationalised economies of Russia and Kampuchea. The claim that international competition plays the role of the internal competition of private capitals in bourgeois economies needs also to be substantiated in particular instances.

With the spread of national liberation movements and the virtual absence of a mass revolutionary Marxist party anywhere, the current crop of anti-imperialist overtures are going to produce more regimes that are not in practice proletarian (whatever their claims to be socialist or Marxist), but bear some as yet undefined relation to capital modes of development and exploitation.

Surely this is an urgent priority for all sections of the Fourth International if more splits and disorientations over these new developments are to be avoided and political progress made? JOHN FLETCHER, London N16

## Anti-imperialism

MOHAMMAD J'AFAR's letter on recent events in Iran (22 November) paints a gloomy picture. He characterises the occupation of the US embassy and the demands for the extradition of the Shah as Khomeini's 'semi-fascist project'.

He argues that 'Khomeini is engaged in a populist manoeuvre designed to head off growing discontent...' and chastises SC for 'falling, hook, line and sinker for such an obvious manoeuvre, just because the Iranian masses are backward enough to mobilise in support of it.'

Unfortunately, J'AFAR takes no position on the role of the US in the 'Iranian crisis'. Yet this must be our

starting point. The mass movement which dislodged the Shah struck a massive blow against US imperialist interests in the Middle East.

We must oppose any intervention. We must support the Iranian people against imperialism, not because of 'guilt complexes' but from a clear position of class solidarity.

Opposition to US intervention does not amount to support for Khomeini. His war against the Kurds, his attacks on the left and on press freedom, his contempt for women's rights must be severely condemned.

We must reject the formula that because there 'is nothing anti-imperialist in Khomeini's mobilisation on... the American hostages', it follows that there can be nothing anti-imperialist in the demands which the masses raise.

Did the fact that, in February, Khomeini was at the head of the anti-Shah movement make it any less anti-imperialist? Of course it didn't!

J'AFAR asserts that 'Khomeini is clearing the road for the consolidation of a fully fledged clerical state.' This is no doubt his intention, but the road is littered with pot-holes.

Defeated by the Kurds; confronted by continuing unrest among the Arab nation and in the oil-fields; under pressure from the Turkomans, Azerbaijanis, and Baluchis; and with the pro-clerical forces divided, it cannot be seriously maintained that Khomeini is in an uncontested strong position.

The low vote in the referendum strengthens this argument.

The struggle which erupted last year has not yet run its course. Despondency at the reactionary character of Khomeini's policies should not cause socialists to abstain when the masses are raising demands that strike Western capital in its very heart.

Imperialist threats are real. They seek to re-establish US hegemony in the country. Bazargan's fall and the US embassy mobilisations are ensuring that this path will remain blocked for some time. Barring intervention, this is a gain for the Iranian masses, and one which even Khomeini will find difficult to steal. JOHN LEADBETTER (London WC1)

# UNDER REVIEW

# THE THIRTIES

by Megan Martin

**THE Thirties** is an ambitious exhibition and one which has taken the Arts Council and the Victoria and Albert Museum more than four years to organise. Not only does it cover painting and sculpture of the period and architecture, graphics and decorative art but it also covers design as it was reflected in transport, communications and industry at the time. All this plus a documentary section entitled 'Society Observed'.

It is worth going to see. It combines a survey of intellectual trends in design [the battle for 'modernism'] with straightforward nostalgia and so provides something for everyone.

The picture of the mass media it gives is fascinating. Broadcasting was still young at this time but the amateur days were over and the BBC could claim 5 million licenced receivers in 1932. The advance of the popular newspapers took place in the 30's and it was a boom time for cinema building. It was the beginning of the development of the mass media into the powerful, sophisticated force for controlling ideas that it is today.

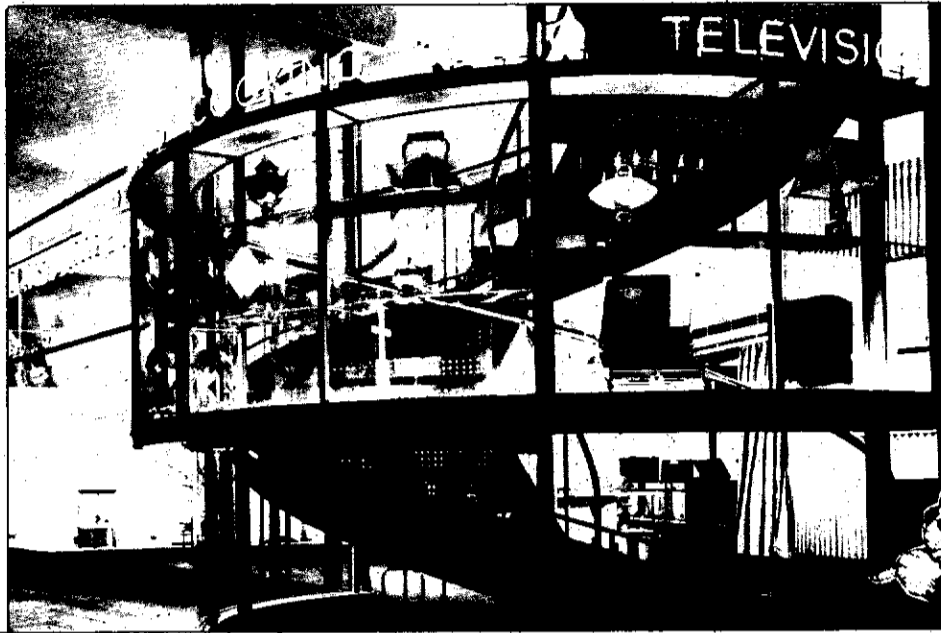
## Weaknesses

Advertising too was in its infancy in the 30's, much more self conscious, and the display of Shell advertising posters are certainly entertaining.

In the documentary section there is much that is downright hilarious — from the photograph of the 'Ramblers Association West of England Rally at the Whitehouse Westbury' to that of the stern faced lantern-jawed Australian cricketers.

But the weaknesses of the exhibition are most clearly demonstrated in the 'Society Observed' section which aims to reflect the social concerns of the 30's.

It is not at all apparent from this section that the decade was a time of misery for the mass of people. Unemployment reached nearly four million in 1932; the dole was cut; millions lived in slum conditions.



Instead of one or two cheerful photos of miners waiting to go down the pit, there could have been photos of the rescues and pit-head vigils which recurred on the pages of the *Daily Herald*.

For that matter why rely on the *Daily Herald* for the depiction of reality? Surely the Arts Council could have collaborated with the National Museum of Labour History to represent social conditions more accurately. The Bede Gallery would have let the Arts Council display the banners of the hunger marchers.

Whatever the reason, the result is a romanticised view of the 30's. Despite increasing social mobility as represented by Shell's posters and BP Ethyl ads, there remained a huge gulf between the classes. It was a decade of class conflict, in Britain as well as internationally. Perhaps the powers that be are afraid of us drawing parallels with the situation today.

Nor is it apparent that people fought back against these conditions. In 1931 12,000 sailors of the Atlantic Fleet at Invergardia passed resolutions against pay cuts; in 1932 there were riots in Birkenhead against the means test; in Hyde park there was a succession of huge demonstrations by the unemployed; in Belfast demonstrations demanding work resulted in 2,000 police-establishing control with gunfire and bayonets fixed; there was the crushing defeat of Mosley's black-shirts at Cable Street; and there were the famous hunger marches.

Out of 245 exhibits in this section we are offered only a couple of pictures of the Jarrow marchers and one of these is a 'witty' painting of a bourgeois couple in evening dress looking down from their window on the arrival of the marchers in London.

To be fair, there is some representation of the work of the Ashington Group which began as a WEA class in art appreciation, most of the members of which are miners and the Artists' International Association whose first major exhibition was 'Artists against war and fascism'.

But these themes are not dominant in the exhibition. The reality of working class life is missing.

This is partly because most of the photographs in the exhibition were originally taken from the *Daily Herald* between 1931 and 1939 and the romantic rustic scenes were all part of the editor's own campaign against 'modernism'.

Attempts could have been made to go beyond the editorial emphasis of the *Daily Herald*. For example the decade resounded with pit disasters.

## THE OTHER BOOKSHOP

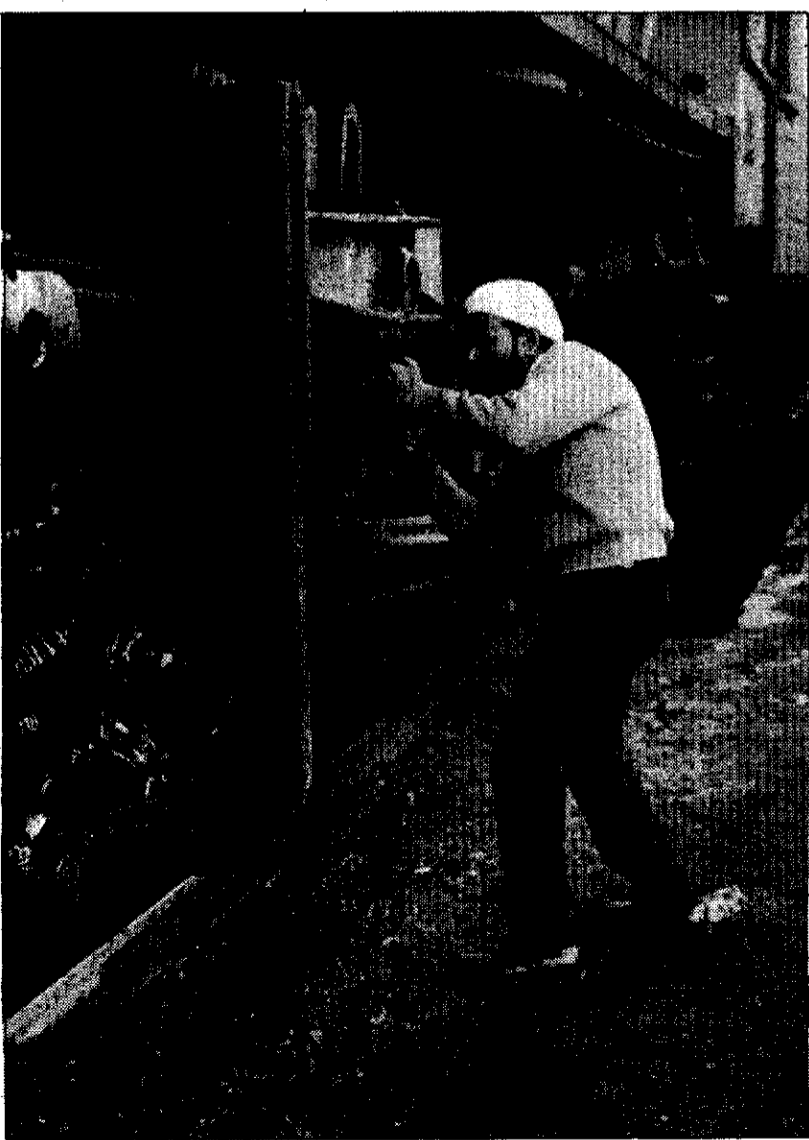
### NEW TITLES

**In the Ditch** by Buchi Emecheta, Allison and Busby, £1.95.

**Season of Adventure**, by George Lamming, Allison and Busby, £2.95.

**One Azania, One Nation — The National Question in Africa**, by No Sizwe, Zed Press, £2.95.

328 Upper Street, London N1 2XQ (tel. 01-226-0571)



'Before the Monsoon' is a trilogy of three one-hour films, two of which have already been screened, on India. Directed with passion and flair by Michael Grigsby they break with traditional documentaries by letting the people do all the speaking.

One of the central figures is Ashok Kumar (above), an engine-driver who is a militant of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). The last film will be screened by ATV next Tuesday at 6pm.

# But what about state racism?

By Bisi Williams

A COMIC is a good way of opening up a discussion among young people about the causes of some of their problems. **ARC**, by Leeds Women Against Racism and Fascism (WARF), deals with racist violence, the National Front, racial discrimination and employment.

The comic attempts to discuss racist stereotyping. An unemployed white youth sees a black driving down the road and says: 'He's on the scrounge like the rest of them.' Is this intended to imply that blacks who are on the dole are scroungers?

A story about the National Front focuses on the racist, anti-working class policies they would introduce if they were in government. A shop steward is arrested for being a 'red'. But the sacking of Derek Robinson and the proposed Nationalities Bill are happening under a Tory government. It is misleading to associate such extremist and racist measures with the NF only.

## Ignored

If this comic leads to discussion among young white people about the nature of state racism, and helps them bring out these points themselves, this would be highly educative. But what about young blacks? They know that racism is not the NF, but 'sas', disruptive units at school and no job. The NF doesn't stand for much they haven't already experienced to some degree.

The comic completely ignores black self-organisation and concentrates on Community Relations Councils to combat the racism they



experience at work. Complaining to these bodies, we are told, will 'stop them (the employers) treating other people unfairly in the future'.

This liberal rubbish may deceive young whites but many black youth know better.

Race relations legislation has

hardly altered the position of blacks in Britain at all. Unfortunately, because the comic fails to explain the way the state institutionalises racism in this country, particularly through the immigration laws, black youth may reject everything else that is positive about the comic.

# Socialist Challenge

## SOUTHALL SHOW TRIALS GO ON AND ON

SEVERAL weeks ago Juliana Henry, a 22-year-old West Indian sister, was found guilty at Barnet magistrates court of assaulting a police officer and threatening behaviour during the anti-NF demo in Southall on 23 April. Her appeal was heard on 21 November at St Albans Crown Court.

The Crown Court confirmed the verdict and Juliana was sentenced to one month in prison. She was immediately transported to Holloway Prison. Juliana is a single parent and her two-year-old child is being looked after by an aunt.

★★★★★★★★★★★★

On 23 April she was at 26 Park View — the headquarters of Misty and Peoples Unite in Southall. It was attacked by the police with great force and brutality. Clarence Baker, Misty's manager, was nearly killed as a result, and hundreds were arrested.

The police claimed that Juliana was on the top floor throwing bricks. She was seen by a policeman for 'fifteen seconds'. He stated in court that he recognised her because she was wearing a black scarf.

When the defence asked whether the policeman was aware that lots of black women wore black scarves, the judge said that the question was irrelevant. The judge also stated that she was the only coloured person at the window at the time. Such an obvious lie must have embarrassed even the police!

★★★★★★★★★★★★

In sentencing Juliana the judge stated: 'The blue uniform must be respected.' So black faces can be smashed, black people can be battered, provided the 'blue uniform is respected'.

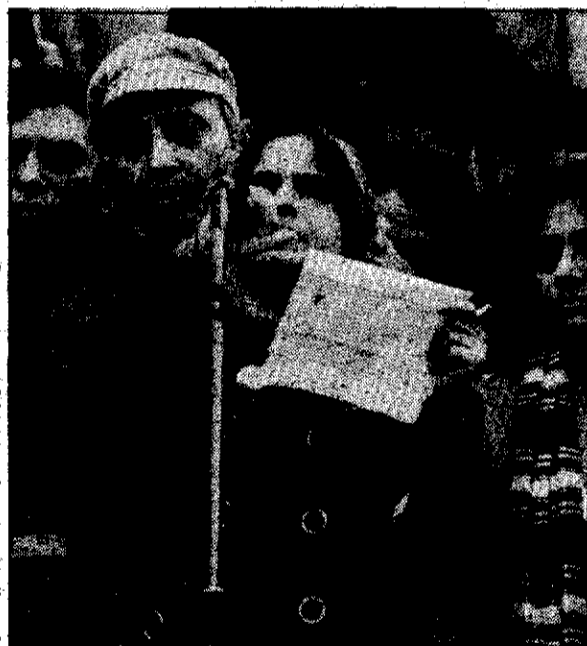


Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

Southall speaker at 25 November demo against immigration controls

Parita Trivedy from the Southall Campaign Committee was in the public gallery when Juliana was sentenced. She was not allowed to take notes and her notepad was snatched from her by the police. She was told that 'the judge rules this court in his own way'.

Peoples Unite is a predominantly West Indian organisation. It is especially hated by the local police. Five of the thirteen people so far sent to prison are from Peoples Unite.

On Monday 17 December four members of Peoples Unite will be up before the Barnet magistrates and the next day Clarence Baker will face trial. The Southall Campaign Committee and Peoples Unite are calling for a picket of the Barnet magistrates court on 17 December at 9.30am (nearest tube High Barnet).

Committee members are enraged that there is still no consistent campaign by the labour movement to demand that these show trials are stopped.

PADDINGTON Socialist Challenge group are organising their second film/social night on Friday 14 December with Alain Tanner and John Berger's classic *La Salamandre*.

Last time they showed *The Spiral*, about Chile, and made £80 for the paper's fund drive. Here DAVE KELLAWAY of the Paddington group makes some suggestions as to how other supporters could go about organising similar events.

1. Choose a good night (Fridays are suitable) at least six weeks in advance to allow for booking problems and publicity.

2. Arrange a room at the same time. Make sure it is okay for showing films — plugs, seating, blackout and tolerance from the landlord.

3. Budget for an audience of 60-100 at about £1 a head donation. Film distributors demand a cut if you advertise and charge entry. This allows for a film costing about £25, which really works out at £32 once VAT and carriage is added. Plenty of good films are available for hire at that price.

4. Catalogues are available from all the main distributors for this sort of film: *Connoisseur Films Ltd*, 167 Oxford St, London W1; *Contemporary Films Ltd*, 55 Greek St, London W1; *Other Cinema*, 12 Little Newport St, London WC2; *Harris Films*, Surbiton, Surrey; *Cuban and Soviet films* can be sorted out via the embassies; *The British Film Institute* are very friendly and will tell you where you can get the film you want.

5. Choose a film for the audience you are capable of mobilising. It doesn't have to be Z or a 'purely' political film.

6. Get your well produced publicity out at least three weeks in advance. Give a brief 'come-on' type synopsis of the film and the when,

where, why details. Then it can be easily used as a notice. Get it in *Time Out* or other progressive journals where you don't have to pay much — as well as *Socialist Challenge*, of course.

7. Arrange to borrow the projector, screen and all other equipment (teachers and community workers usually have access to such things). Check that the plugs match and the lead reaches before the night. Make sure one comrade knows how to project and have a trial run through.

8. Finally, make sure the social is close to the film venue. You can flog food and drink for extra revenue during the film.

Of course the above doesn't completely apply to the use of films as part of a campaign meeting or where you want to organise discussions around the film.

\*\*\*

YOU'D better get moving with some kind of fund-raising activity because we're well behind schedule in fighting to meet this quarter's £2,500 target.

Our thanks this week to:

Swindon SC	£5.00
P. Scott	4.00
M. Thomas	2.00
Outer West London IMG	50.00
P. Shafee	60.00
Anon	1.00
Week's total	£122.00
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>£808.66</b>

Also, our apologies to those whom we inadvertently forgot to credit two weeks ago. They were:

P. Ling	£5.00
S. Austin	5.00
H. Wicks	2.00
Manchester seller	1.72
N. Beeton	10.00
L. Thalman	10.00

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 — Airmail £18.00  
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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