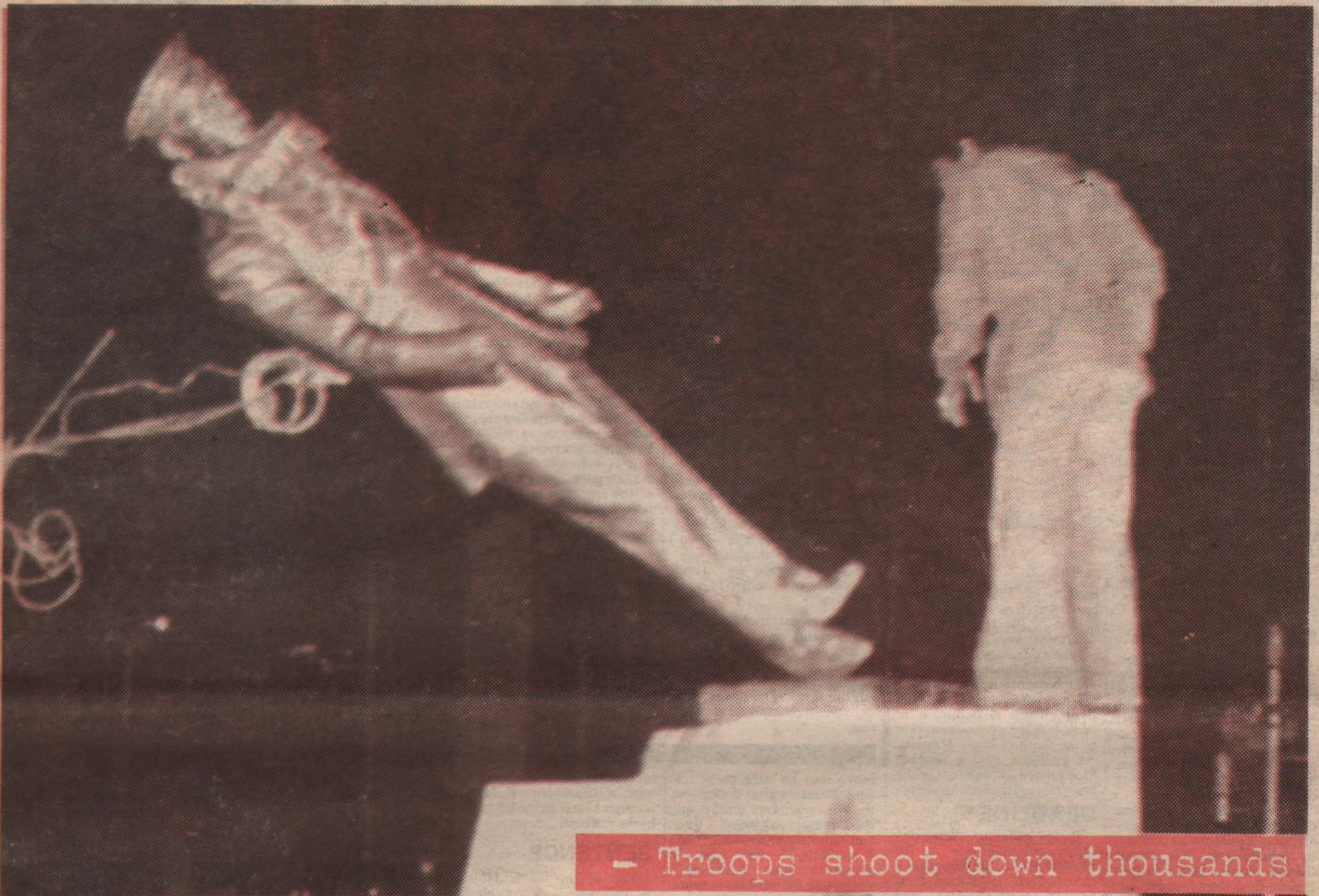


Socialist Challenge



- Troops shoot down thousands

of demonstrators

- Masses erect barricades

in Tehran

- Labour Government refuses to stop

flow of arms

- Mass protest planned in London for

December 17

(Pages 2 & 11 for further news and

analysis)



CHINA IN TURMOIL DOSSIER ~ PAGES 7,8&9

THE NEWS on this page may be out of date by the time you read it. Nevertheless it will still present a more complete picture than the typically fawning Fleet Street.

On this page we bring you an eyewitness report phoned through from Tehran at the weekend; RICHARD CARVER pieces together some of the other events in this crisis week for the Pahlavi dynasty; and, most importantly, you can read what progress is being made to build the 17 December solidarity demonstration.

Shah flees to island retreat

EVERY layer of Tehran society, from the court to the street, is nearly certain that the Shah will go in the next week or so.

But if he manages to ride the present crisis he will be considerably strengthened, if only temporarily.

The Shah himself is aware of the fate which awaits him. Sources in Tehran inform us that he has joined his family on the Gulf island of Kish — a small rock covered with casinos, luxury hotels and brothels, which is an apt symbol for the Pahlavi dynasty.

Tehran sources report that a group of generals visited the Shah last week to try to get him to relinquish power. Now there are indications that a regency council has been formed which will take power in the next few days.

SHIFT

Certainly something is afoot. Ardeshir Zahedi, the ambassador to Washington who is widely regarded as the go-between for the Shah and Carter, has returned to Tehran.

Some big policy shift is on the cards. The last time Zahedi was in Tehran martial law was declared!

Probably US imperialism has decreed that it can no longer afford to jeopardise its interests by propping up this blood-stained maniac. Better to give ground now than lose the lot.

The reason the governmental crisis continues, as shown by our eyewitness account, is the strength of the masses on the street.

SLAUGHTER

The first salient fact about the last few days, typically suppressed by the British press, is that possibly thousands of people have died in a slaughter even bloodier than 'Black Friday'.

But the second is that the fighting spirit of the demonstrators is only getting fiercer. For the first time there have been exchanges of gunfire — in other words the people are shooting back.

A police officer died in one of these clashes on Monday. Barricades have gone up in



BUT PRINCESS PASHRAF THE COLLEGE CAN'T GIVE YOU THE £400,000 BRICK FOR 'HOLIDAY' CASH!

sections of Tehran, which is moving to virtual civil war.

Part of the reason for the determination of the opposition is the religious month of mourning, Moharram.

Moharram is a crucial part of the religious calendar of Shia Islam, which is dominant in Iran. It is the commemoration of the death of Imam Hussein, the grandson of the prophet Mohammed, at the hands of the precursors of the Suni Moslems.

DEADLINE

In a religious ceremony unlike anything else in the Moslem world, Shi'ites enact a month of self-flagellation, chest beating, passion plays, and latterly, scarcely disguised political demonstration.

Religious dedication partly explains the masses' readiness to defy the military government's ban on public manifestations of Moharram.

But, more to the point, they sense that their political objective is only days away; the tenth day of Moharram (11 December) is widely touted as the deadline for the departure of the King of Kings.

The essential factor is the co-ordination between all sections of the opposition. As indicated in our report from Tehran — and contrary to the Western press — the oil workers' strike continues.

We also hear that power workers are taking selective strike action. When the troops

BARRICADES GO UP IN TEHRAN



Eyewitness report

“ At about 9pm last night (1 December) large crowds of people, wearing white shrouds, started coming out onto the streets in the poorer southern districts of Tehran.

They began demonstrating, shouting 'Death to the Shah'. The number of demonstrators rapidly grew as they were joined by people who had gathered in mosques for ceremonies marking the beginning of the month of Moharram.

Truck loads of soldiers and jeeps equipped with machine guns rapidly appeared on the scene. Army officers addressed the crowd through loudspeakers in an insulting way, telling the people to 'get lost and go home or else we'll start shooting'.

The demonstrators refused to disperse and the soldiers began firing into the crowd. As soon as people in other districts of Tehran heard the sound of gunfire they began coming out onto the streets and demonstrating.

move into an area to attack demonstrators after the curfew the power workers simply pull the plugs, allowing their comrades to get away.

Ironically, the regime's anti-strike laws have only stimulated the workers to more imaginative actions. Workers are generally obliged to clock on, but they then work to rule or implement elementary workers' control.

LIST

The power workers' action is one such example. The many workers who have held political discussions in company time are another. And the oil workers' decision that they would determine who did and didn't get fuel was a third.

But the most explosive example has been the bank workers', who drew up a list of the 200-odd top officials who were smuggling capital out of the country.

The official inquiry set up to investigate the allegations will be a whitewash and nobody

The demonstrations reached their peak between 10-10.30pm in Shahreza and Hedayat Avenues. Demonstrations were attacked by helicopter gunships and many were killed.

The demonstrations continued until about 4am. Throughout this time automatic fire could be heard.

Once the demonstrations had subsided after 4am fire engines were brought in to wash the blood off the streets.

It is believed that at least 2-3,000 people were killed. One of the reporters from *Kayhan* saw an armoured car open fire on demonstrators in Sarsabil, killing many.

The official casualty figures broadcast on the radio are seven deaths and 35 injured, but *Kayhan* reporters have counted up to 800 bodies in the city morgues, while many bodies are believed to have been taken to an unknown destination in army trucks.

Early this morning people started to come out onto the streets once more. They have set

up barricades to prevent tanks and army trucks moving through the streets.

At 10am the sound of gunfire can be heard throughout the city once again. In several parts of the city people have begun religious processions in the streets in defiance of the martial law authorities.

Tehran and Shiraz refineries are on strike. There is a partial strike in the southern oil fields. A full strike is expected to start today. Many shops, offices and all schools remain closed.

10.30am: a large demonstration is taking place in Sa'adi Avenue. Troops have opened fire, killing many.

11.30am: Tens of thousands of demonstrators have gathered in front of the main entrance of the bazaar carrying placards saying 'Death to the Shah'.

They called on soldiers to join them. As they approached troop carriers an officer put down his gun and greeted the demonstrators. He told his soldiers to do the same.

takes it seriously. The main topic of conversation in Tehran is rather who is on the list issued by the workers.

SENTENCE

Top of the list is Hojbr Yazdani who is responsible for salting away some £40m. The strange thing about his name being on the list is that he is supposed to be already serving a six month sentence for corruption — a case in which Nassiri, the former head of SAVAK, is implicated.

It is the presence of so many military names on the list which most embarrasses the government.

CODE

But most interesting of all are the large sums of money removed from the country under a code name. The workers, who know that the culprit is the Shah himself, have demanded that the Central Bank release the real name. The crucial factor at this stage

of the Iranian revolution will be the impact of the mass movement on the ranks of the army. Discipline is beginning to crumble.

Our Tehran correspondent reports how an officer greeted demonstrators at the weekend. Another eyewitness tells of how an officer broke down in tears when his soldiers refused to disperse a picket of striking oil workers.

SHOOTING

And we have heard that shooting has been reported from inside the major Saltanat Abad army base in north-east Tehran. That could mean a number of things — but none of them bodes well for the regime.

With the mass movement at its present pitch the prospect of an orderly stabilisation of a pro-Western regime to succeed the Shah looks distant.

If the army collapses it will be non-existent.

All out 17 December

A CAMPAIGN of meetings, poster and badge selling is sweeping the country in preparation for the 17 December Iranian solidarity demonstration.

One of the biggest meetings was a gathering of several hundred in London on Monday night.

But perhaps the biggest breakthrough has been in Liverpool, where the dock shop stewards have invited a speaker from the Committee Against Repression in Iran to address their quarterly this Wednesday.

The dock shop stewards' committee will also be sending a speaker to a Trades Council-sponsored public meeting on Thursday [7.30, Red Star Social Club, 39 Shaw Street, Liverpool 5].

There was another breakthrough in Birmingham last Saturday, when for the first time supporters of the religious opposition in Iran joined a 500-strong demonstration called by the Committee Against Repression in Iran.

In Plymouth, where 'Dr Death' Owen has his [marginal] constituency, 150 people marched through the city centre on Saturday to attack British complicity with the Shah.

And, perhaps most importantly of all, CARI is in touch with shop stewards at the Vickers plant in Newcastle, where they make the Chieftain tanks which are propping up the Shah.

Readers in those areas where there hasn't yet been any action should take the initiative: try to invite CARI speakers to your labour movement organisation, for example. It doesn't matter that you won't be able to arrange it till after Christmas — solidarity will still be needed then.

Get the new CARI badge to sell, and posters for the demo from Box 4, 182 Upper Street, London N1.

DEMONSTRATE!
Sunday 17 December
1.30pm, Speakers Corner

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

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

NAME

ADDRESS

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

OUR POLICIES

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

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

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

* To begin to fight for the creation of a unified and democratic revolutionary socialist organisation which can, through an application of united front tactics, begin to be seen as an alternative by thousands of workers engaged in struggles. Such an organisation should be based on the understanding that:

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

2 Our socialism will be infinitely more democratic than what exists in Britain today, with full rights for all political parties and currents that do not take up arms against the socialist state. The Stalinist models of 'socialism' in the USSR and Eastern Europe have discredited socialism in the eyes of the 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 'Euro-communist' nor the pro-Moscow wings have any meaningful strategy for the overthrow of the capitalist state. New revolutionary socialist parties are more necessary than ever before. Conditions today are more favourable than over the preceding three decades. But such parties can only be built by rejecting sectarianism and seeing internal democracy not as a luxury but as a vital necessity. This means the right to organise factions and tendencies.

Unions lack strategy in press shutdown

The proposals of Times Newspapers management have met almost complete opposition from its workforce, but the shutdown of the presses still finds the unions on the defensive. Leaders of a major print union seek a compromise settlement, while a work-in remains the best hope for a united struggle.

Work-in would meet management's challenge

By Geoffrey Sheridan,
Labour Staff

The shutdown at Times Newspapers which began last Thursday has had the beneficial effect of concentrating minds, such as those of the journalists on *The Times* who on that day unexpectedly voted to reject management's proposals.

So brazen has been the management plan to lock out its 4,300 employees until a quarter of them agree to accept redundancy, that it has not found wholehearted support even among its Fleet Street neighbours.

Editorials in the *Guardian* and *Daily Mirror* have questioned the value of such a confrontation.

But the virtual unanimity of the unions at Times Newspapers in opposing the plan has yet to be matched by any agreement on how to fight back. Indeed, none of the unions involved has so far come up with a counter-offensive.

For the past week a phoney peace has reigned, with management's last-minute concession of allowing its printworkers to remain on pay for a fortnight and other employees to 'work out' their normal periods of notice.

This policy has all the hallmarks of divide-and-rule tactics, and the largest union involved, NATSOPA, has told its members that they should

stay on until their various notice periods expire, contributing part of their pay to a lockout fund.

The divisions that this is likely to create will be further enhanced by NATSOPA's proposal to place locked out clerical staff in temporary jobs elsewhere in Fleet Street.

The National Graphical Association, whose members' jobs are most directly threatened by the introduction of new technology, plans to raise a £5 weekly levy from all its Fleet Street members, and is prepared to shut down all Thomson's regional newspapers.

But the union leadership has made it clear that it is willing to reach a compromise. While it insists that only NGA members should set copy, and not journalists or clerical workers, it accepts that this would still mean a large loss of jobs.

As Mr William Booroff, the NGA London regional secretary, explains: 'Our members are using the new technology at Mirror Group Newspapers, where Reveille is already being produced on the new equipment, together with several pages of the *Daily Mirror*.

'This has meant a third reduction in jobs in the composing room. A substantial loss of jobs is involved, but what we want is progress in a phased way.'

A number of the Labour MPs

and union leaders who spoke at the 2,500 strong rally held by NATSOPA last week spelled out the implications of micro-electronics for both newspapers and industry as a whole: the devastation of jobs.

Yet the newspaper unions have not raised the kind of demands which can ensure that technology improves workers' lives — the 35 hour week, for example, longer holidays, and earlier retirement; not to mention higher pay.

Much was said by the speakers at the rally — before the audience was sent off to lobby MPs — about the lack of press freedom and the absence of any mass newspaper putting forward labour movement views.

They did not, however, advocate a work-in at *The Times*, which would be the most powerful means of confronting the lockout, building support for the unions, and revealing the bosses' press freedom for what it is.

All of Fleet Street will gain if the printworkers' chapels are defeated at Times Newspapers. Stopping their presses now and producing a workers' paper for the duration of the lockout would concentrate a great many minds.

The all-out strike by provincial journalists which began this week (see page 4) emphasises that need — and opportunity.



THE FIRST (now late) Lord Thomson at the presses with the newspaper he purchased in 1961. He described his stake in TV as a licence to print money. The second Lord Thomson, who heads the lockout, is riding high on oil. Profits this year will be more than £100m.

NGA leader says 'Let's talk about press freedom'

By George Jerrom
Executive member of the NGA
As told to our Labour Staff

'The agreement at the Mirror Group Newspapers is being held up as magnificent, but while there's no compulsory redundancy there the fact is we're working new technology with fewer jobs.

'Times Newspapers is putting a lot of money on the line to buy out jobs — as much as £20-30,000 to individual printworkers. And those who are being wooed don't need much wooing. They're aged over 60, in the highest earnings bracket, which means the redundancy payments are very high.

'The class position should be total job protection. If the system is quicker, let's have more free time. These dimensions of the argument have yet to be aired to any degree.

'If we said we want a sufficient number of jobs for all our needs — for all those in the industry — then it would put a stop to the fight over who does fewer jobs and where the demarcation lines should be.

'There is a natural desire on the part of the NGA leadership to do a deal and compromise. It's written in to the union's

rules, which say that officers should act in a conciliatory manner.

'We have to link the industrial with the political. When management says the confrontation is about freedom and democracy, we should say: "Yes, it is. Let's talk about press freedom."

'We have to break the economic stranglehold that the present owners have over the press, with their papers subsidised by big business through advertising. It allows the *Sun* to publish 32 pages and sell for 7p, while the left's papers are a lot more expensive than that.

'We need some kind of government intervention that will allow left and community papers to be competitive on the newsstands. The Labour Party's proposals for a national printing corporation are helpful. Such a national facility would open the way to municipal presses. If books are available on the rates through libraries, why not local publishing facilities?

'It doesn't look at the moment as if we're taking any initiatives at Times Newspapers. Perhaps the battle lines will show themselves at a later stage.'

Shutdown is industrial vandalism

From Dennis Potter, TV critic of the 'Sunday Times'

I don't want to work for that management again. It's only a small, individual gesture, which will cost me a great deal, but now they have closed the papers I will never go back.

The management is behaving abominably.

'If the problem of British industry is to move from one kind of technology to another, and if management attempts to do that by confrontation, then they are putting machines before people and amplifying every fear of the unions, especially the craft unions.

I don't assume that technological change is unnecessary, but the way Times Newspapers is behaving is antique and stupid. It's industrial vandalism.

With all their editorials pontificating to British industry, their present response shows that they are more capable of preaching than with dealing with an industrially complex problem.

I'm disappointed that the journalists on the *Sunday Times* have accepted management's proposals. It would have cost them nothing to have rejected them.

Until the lockout it may have seemed that the unions were in the wrong. Now it will be clearer who the villains are. If the NGA sticks it out and if people support them, many more will begin to see what management has done.

Management wants 'secretarial dogsbodies'

From Jean Sargeant,
Researcher to the 'Sunday Times' Travel Editor

Management first made their lockout threat in April and then at the end of October supplied my union, NATSOPA, with 22 detailed documents to negotiate. It was only three days before the 30 November shutdown that we were informed of our proposed wage structure.

Many of the proposals are incredible. The document on our duties says it applies to: 'secretaries, research assistants, and copy typists — hereinafter referred to as secretaries'. That's characteristic of the tone of the document.

It gives management unprecedented rights over our time. When we take meal breaks would be at their discretion. They want short notice shift changes, so that they could tell us on a Friday that we have to come in on Saturday.

And just about anyone in NATSOPA Clerical could be asked to do anything, including making the tea, of course. They've listed over 30 job tasks, and then said they reserve the right to add to the list.

In other words, we're supposed to be all-purpose dogsbodies.

The leadership of my chapel has handled the issue well, encouraging full discussion at every stage, and there has been a closing of ranks in NATSOPA between the clerical and machine sections.

But there needs to be unity between the unions. We should be facing management with a common strategy, and take this opportunity to open up the whole question of press ownership and control.

It's a discussion that's needed throughout the labour movement.

Unions produce alternative paper in Canadian press strike

From our Foreign Staff

WITHIN 48 HOURS of the start of a strike on two Canadian newspapers, the *Vancouver Express* was launched — published by the six unions involved.

This was at the beginning of last month, and since then the new paper has been appearing three times a week, with 38 pages and a print run of 110,000.

Despite attempts by the Vancouver Board of Trade and the Employers Council in British Columbia to boycott the paper, it has received lots of

commercial advertising.

Members of the Canadian Newspaper Guild and the Printing Pressmen's (sic) Union walked out of the *Vancouver Sun* and the *Vancouver Province* — the largest daily newspapers in British Columbia — on 1 November, when management attempted to break contracts over staffing levels.

In order to have a free hand to sack printworkers as new technology is introduced, the company wants to rewrite the contracts which determine the number of printers required. Management has offered

over a hundred printers \$5,000 each to buy back the right to determine work schedules. Within minutes of the strike, the four other unions involved were locked out.

The 1,400 press and printworkers are now prepared for a long battle. The publication of the *Vancouver Express* is seen as a way of winning public support and helping to boost strike pay.

With no other newspaper being published in Vancouver, sales have been brisk, and management was obliged to buy a quarter-page ad to publicise its offer to the strikers!

Loss of literary supplement only slightly disturbing

From Francis Mulhern,
an editor of 'New Left Review'

On the face of it, the *Times Literary Supplement* is a review of serious books. But if you compare it with a formally similar publication, such as the *New York Times Review of Books*, you see its real character.

It's an academic trade paper, composed in the image of those who write and read it.

Traditionally the *TLS* has combined pure academicism with frivolity. The books

reviewed are like so many Himalayan peaks — climbed simply because they're there, and read in the same spirit.

The supplement's former policy of having all its articles unsigned provided light relief for its readers. In every academic common room, Friday was guessing game day — 'Who's the bastard who knifed my book?'

Under its present editor, John Gross, certain changes have occurred. The policy of anonymity has been dropped, and the paper is more

attractively designed.

It has also become politically harder, shifting to the right.

Marxists are virtually unknown on its pages, and recent books by British Marxist writers have been subjected to very deliberate hatchet jobs. Christopher Hill and Terry Eagleton are two cases in point.

The loss of the *TLS* will disturb British intellectuals more than its contents ever did. It has always been so dull and conformist that it never disturbed anyone.

Journalists on 'The Times' throw off fear of unknown

By Jake Ecclestone
NUJ father of the chapel at 'The Times'
As told to our Labour Staff

'I was absolutely ecstatic at the decision of the chapel to reject management's proposals, by 142 to 92. It gave many members of the chapel the tremendous realisation that at last they've thrown off the fear of the unknown.

'The debate at the meeting last Thursday went on for three hours, and in a curious way most people realised that in the last resort they would not be saved by pursuing their own narrow self-interest.

'The chapel for the first time has rejected management's blandishments; that this time we won't take the money and run.

'The vote was to maintain NUJ policy, which is that we will not take NGA jobs unless they agree to give them up; and to reach pay parity with the journalists on the *Sunday Times* by July 1980.

'I think management's deferment of sending workers out the door is not a concession but part of their overall strategy — a careful public relations

campaign. But the unions will be encouraged because it looks like management is backing off.

'If they now offer to completely withdraw the threat to sack journalists it will put us in a difficult position, because we've argued that journalists are no different from anyone else. We get the same treatment.

'To be frank, I'm not sure what an offensive strategy would be at this stage. The level of co-operation between the unions at TUC level is abysmal and there still isn't enough co-operation inside Times Newspapers, although it is growing.

'People who never did talk to each other have started to do so. Journalists who used to be snotty about talking to other staff now realise they're just as expendable. It's been a very educative experience.

'Provided the NGA keeps its nerve I don't think that management will win. They are hung up on the American experience of a big confrontation with the unions in order to bring in new technology.

'The unions in Britain won't stand for it. Management will get a bloody nose.'

HOME NEWS

Gamers day of action, 8 December

'We'll keep fighting, we've got no choice'

CATERING workers at Garners have been on strike for over ten months. Standing on the picket line in Central London is never much fun — it's boring, and you're subjected to harassment and abuse from prospective customers and from the police.

With the second winter of the strike now setting in, the strikers face one of their worst enemies — the cold.

Cyril Margolis, Garner's boss, is depending on the freezing temperatures to kill the strike, but the strikers who spoke to MICK GOSLING and JUDE WOODWARD are determined not to give in.

Zahir Haq, treasurer and secretary of the Garners strike committee, talked about how it felt to be on strike after nearly a year.

'Although the pickets are determined to carry on, they are a little bit baffled by the situation', he explained.

'We see it as an elementary right of the worker to be in a trade union, and they are surprised that employers like Margolis can get away with it.'

'It's scarcely believable. The other thing', he added, 'is that we expected more support. If we could just have five or six pickets on each restaurant over lunchtime the strike would be over.'

STONEWALL

The main problem of the strikers has been maintaining morale in the face of determined stone-walling by Margolis, and with little back up from the union — the Transport &

General Workers.

The strikers each receive £6 a week strike pay, and it's quite simply not enough. 'We spend it just on transport getting in to picket', Haq said.

VOLUNTARY

The TGWU says that it is bound by its constitution and cannot pay more. Nor can it institute a compulsory levy on the branches.

This may be true, but the union can strongly advise its branches to take a voluntary levy for the strikers, which requires more than the routine circulars that have been put out.

Two branches are taking a voluntary levy, the 616 branch and one of the building branches. This would be done in a great many more branches, if the union leadership made its point strongly enough.

The strikers have sent speakers along to the branches,



Scene from the last Garners solidarity demo

and organised meetings — usually getting a good response.

A 5p a head levy from the biggest and best organised branches — at Ford, in the docks — could boost the strikers pay and finance other members of the union to take time off work and help on the pickets.

Despite the lack of support, 35 of the 84 Garners workers who walked out are still actively involved in the strike.

Some of the problems of the strike stem from the nature of the catering industry. Workers at Trust House Forte and at Metropolitan Hotels fought hard for union recognition — and lost.

Haq pointed out that the catering industry is growing, not declining. 'Growing, we believe, due to the exploitation

of catering workers, who are mainly immigrants.

'The industry is one of the most low-paid areas. And it's not just the pay — the hours people work are unsocial hours. They have no time for family or social life. They are slave hours.'

Haq continued: 'It is hard to organise them, as many come to this country on a work permit basis which means they can be sent out of the country if they lose their job.'

'Often they don't have trade union experience, British law is completely new to them, and language is a big problem; often they cannot even communicate with each other.'

Although trade at the Haymarket branch is down to less than 20 per cent of normal turnover, Margolis seems to be

holding out. He has offered more to the scabs, but he has refused to discuss recognition.

Some of the strikers cannot help feeling that Margolis must be getting help from outside. There are powerful anti-union interests in the catering industry who are very concerned that the Garners strikers do not win — it could be just the tip of the iceberg.

Muhammed Mahboob, on the picket line at Haymarket, wasn't happy with the TGWU's attitude to the strike.

'The officials made an arrangement with the police that the pickets would be limited to six on each restaurant, and we weren't even told', Mahboob said.

'And the police aren't on our

side. We tried to serve a summons against one of the directors who attacked a picket, and they said they wouldn't do it. Then we got a summons from the same director saying we had attacked him.'

Margolis's wife received £25 for assault last month, for hitting one of the pickets in the eye, which is now permanently damaged. Mahboob was fined £25 and bound over for a year for 'threatening behaviour'.

PARTIALITY

The courts and the police have displayed their usual partiality. Mahboob told us: 'There was one 15-year-old black youth coming down here, and the police said they would do him for "sus" if he hung around.'

'The boy had a letter from his mother, who also used to come down, saying that she knew that was where he was.'

A day of action has been called for Friday 8 December, when all Garners' steak houses will be picketed.

Militants in London should make it a priority — not simply because another defeat like Grunwick would be a tragedy, but because both these battles for union recognition reflect a fundamental aspect of racism in Britain: that the lowest paid jobs are reserved for blacks.

PICKETING

It is not surprising, therefore, if black people in Britain judge the workers' movement by its support or otherwise for strikers like Garners.

The pickets believe that with adequate picket lines each day the strike could be won.

The Transport Union has always completely opposed mass picketing, but particularly during the Christmas period this could be the way to take the strike forward by stepping up the pressure on Margolis.

* On 8 December turn up at the Haymarket restaurant between 12 and 3pm and from 5.30pm onwards.

Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

NUJ demands £20 rise All-out journalists strike on provincial papers

FOR THE FIRST time in its history, the National Union of Journalists has called out on strike its 9,000 members working on provincial and local newspapers.

The dispute, for a £20 increase, promises to leave much of Britain with only the national press — what's left of it, that is.

JEAN GRAY, secretary of Journalists Charter, told Socialist Challenge how this battle against low pay is shaping up.

The NUI executive voted 14 to 7 to call out all provincial and local journalists from the beginning of this week. It was a surprising decision.

Sanctions have been in operation in most offices since 10 November and in a number of areas journalists felt they could do more damage to production being on the inside than going out to a picket line.

But the weakness of the argument that we should simply maintain sanctions was that its advocates provided no strategy for actually winning our claim for a £20 pay increase, amounting to 20-30 per cent.

LUCRATIVE

What's more, management has kept completely silent. There have been no new offers, and my guess is that with the lucrative pre-Christmas issues, which are fat with advertising, they were hoping to hold on

until this period is over.

What helped to persuade our union executive to support an all-out strike were the journalists on half a dozen local papers in London who had already taken to the picket lines, including my own, the Camden Journal.

LOBBYING

A hundred of us lobbying the executive also helped to concentrate their minds, and there was an unexpected speech from John Bailey, the NUI treasurer.

He said that he'd been coming along to executive meetings for 15 years, and for 15 years he'd heard the same arguments against a strike on the local and provincial papers. 'It's time to end this scandal of low pay', Bailey argued.

The minimum senior rate at present is £60.92 a week, which is all that many long-serving

journalists receive. The offer from the employers is 9 per cent, which amounts to £2.3 before tax.

Our concern now is to stop scab papers being brought out. The executive has instructed the journalists at the Press Association to stop work, which would freeze the copy that goes into newspaper offices on the teleprinters.

But editors can still bring out many papers single handed, and in a number of offices they can depend on scabs in the Institute of Journalists.

Much will depend on support from the printworkers, which is why solidarity with the NGA — whose members are directly affected at The Times — is so important.

Strike pay is a problem, and a lot of our time will be taken up with fundraising. We might receive £10 a week from the NUI, but that's only if an interest-free loan can be obtained from another union.

COMMITTEE

In London we will be picketing the main printing centres, the distributors, and wholesalers, and an action committee has been set up to build the strike. Hopefully this will be done elsewhere.

Journalists often don't like

'outside interference' on their pickets, even from other NUJ members, so we have to explain that we need all the help we can get.

PAPER

Journalists Charter has just produced a 4-page paper on the background to the strike, and will be organising local meetings.

The employers, whose offer breaks the 5 per cent, want us to go with them to the Government to say we're a special case. This is a load of rubbish. There are many others as appallingly paid as us.

It would be a very good idea if all those with claims against the 5 per cent could get together on a local basis to co-ordinate propaganda and activity, as Hackney Trades Council has done with its pay action committee.

With such a general shutdown in the press, it's worth considering the possibility of producing an alternative newspaper to back all the struggles.

Donations and offers of help to: Newspaper Society Action Committee, NUJ, 314 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1. Tel 01-278 7916.



Local journalists lobby last Friday's NEC meeting, which decided to call an all-out strike.

HOME NEWS

Bakers and the police

Striking along the Mersey

THE TWO chief characteristics of the bakers' strike are the militant determination of the workers and increasing use of the police to smash picket lines.

TONY MEEHAN reports from Merseyside, which offers one of the best examples of police intimidation and how it is being successfully resisted.

Two hundred bakers at the Long Lane Mother's Pride factory in Aintree have been out from the beginning. They have won support from the drivers, members of the United Road Transport Union, who have agreed not to cross the picket line.

But the management has encouraged scabbing by offering commission of one week's pay if the drivers take out just two trays daily.

The bread has been baked by management themselves, and so far they've managed to get two van loads out courtesy of a massive police escort. The bigger the picket laid on, the bigger the escort.

EXAGGERATE

But management have tried to exaggerate the impact of the scabbing. Along with Sunblest, they have been transporting bread from Scotland at considerable expense.

They hope that bread appearing in the shops with Sunblest and Mother's Pride wrappers will demoralise the strikers.

They haven't succeeded. At the Scott's Sunblest-producing bakery in Netherton, the 600 strikers are completely solid.

Regular mass meetings have involved the workers in the running of the strike. As one picket put it: 'Scott's has always been 100 per cent solid but the way the strike's been run has made it 101 per cent solid!'

OPPORTUNITY

The mass meetings have provided the opportunity for reports back on the latest developments. Collections have been taken to help finance flying pickets.

Merseyside bakers have been as far afield as Chester, Warrington, Colwyn Bay, Manchester, and even Cardiff.

The militancy has won support from the local labour movement. Dockers have started to boycott grain and flour lorries.

Transport & General Workers Union flour lorry drivers have to leave the depots to avoid being sacked, but they are refusing to cross picket lines. They've also received support



PICKETS at the Scott's Sunblest bakery in Netherton have faced policy harassment.

from the General & Municipal Workers, the International Food Union, and the shopworkers' union, USDAW. A mass meeting of striking social workers last Friday took a collection for the bakers.

Liverpool Trades Council has distributed collection sheets,

but hasn't yet mobilised for mass picketing. 'This is going to have to change', as one picket said, 'so that we can see Merseyside up.'

The strength of militancy has meant that local management have tried to divide off the most militant strikers by settling their

claim locally or firm by firm.

DIVISIVE

This has already happened at Rathbone's in Wigan. Here the union leadership has not followed the old adage of 'one out, all out', and has given permission for a return to work.

Sanderson strikers win



PHIL GILLAT

THE eighteen month old fight for union membership at Sanderson's fork-lift truck plant in Lincolnshire came to a victorious end last weekend.

Sandersons agreed to recognise the Transport Union and reinstate all the striking workers.

The strike began when Sanderson sacked Phil Gillat for attempting to recruit to the union.

After his sacking, 43 other workers walked out. They have been picketing the plant ever since.

The strike has been won through the determination of the strikers to break through, and by the support from other Transport Union members.

Supplies of engines to the plant were boycotted by the union and the firm was prevented from having stands at the commercial vehicle and agricultural shows.

Now Sanderson has agreed in principle to give the TGWU bargaining rights. He will also take back all the strikers, including Phil Gillat.

Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

Photo: BOB MURPHY (Socialist Challenge)

NALGO strike spreads

Social workers reject pay deal

SOCIAL WORKERS in 12 local authorities are now on strike in their battle for salary regrading.

Last Friday, social workers in Cheshire and Islington were called out by their union, NALGO, to join colleagues who have been out for four months.

The escalation follows an unprecedented climbdown by our union leadership, reports PETE CRESWELL, secretary of the Liverpool strike committee.

NALGO's national policy is to abolish the national social workers' salary scale and allow local negotiations. This decision was taken after it had become clear that the national scale was artificially holding down wages.

Despite this, NALGO's leaders, headed by Mike Blick, entered negotiations with the employers on 25 October with the aim of improving the national scale rather than getting rid of it.

LUDICROUS

The outcome of these talks was a ludicrous 5-level pay scheme which was rejected by social workers across the country.

At the crucial meeting on 29 November, Blick found that 11 of NALGO's 12 districts had rejected the deal. He also found that 1,500 social workers from all over the country had turned up to lobby the meeting.

ALTERNATIVE

The leadership had no alternative but to throw out the deal. So they are now proposing to call a special group meeting — a conference of all local government branches — in late January, to try and force acceptance of the offer.

They're also making noises about reducing strike pay. NALGO, it should be noted, is supposed to be one of the richest



SOCIAL workers lobbying NALGO HQ to stop a sell out

unions in Europe.

This climbdown comes after the most concerted demonstration of rank and file power in NALGO's history. Social workers have refused to be ordered around by the official 'strike operations committee' which does not contain a single social worker.

Instead we have formed our

own standing conference of strike committees. It is this group which organised the lobby last week, and over the past months has organised lobbies, pickets, and even an occupation of NALGO's HQ in an attempt to stop a sell-out.

The stage is now set for a long and bitter continuation of the dispute. The local employers

will be hanging on until next month in the hope that we will then be forced to accept the national deal.

We are equally determined, however, and social workers will be taking action to force the union to strengthen the strike. We want the strike spread to other districts.

CPSA elections — manifesto axed

NOT content with undemocratically ousting the left-wing executive committee of the civil service union, the CPSA, the 'moderates' in the union now seem determined to sabotage the re-election campaign.

The methods they have resorted to in order to prevent the left getting its views across to the membership amount to straightforward censorship, as JUDE WOODWARD explains.

The whole executive was removed from office after an enquiry into the elections at the union's national conference last May.

A technicality meant that the election of CP member Pete Coltman to one of the vice-presidencies was declared

void.

As he had not gone forward for election to the executive, on the grounds that he had already been elected vice-president, the election of the whole NEC was also declared void — even though Coltman was quite prepared to waive his rights in

this matter. The whole affair came about as a result of pressure from well-known right-winger Kate Losinska, who was beaten by Coltman in the vice-presidential election.

THREATS

She threatened legal action if steps were not taken, and union president Len Lever finally bowed to her threats. The sacked members of the NEC have now begun their re-election campaign, deciding to let the membership judge rather than try to take the issue

to the courts. But there was more to come from the full-time officials. Viv Lacey, one of the ousted executive members, has not had her election manifesto published.

In the document distributed to all union members, Viv's name appears with a statement that her manifesto was not published 'on legal advice' — because 17 out of 472 words were allegedly libellous.

OUTRAGEOUS

However, a libel lawyer acting on Viv's behalf waived

his right to fees because he considered the alleged reasons for censoring her manifesto were so outrageous.

CHALLENGE

But Viv's manifesto is still being circulated to large numbers of the membership. Broadside, the journal of the CPSA Broad Left, has published it in full.

And the left members of the NEC have publicly challenged any members of Kate Losinska's moderate group to debate the issues in front of their branch.

Students censure executive

JUST a week before their ordinary conference, students met last week to discuss student union financing and autonomy.

What lies at the root of this discussion? PAMELA HOLMES reports.

The basic question is whether student unions should remain independent of the state and of the institutions of higher education.

The Department of Education & Science proposals which jeopardise this have been rejected by virtually all sectors of the student movement.

So the NUS executive took on the job, and have produced what has been named the 'elusive' compromise. It puts forward a different structure but contains the same inbuilt attack on the autonomy of local student unions.

Not only were their proposals rejected at last weekend's conference, but the executive was censured for failing to carry out its mandate from the NUS conference last Easter.

Its commitment to student union autonomy is such that it failed to draw up an autonomy charter, to organise a speaking tour to explain the issue, and to initiate an autonomy campaign.

The basis for a campaign for autonomy must start with a strategy to eradicate the anomalies of the present system that prevent unions acting independently of the state and its institutions.

The confusion sown by the executive needs to be overcome if the student movement is to tackle the issues up for discussion this weekend.

BRIEFS

'IMMIGRATION LAWS — What They Are and How to Fight Them' is the topic of a day school this Saturday (9 December) organised by the Campaign Against the Immigration Laws (CAIL). It's from 10.30am to 5pm at the Institute of Education, Bedford Way, London WC1. Admission £1 (50p non-earners). Phone Colin on 01-226 0571 for details.

THE Gay Socialist conference on 'Homosexuality and Power' on 25-26 November, attended by about 200 people, saw much discussion on the need to re-examine and re-evaluate the ideas of the gay liberation movement. A newsletter is being launched to continue this discussion — if you would like a copy, write (with a donation if possible) to: Dai, 16 Newton House, Union St., London SE1.

SINCE the ANL was founded no NF meeting of importance has gone unchallenged in Devon and Cornwall. Most recently 60 supporters from Plymouth, Exeter and Exmouth picketed an NF meeting in a bingo hall in the Devonport area of Plymouth addressed by NF leader Andrew Fontaine. Since then there has also been a mass leafleting of the bingo hall to try to stop it from being let to the NF again.

THE latest issue of CARF, the anti-racist, anti-fascist paper, is now out. It includes an important editorial on the present state of the movement plus articles on police harassment and immigration controls, BASH, the East End, a run-down on recent fascist attacks, and lots of local reports. Price 15p plus 8p p&p from CARF, Box 35, 182 Upper Street, London N1.

A BENEFIT for the Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee and the Defence Campaign for those arrested in the defence of Brick Lane takes place this Saturday (9 December) from 8pm to midnight at St Hilda's, Club Row, London E2 (off Bethnal Green Road near the top of Brick Lane). Belt and Braces are performing and admission is £1. Food and bar available.

THE occupation of Hounslow Hospital ended on 28 November after failing to achieve its aims of winning the immediate re-opening of Hounslow as a community hospital. But in a statement the occupation committee noted that this could not be won without a greater development of an anti-cuts movement. The occupation was an important symbol in aiding this, but the committee feels that its continuation now serves no purpose in the absence of a firm date for re-opening from the Area Health Authority.

HOMENEWS

ANL trade union conference Chance missed to debate issues

LAST WEEKEND'S Anti Nazi League trade union conference attracted 511 delegates from union branches, stewards committees, 29 national union executives, and a number of workplace ANL branches. RICH PALSER reports.

Welcoming the delegates in the conference hall at the TUC's Congress House was Bill Keys, chairperson of the TUC equal rights committee and leading spokesperson for the General Council on racism.

Other speakers on the platform included Terry Marsland of the Tobacco Workers Union, who warned of the threat to women's rights which the fascists represent — in particular the right to choose whether to have an abortion.

The united message coming out of the conference was 'build the ANL in the workplaces and on the shop floor'. The presence of Bill Keys and other union leaders can help to make that task easier.

But beneath the apparent agreement were many unspoken

differences. The question 'build the ANL in the workplaces to do what?' was never debated.

There are many different ways and means of organising to stop the NF. Bill Keys put forward one — strengthen the Race Relations Act, implement the Public Order Act, and if this is insufficient change it so that the police do more to protect black people against fascist violence.

Reg Williams, vice-president of the civil servants' CPSA, explained that a campaign had been launched to persuade union members to remove fascists from posts as union branch secretaries. Others, we think mistakenly, have argued for banning members of fascist organisations from union membership.

Which policy should ANL workplace branches organise around? And how should the ANL organise to confront racism within the unions?

These issues could not be debated at the conference because no amendments were allowed to the declaration put forward for voting. ANL leaders Ernie Roberts, Peter Hain and Paul Holborow all justified this practice, which all of them have opposed at other conferences.

Paul Holborow argued that the prime thing was unity in action, and that meant building workplace ANL branches. But unity in action around what objectives? Only the fullest involvement in democratically deciding the objectives and methods of that action can



MAY 1979

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1979 Anti-Racist Anti-Fascist Anti-Nazi Calendar. 13 stunning poster-size prints — 17ins by 24ins — on historical, international, and contemporary anti-fascist and anti-racist themes. Get yours now. £1.50 (plus 36p p&p). Ten or more copies, £1 post free. Rush your order to: SC Calendars, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Cheques to 'The Week'.

ensure a united movement.

Ernie Roberts argued that we must not split the movement. But proposals which would have this effect can only be dealt with by arguing against them, not by suppressing them.

It is equally true that some may walk out of the ANL if they do not agree with a majority decision. But it is far more difficult for them to do so when the 50,000 paid-up members of

the ANL have democratically decided policy by majority vote.

Many speakers took up the campaign by the press to isolate the ANL, pointing to 'famous people' who have recently left. The best defence against these attacks is to be able to show that it is the membership which decides policy, while the two or three 'notables' singled out by the press represent only themselves.

Call for ANL conference defeated

BY A VOTE of 52 to 34, the Anti Nazi League leadership succeeded in defeating the call for a conference at the ANL 'Working Council' on 26 November.

COLIN TALBOT explains why this is a setback.

Only a few minutes at the end of a four-hour meeting were set aside for discussing the many resolutions put forward to the meeting by rank-and-file ANL groups. The rest of the time was largely taken up with exhortations for 'more of the same'.

Major reports were given on 'Football Against the Nazis' and the Rock Against Racism Roadshow. Both of these are obviously excellent ways of taking the campaign into new areas, but the emphasis on them meant that some present political problems weren't dealt with.

Discussion on workplace activities and the trade union conference also failed to grapple with the political debates which are being raised by anti-Nazi activity in the unions.

And the report on 'Work in

the Asian Communities' hardly touched on the political issues which arose after the Brick Lane events.

The major criticisms raised at the council were that the League is failing either to mobilise adequately against the Nazis themselves or to take up the anti-racist issues which have been posed by the successes of the ANL.

VIOLENT

With the fascists turning to more openly violent and intimidatory policies, the ANL's attitude towards self-defence against fascist violence is a burning issue.

At the same time, sections of the ANL like Teachers Against the Nazis are already beginning to confront the issues of racism on which the Nazis breed. Yet the ANL leadership stubbornly refuses to allow these issues to come out in the open.

The ANL's failure to provide for adequate defence of Brick Lane during Carnival 2 symbolises for many militants, inside and outside the ANL, its



CHRISTMAS shoppers in the Islington district of North London were treated to a 500 strong anti-fascist, anti-racist demonstration last Saturday. The march was in protest against fascist violence and the presence of the National Front in Islington's Chapel Market.

weaknesses.

These have to be brought out into the open and resolved in a democratic fashion, otherwise they will fast become festering sores. And for the hundreds of thousands the ANL has galvanised against the fascists,

that would be a disaster.

For the black communities it would also be a disaster, removing the only united mass opposition to the Nazi goon squads.

Every ANL group, every TAN, SCAN, SKAN and FAN

should demand that the Steering Committee organise a national conference for the spring to debate out these issues, elect a democratic leadership, and ensure that the ANL goes into the coming general election united and prepared.

WHAT'S LEFT

5p per word. Display £2 per column inch. Deadline: 3pm Saturday before publication. Payment in advance.

DEMONSTRATION against the Nazi British Movement on Sat 12 at 11am in Mold, North Wales, by Daniel Owen statue. Organised by Merseyside ANL.

PICKET GARNERS: Main pickets every day, noon to 3pm and 5.30 to 11 pm at 399 Oxford St., London W1 (opp. Selfridges); 243 Oxford St. (Oxford Circus); 40-41 Haymarket; 56 Whitcombe St. (Leicester Sq.). Mass picket every Saturday at noon, 399 Oxford St. Donations urgently needed as strike pay is only £6. All donations to Garners Strike Fund, c/o TGWU, Rm 84, 12-13 Henrietta St., London WC2. 01-240 1056.

NORTH LONDON ANL. David Voipe leads a discussion on fighting Fascism in Hackney in the 30s and its lessons for today. Stamford Hill Library, 8pm on Tues 12 Dec.

'FIGHT RACISM' T-shirts. Good quality white cotton with red design. Jap sleeve or regular short sleeve. Medium or large (sizes are on the small side, if in doubt order a large). £1.50 from our offices, or £1.75 inc. p&p.

IT IS with deep regret and sadness that socialists in Nottingham announce the tragic death of their comrade Mick Moran. Mick died suddenly and unexpectedly on 29 November after being admitted to hospital only six days before.

Mick will be particularly remembered for his tireless work around the strike at Stanton iron works one year ago, for his energetic opposition to racism and fascism, his honesty, warmth and devotion to the cause of his class.

He will be greatly missed by his many friends and comrades of all political views in Nottingham. We offer our sincere condolences to his family.

DESIGNER required to work for Socialist Challenge/Fl Litho. Must be politically committed. Knowledge of printing and production techniques, especially platemaking, an advantage. Apply in writing to Fl Litho, 328/9 Upper St, London N1 or ring 01-359 8288.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE now has a stock of attractive hessian bags with two designs: in black, light racism; in red, women's liberation symbol. Cost: £1 from our offices or £1.25 by mail (including p&p).

WOMEN and Ireland are holding a slide show and discussion — Women in the Irish Struggle — at Centreprise, Kingsland High Rd, (Nr Dalston Junction BR station) at 7.30pm, Thurs 7 Dec.

SHIT-throwers benefit — John and Yana were fined £100 with £101.50 costs each after throwing horse shit into the House of Commons last July to publicise conditions in H-Block, Caxton House, Holloway Rd, London. Bar, Disco, Belt and Braces Band, 8pm till late on 22 December. Adm: £1 (60p wageless).

COMRADE from an African country (political refugee) desperately needs own room to rent in London. Contact: Richard Carver at SC, 01-359 8180 (office hours and Sundays) or Jon 01-986 4045 (evenings).

MANCHESTER Revolution showing new anti-racist film, *Divide and Rule — Never!* Sat 9 Dec, 3pm, Moss Side Peoples Centre; Mon 11 Dec, lunchtime, South Trafford FE College.

MANCHESTER SSA: Divide and Rule — Never! Mon 11 Dec, 7pm, Manchester Poly, followed by discussion.

SPARTICIST League public meeting: Workers must rule Iran! Down with the Shah! Down with the Mullahs! Wed 13 Dec, 7.30pm, at Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Rd, London N7.

MIDLAND RED Theatre Co. are looking for new members. We are a part time/unsubsidised collective touring Socialist and Feminist plays around the West Midlands. Experience of theatre work is not essential though commitment is! Contact us c/o 17a Carlyle Rd, Edgbaston, Birmingham 16.

ISLINGTON Women's Voice Group present the film *Salt of the Earth* at the Cinema, North London Poly, Holloway Rd, London N7 on Mon 11 Dec at 8pm. Adm: 75p (50p wageless).

SOCIALIST translators needed for material in Spanish and Portuguese from the Latin American left. Please contact: LAF, PO Box 50, London N1.

EDINBURGH Revolutionary Communist Group. First in a series on monthly public meetings. Which way forward for Communists? Edinburgh Trades Council, Picardy Place, Wed 13 Dec, 7.30pm.

FASCISM and Sexuality: a Big Flame day school. Sessions on: Marxism and psychoanalysis, women in Nazi Germany, masculinity and fascism, women and the NF. Workshops. Creche. 9 Dec, 10am-4pm, at Birmingham University Union.

ICAR MEETINGS are every two weeks: 27 Nov, 11 Dec, 8 Jan, at 374 Grays Inn Rd., WC1, 7.30pm.

THIRD international meeting of International Campaign for Abortion Rights — Paris, 9 Dec. Contact ICAR, c/o 374 Grays Inn Rd., WC1.

THE NATIONAL ABORTION CAMPAIGN needs a new office worker to coordinate the campaign's work, run the office, organise activities, demos, etc. Office experience useful, commitment to women's liberation essential. Hours 10-5 with some evening and weekend meetings. Salary approx £160 per month after tax. Please apply in writing giving previous work and other experience to: NAC, 30 Camden Rd, London NW1.

FEMINIST Review Christmas Bizarre. Sat 9 Dec, 11am-4pm, Drill Hall, Cheries St, London WC1. To raise funds for *Feminist Review*: a new self-financing journal. Events include: jumble and nearly new, agit prop, book stalls, home made food, crafts, film show, auction (12 noon), things for kids, special appearance of *Mother Christmas*, Action Space health food cafe. Adm: 20p (5p wageless, accompanied kids free).

RCG public meeting. The Working Class, the Crisis and the State. Speakers: S. Palmer and P. Newman. Tues 12 Dec, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

HACKNEY Committee Against Racism and Tower Hamlets Movement Against Racism and Fascism joint benefit. Sat 9 Dec, 8pm, Belt and Braces Band and disco. £1 at St. Hilda's East, Club Row, London E1. (off Bethnal Green Road, near the top end of Brick Lane).

ANGOLA discussion meetings. Fri 8 Dec: The politics of the MPLA. Fri 15 Dec: Angola's Foreign Policy. At: The Mozambique, Angola and Guinea Information Centre, 34 Percy St, London W1 (01-636 7108) 7.30pm. Adm: 50p inc. light refreshments.

NAC film benefit on 10 Dec at 3pm, Scala Cinema, Tottenham St: *Shirin's Wedding* — an excellent film about the two-fold oppression of a Turkish woman, as an immigrant worker in Germany and as a woman forced to turn to prostitution. Plus: *Home Movie* (short) — home movies of growing up and coming out as a lesbian. £1.60 (£1.10 wageless). Further details from NAC: 01-278 0153.

THE TEXT we publish below was first published in the official youth publication of the People's Republic of China, China Youth, some weeks ago. A slightly modified version was reprinted in the People's Daily on 13 November. This is its first publication in an English-language periodical in the West.

We have been forced, for reasons of space, to delete a few sections. We must stress, however, that these excisions in no way change the character of the article.

The importance of this text lies in the fact that it reveals the severe contradictions now erupting in the People's Republic. They reflect the undemocratic and bureaucratic character of the regime; the total lack of any institutionalised links between the state/party apparatuses and the masses; the difficulties created by this absence for the bureaucracy in running a country of 800 million are obvious.

These problems are not new. They have existed in China since 1949. There have been periodic efforts to grapple with them. The 'Hundred Flowers' campaign in the Fifties and the 'Cultural Revolution' in the Sixties both represented attempts to involve the masses, albeit in a manipulative fashion and essentially in order to use the weight of mass mobilisations in order to resolve debates within the apparatus.

This clearly involved dangers. The mass movements could get out of hand. In both the above campaigns an independent dynamic did develop. It was stifled by the party bureaucracy in the Fifties and crushed by the army backed by the party in the Sixties.

Nonetheless the very fact that a number of party leaders and, in particular, Mao himself were ready to use the masses indicates two facts. First that the relationship between the party and the masses in post-revolutionary China was not exactly the same as that of Stalin and the Russian masses; secondly, a constant appeal to the masses meant a much higher degree of primitive politicisation than existed in Stalinist or Brezhnevite Russia today.

It is in this overall context that we have to view the current debate. We have many disagreement with the document. In particular it fails to explicitly call for the right of other political tendencies and parties or independent trade unions to exist in China. But it nonetheless reflects serious divisions emerging within the apparatus. For it was not crafted on to a wall poster in central Peking, but appeared in an official journal of the party. These divisions are not unrelated to mass pressures as revealed by the recent wall-poster campaign.

The decision last week of the Chinese leaders to try and halt the wall-poster campaign and clamp down on criticisms of Mao and Hua is the clearest indication yet that they fear a revival of mass politics in the country as a whole. Whether or not they will be able to stop the campaign for socialist democracy is an open question. If it spreads to the provinces it could re-open many of the wounds inflicted on the party apparatus during the Sixties.

Editorial Board.



CHINA IN TURMOIL

Bring democracy into full play

by Lin Chun and Li Yin-Ho



Why is it necessary today to put forth the issue of bringing democracy into play and consolidating the legal system? People often consider: has the Chinese Communist Party not led the people in overthrowing the three great mountains of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism and in establishing the People's Republic? Has our democratic revolution not been successful? Have great achievements not been made in our socialist revolution and construction? Is it not clearly understood that people's democracy exists under the socialist system?

The disaster created by Lin Piao and the gang of four has made people think once again. With feelings of deep suffering, the people cannot help but reflect: how could the gang of four have run amok in such a way over the past several years? Why were the Chinese people tolerant of them?

They were obviously the most wicked criminals in Chinese history as they frenziedly damaged inner-Party democracy and people's democracy, vehemently trampled upon the legal system, wantonly persecuted revolutionary cadres and people, and led socialist China onto the path of a counter-revolutionary comeback.

However, although the gang of four and their followers seized surprisingly great power, there were only a handful of them. Why couldn't the hundreds of millions of our people have exposed and overthrown them in time to prevent such a disaster and safeguard the revolutionary fruits of our decades of bloody sacrifice?

Speaking of the counter-revolutionary coup d'etat of Louis Bonaparte, Marx said: 'What the French people have said is not convincing: That their nation suffered a sneak attack...Why was a nation of

36,000,000 people put off guard and made prisoners without resistance by three well-dressed swindlers?' (Selected Works of Marx and Engels, Vol.1, p.608).

In other words: the viewpoint that advances and setbacks in history can all be attributed to or blamed on individuals cannot stand up.

History cannot have occurred in vain. We have paid a high price but learned what we didn't know before. We have come to understand: the gang of four's emergence in the land of China had deep social and political roots and was a product of history. The incompleteness of our laws, the imperfection of our legal system and the absence of reliable organisations and systems to safeguard socialist democracy gave Lin Piao and the gang of four opportunities to exploit.

When the democratic means of the Party and people were seriously weakened and undermined, the small number of careerists and conspirators who had come into power were able to do whatever they liked. They donned a 'left' revolutionary cloak, waved the signboards of the Communist Party and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and fooled and incited some of the masses, particularly naive young people.

The vast numbers of Communist Party members and the masses of people at first did not consider and could not possibly have acted to exercise supervision over them; later, they were powerless to stop them and were without the legal means to sanction them.

This was an extremely deep, painful lesson which history taught us. The revolutionary people cannot help but remember this lesson and seize the weapons of democracy and the legal system. The people's will and rights should be protected by the Constitution, laws and judicial departments; to carry out this protection and prevent it from being undermined we must rely on struggle.

Only when the masses of people can truly make the final decisions on state affairs and really control their own destiny will our nation no longer need to worry — like children who cannot support themselves — that they might become orphans with no one to turn to because their fathers and elder

brothers have left.

When that time comes, the proletarian political power of our country will really be mature and consolidated.

Stimulation of the Chinese people's tremendous enthusiasm and creative spirit in carrying out the general task

for the new period and building a powerful and modern socialist country — this is of pressing significance in discussing the issues of democracy and the legal system today.

This is the tide, the will of the people and an important sign of the new period of Chinese revolution.

The fight for Socialist Democracy

Continued on next page



CHINA IN TURMOIL



II

Many centuries of autocratic rule caused the labouring people to lose even their right to live as human beings and forget their own wisdom, talents and confidence. They dared not believe in their own strength but asked for help from 'God' and attributed to God's name all the good, great and noble things which were really human.

Bourgeois scholars of the age of enlightenment were the first to disseminate democratic ideas, but it was the subsequent proletarian revolutionary movement and its theoretical manifestations that really represented the labouring people's democratic interests.

Lenin pointed out: it is not only for its own vital interests but also for the interests of social development as a whole that the proletariat has become the most radical, most thoroughgoing wing of the bourgeois democratic revolution and has finally assumed direct leadership in the struggle to overthrow feudal, despotic systems.

According to the law of social development, democracy is a necessary stage and precondition to achieving the emancipation of mankind. To be sure, only socialist revolution can really bring about people's democracy.

Socialist democracy is no illusion. Nor is it people's goodwill. It is an objective requirement of the socialist economic base.

Marx said: 'Economic control of the workers by those who monopolise the means of labour — that is, the source of livelihood — is the foundation of all forms of slavery — that is, all social poverty, spiritual humiliation and political dependence.' (Collected Works of Marx and Engels, Vol.16, p.15).

The economic liberation of the working class and other labouring people and their common possession of the means of production form the foundation of socialist democracy.

The workers' real ownership in the economic field calls for corresponding democratic rights in the political field. The proletariat should apply the law that the superstructure must conform to the economic base in order to achieve fully socialist democracy.

Conversely, in places where there is no democracy, isn't it reasonable to look for the economic roots? In places where people's democratic rights exist in name only, isn't it true that workers' ownership in the economic field is in name only too?

Lack of democracy in the political field inevitably reflects on relations of production and the productive forces and hinders and undermines the development of productive forces. This has been proved by history.

The idea of socialist democracy embodies the Marxist viewpoint that history is made by the masses of people. Our Party's cadres and administrative leaders certainly cannot decide and change everything as they please.

'After all, we are only one drop in the ocean among the masses of people, and we can manage only when we correctly express what the people have in mind.' (Selected Works of Lenin, Vol.4, p.651).

That is to say, only by concentrating the masses' experience and wisdom through democratic means can we work out a line, principles and policies in the people's interests.

Chairman Mao used the reasoning

that 'running water is never stale and a door hinge is never worm-eaten' to explain vividly the importance of democratic life. Since the victory of the revolution, we, in the position of the ruling Party, need democracy and direct criticism from the masses more than at any time in the past.

Practice has shown that, in any place, once democracy is abolished no one will dare to tell the truth and lies, boasting and empty talk will bury and deceive us. With no one expressing any more opinions, we will be surrounded and corrupted by people who flatter and fawn upon us and sing our praises.

Party organisation in such places will unavoidably become divorced from the proletarian base and the organs of political power will turn against the masses of people.

The most advanced and loyal, the cream of the Party and nation, will be trampled upon and suppressed and become disillusioned and resentful, while society's most backward and reactionary forces will rise to the surface and run wild for a time... [New China News Agency ellipsis] and the result can only be the final forfeiture of our cause.

Concerning the issue of disputes within the Party, Engels held that it was inappropriate to arbitrarily dispose of opinions opposed to one's own. He said: 'Criticism is the vital factor of the life of the workers' movement. How can the workers' movement itself avoid criticism and try to silence disputes? Do we demand others to give us the freedom of speech only for the purpose of suppressing free speech among our own ranks?' (Collected Works of Marx and Engels, Vol.37, p.324).

CRITICISMS

Only the political parties of the exploiting classes, which are at the end of their tether, are afraid of the truth and people. Chairman Mao said that only the Kuomintang was afraid of criticism and that the Communist Party was not afraid of criticism to enable our ranks to avoid becoming petrified and always remain vigorous, and to let the masses of people supervise the leading Party and state organs and prevent the transformation of these organs from being 'servants of society' into 'masters of society', it is all the more necessary to practise democracy.

We should feel that any cadre who does not have a democratic work style disqualifies himself from leading work. This is because a leader who is despotic, unreasonable and practises personal dictatorship cannot possibly win the trust and support of the masses.

Therefore, it is basically impossible for him to do a good job in the work of a department or locality. He may even bring great harm to the masses there and cause losses to the revolutionary cause.

Chairman Mao mentioned some persons who felt that since they had become rulers of the country they could practise bureaucracy, pay no attention to the people's suffering and show no concern over the people's fate.

The people will strike at these persons with their carrying poles, and they have the right to use methods of extensive democracy (including speaking out freely, airing views fully, writing big-character posters, holding great debates, staging parades and demonstrations and even striking) to make revolution against them.

Using such methods as speaking out freely, airing views fully, writing big-character posters, holding great debates, and staging parades and demonstrations is necessary even in dealing with bureaucracy, and certainly all the more fair and just in dealing with ferocious class enemies.

In the spring of 1976, the Chinese people courageously rose up to the strains of the 'Internationale' and wrote an extremely heroic, sad and moving page in the history of the Chinese revolution, fully displaying the power of people's democracy.

The incident provided an unprecedented education to the people. It taught us that using the methods of extensive democracy to expose and criticise careerists and conspirators like Lin Biao and the gang of four is the people's undeniable right and sacred duty. Could it be that our people have followed the Communist Party in revolution for decades only to have a bunch of new 'overlords' sitting on their backs?

The masses of people ardently hope to revive and carry forward more successfully the Party's fine traditions and work style of seeking truth from facts and taking the mass line. We have not the slightest right or reason to disappoint the people.

Lenin's words are worthy of our consideration again and again: 'If socialism, which has won victory, fails to practise full democracy, it will not be able to keep the victory it has won.' (Collected Works of Lenin, Vol.23, p.70).

Although the victory of the Chinese revolution has long since changed the Chinese people's historic destiny, traditional ideology still often entangles the people's minds like a lingering bad dream, and many people still cannot lift up their heads and stand up straight.

When the Chinese nation was in its darkest period, Lu Hsun bitterly pointed out: the Chinese people are so 'lifeless' under the system of dictatorship. Only revolution and socialist democracy can fundamentally change the mental outlook of the people of our country and stimulate and mobilise the entire nation.

Marx cited a cautionary passage from Paris Revolutionary Weekly that was printed during the French revolution: 'Great men look so great because we ourselves are kneeling. Stand up!' (The Complete Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Vol II, p.104).

Chairman Mao repeatedly pointed out: don't be afraid of professors, Marx, Gods and foreigners and don't learn from Chia Kuei. This statement refers to the people's mental outlook.

Both Chairman Mao's and Marx's views are consistent. Democracy, as the uncompromising enemy to the power of God and dictatorship, arms the people with the weapon of self-determination and pride and calls on the people to stop kneeling before any God, stand up and smash all mental and material yokes.

The enemy's power lies in the people's ignorance. When the people stand up, the enemy will perish. It was precisely in the fierce struggles against Lin Biao and the gang of four that the Chinese people greatly heightened their political consciousness, strengthened themselves and gained valuable experiences in striving for and defending people's democracy.

Democracy is a great school. In this great school, the people will eventually clean off all the dirt of the old society from their bodies, win progress and obtain complete emancipation.

III

For quite a few years people have formed the habit of linking democracy with the bourgeoisie and felt that by talking about democracy they would associate themselves with capitalism or revisionism. They have confused proletarian democracy with bourgeois democracy and distorted the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Dictatorship and democracy are two functions of a modern state. The democracy of the ruling class also implies the dictatorship over the class to be ruled.

Lenin summarised the Soviet system as 'the system of proletarian democracy or proletarian dictatorship' (The Selected Works of Lenin, Vol.IV, p.568). He correctly and clearly explained the equivalent relationship between proletarian democracy and proletarian dictatorship.

Proletarian democracy is enjoyed by the labouring people and is an extensive democracy that is not comparable with bourgeois democ-

ocracy. He thus refuted the view that democratic dictatorship is inconsistent with proletarian dictatorship. Therefore, why shouldn't we, instead of the bourgeoisie, hold aloft the great banner of democracy?

Politics serves economics. Based on this understanding, we can see that democracy is a means to achieving the goal. How, then can dictatorship be the goal?

The mouthpiece of the gang of four openly said: 'The only goal of proletarian democracy is to consolidate and strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat'. (Study and Criticism Issue No.1 of 1974).

It merits our attention that such open anti-Marxist propaganda has not aroused the people's attention and was for a long time considered natural. Here we don't need to talk about the 'dictatorship' of the gang of four which is now well known.

The issues that need to be clarified now are: first, the state is merely an instrument for class suppression and therefore, is a historical conception. The dictatorship of the proletariat is merely a transitional period reaching the extinction of all classes and entering a non-class society'. (T



WILL A HUNDRED FLO

at men look so great because we ourselves are kneeling, Stand Up!



Selected Works of Marx and Engels, Vol.IV, p.333).

Second, both dictatorship and democracy belong to the superstructure and serve the economic base. Neither of them is the final goal.

Third, democracy and dictatorship and inter-dependent and complementary. Those who consider that dictatorship should be higher than democracy are absurd, both in theory and practice.

When we have completely built socialism and eliminated classes and differences between classes, the dictatorship of the proletariat will no longer be required and will end because by then it will have lost its role.

If we don't clearly understand or don't understand this at all, we are apt to consider dictatorship as absolute and sacred, and may wantonly expand the scope of our dictatorship and reduce the main body which enforces dictatorship.

This teaches us that those who 'had an obsession of the dictatorship of the proletariat' and clamoured 'enforcing an all-round dictatorship' while banning people's democracy were precisely the most vicious enemies of the dictatorship of the proletariat.



IV

To safeguard socialist democracy, legislative and judicial work must be strengthened and the class enemies and all transgressions of law and discipline must be resolutely sanctioned in order to create the environment and conditions under which the people can enjoy the law's protection.

Among the various people's democratic rights stipulated in the Constitution and law, the most important are the people's right to vote, dismiss and supervise the personnel of the state's executive and administrative organs.

Frequently, something like the following occurs: a certain unit's leader is highly incompetent, and even abuses his authority and does all sorts of evil things. But the masses can do nothing to him, not even after writing reports to the higher authorities exposing his deeds.

This big burden on their minds cannot be taken off until the higher authorities decide to replace him. Cases like this have greatly impaired the prestige of the Party and the government among the people.

Lenin repeatedly said that proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy and that this 'higher class democracy' is expressed 'in the election processes and the constant opportunities of elections as well as in the conditions of re-electing and recalling the representatives; for the workers in cities and rural areas, this is much easier and more convenient than the best bourgeois democratic style'. (Selected works of Lenin, Vol.III, p.743).

The people's rights to vote, dismiss and supervise have not been effectively exercised for a very long time. It is now imperative to implement firmly the measures that call for electing the people's representatives through secret ballot and to adopt measures to rectify the situation in which the masses haven't the slightest knowledge and understanding of their representatives, still less how they work and what opinions they present.

A recall system with legal validity should be established that includes the

required percentage of people of a unit needed to recall a leading person and an effective procedure set up to effect a recall so that the people have the right to recall in reality, not in name.

It is also necessary to encourage and mobilise the masses through mass organisations, including trade unions, the CYL, the women's federations and the various other mass bodies, to exercise supervision over the leading organs and leading cadres.

At the same time, exposure and criticism of major administrative and management defects and mistakes should be published in papers and journals to facilitate timely correction and provide the cadres and masses with education through example.

Thus, major issues, such as the implementation of the line and policies, and minor issues, such as the examination and publication of a piece of literary work, are all subject to the people's supervision and decided by the people's will.

TRADITIONS

Today, nearly 30 years after the founding of New China, the issue over socialist democracy and the legal system is once more being placed on the work agenda — this is determined by our national history.

Marx said: 'People do not create their history at will, not under the conditions of their own choice, but under the existing conditions directly confronting them which they inherit from the past'. (Selected works of Marx and Engels, Vol.1, p.603).

Just as babies cannot possibly choose their mothers, people cannot possibly choose their own historical traditions. The organisms of our new-born motherland, though full of vitality, bear the birthmark of the feudalistic tradition of thousands of years.

In past generations, our social productive forces developed slowly within a narrow and natural economic structure. Peasants formed an overwhelming majority of the population, but lived an isolated, secluded life.

To a very great extent, their existence did not rely on social intercourse. Lack of common contacts rendered them unable to protect their own class interests, necessitating the

need for someone else to represent them.

Their representatives were invariably their masters at the same time, the authority towering high above them and the unrestricted government power that protected them from encroachment by other classes and bestowed rain and sunshine upon them from high above'. (Selected works of Marx and Engels, Vol.1, p.693).

Such a backward mode of production was the solid foundation of the feudal autocratic system that reigned our country for thousands of years.

In the course of world history the aristocracy shared power with the monarchy, religious authority surpassed the authority of the monarchy, 'human rights' during the Renaissance challenged the authority of the monarchy and finally the political power of the bourgeoisie negated the power of the monarchy.

But in China there never was a class or a religious authority strong enough to dare dispute the 'absolute authority' of the monarchy before the 1911 revolution. In the orthodox minds of the people there had to exist a 'genuine son of heaven' — the Emperor.

It never occurred to them that there could be other kinds of political systems. The Emperor's will was law, and all other laws were subordinate to him. There was no such thing as a subject's personal rights; there was only the Emperor's infinite authority.

The 1911 revolution established the republic in name only; actually, dictatorship by feudal warlords of all descriptions reigned throughout the country.

Although during the period from Yuan Shih-kai to Chiang Kai-shek the title Emperor was changed to President and the term Kingdom to Republic, the Chinese people not only failed to enjoy what is called democracy, but also suffered under a feudal and fascist domination which was even darker and crueller.

Chairman Mao made an incisive analysis of those autocratic oligarchs wearing new clothing: 'What's the difference between them and the autocratic emperors? The constitution and president they are talking about are all sham... I'm not attacking them without cause. What I'm saying is well

grounded: They are talking about constitutional government yet they don't give the people the least freedom.' (Selected works of Mao Tsetung, Vol.2, p.694).

The Chinese people have lived too long under an autocratic system! Feudal tradition has put too heavy a burden on the people!

The pernicious influence of feudal ideology in our country persists because it has existed for over 2,000 years and because the power of the monarchy, unlike that in Europe, was never questioned.

The influence of feudal ideology also continues to persist because the new social system was directly created from an extremely inferior semi-colonial and semi-feudal state, and more importantly, the ideology's influence continues because the conditions for its survival still exist in the present society.

Today, China's social productive forces remain very backward, manual labour is quite extensive, agricultural yields sent to market are low, and socialisation, division of labour and specialisation in industrial production not highly developed.

This is why the masses still have a backward standard of living as well as why feudal ideology frequently crops up under the guise of 'socialism' and continues to exert its poisonous influence. Weren't the 'theories' advertised by Lin Piao and the gang of four and the policies they pushed heavily feudal-socialistic?

Even today, it is still common that people abruptly fall silent whenever they hear such words as 'democracy' and 'freedom', deeming these terms to be 'heresy'.

Therefore it is imperative to launch a new movement of enlightenment and mental emancipation in order thoroughly to liquidate feudal traditions and ideology. Our Chinese nation has great potential.

Following the epoch-making victory of the Chinese revolution in 1949, the victorious smashing of the gang of four — which has attracted the attention of the whole world and is equally epoch-making — brought China into a new period of development.

Despite its detours, socialist democracy and its legal system have radiant prospects.

POWERS BLOOM AGAIN?

Bahro congress resolution

'Socialism and democracy are indivisible'

THREE THOUSAND people attended the congress in defence of the imprisoned East German Marxist Rudolf Bahro in West Berlin earlier this month.

They unanimously approved this statement, which was drafted by the following political organisations: the Italian Communist Party, Italian Socialist Party, the Spanish Socialist Party, the Fourth International, Listy, II Manifesto and the Socialist Bureau.

The participants of the First International Congress for and about Rudolf Bahro, held in Berlin (West) between 16-19 November 1978 renew their protest against the sentence imposed on Rudolf Bahro for his opinions at a secret trial without an effective defence. And we demand his immediate release.

Rudolf Bahro tries to apply the Marxist method and Marxist categories to the analysis of East European societies, and he tries to show the path of change towards socialism.

THESES

Regardless of whether we agree or disagree with his theses and individual positions, his book is an important scientific

and political contribution, produced by a critical Marxist and communist.

His book *The Alternative* has made an important contribution to the attempt to present socialism as a real perspective and to the attempt to develop steps towards a practical change. Therefore he, like Robert Havemann, represents the hopes of many people in the East and the West.

We demonstrate for Rudolf Bahro and discuss his work because we want socialism. Socialism and democracy are indivisible.

Solidarity with Rudolf Bahro means for us solidarity with all political prisoners and those in the East European countries persecuted for their political or

religious convictions.

But as the many cases of Berufsverbote and other forms of limitation of democratic rights in the Federal Republic of Germany and West Berlin show, people thinking like Bahro also have difficulties in this country, in spreading and standing up for their ideas and conceptions of an alternative social order.

Therefore it is natural for us to oppose any kind of political repression and to fight for the realisation of social and human rights and for a general amnesty for all political prisoners throughout the world.

PARTICIPANTS

The participants at this international congress — trade unionists, communists, independent socialists, socialists and social democrats from the different countries of Western and Eastern Europe have, in the last three days, discussed the work of Rudolf Bahro in an open dialogue.

Despite our day to day

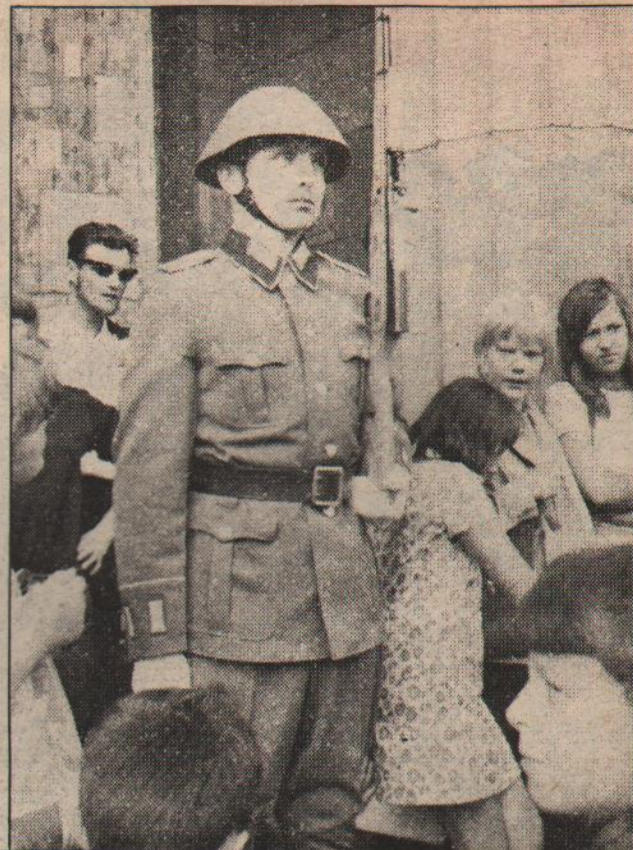
differences we have tried to provide an example through this congress. Out of this discussion and through the exchange of experience here we commit ourselves to further and to strengthen the solidarity work in our countries.

OPINION

Rudolf Bahro hoped that his book would be treated critically and would be discussed. We can only pass on this wish and appeal to the political and moral responsibilities of all left-wing organisations.

We ask democratic international public opinion, especially the various political, religious and trade union organisations, to mobilise all their efforts to increase the pressure on the GDR for the release of Rudolf Bahro.

This will be possible only if this congress is followed by other international initiatives. Here the international trade union movement has a special role to play.



EAST GERMAN guard: keeping the workers behind bars.

University staff back Bahro

BARRY WILKINS reports.

A general meeting of the University College Cardiff branch of the Association of University Teachers passed the following motion earlier this month:

'AUT supports the call for the immediate release of Rudolf Bahro from imprisonment in the German Democratic Republic and upholds the rights of intellectual freedom for citizens, including the right to publish views critical of their

society and its government without fear of reprisal.'

This motion now goes forward to the council of the AUT (a national delegate conference held twice a year).

The Bahro Defence Campaign would be strengthened significantly if the AUT can be committed nationally to supporting the demand for his release.

Therefore all Socialist Challenge supporters who are AUT members should raise the Bahro case in their branches and try to ensure that the Cardiff motion will be supported by their delegates at the Council meeting.

Israel steps in where the West fears to tread

IT MAY have surprised many of our readers to have learned from last week's issue that Israeli troops took part in the Black Friday massacre in Iran.

Or that Somoza's National Guard suppressed the Nicaraguan uprising with Israeli-supplied weapons.

Israel's role as an imperialist 'policeman' in the Arab world is well known, but her involvement elsewhere is much less publicised.

PAUL SAMUELS looks at the evidence.

'Israel's Global Role' was the subject of a recent talk in London by Dr Israel Shahak, head of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights. Shahak explained how Israel supplies weapons and other services to countries in circumstances where the United States and the West would find it embarrassing to do so. Examples from three continents illustrated this theme.

Latin America

The US officially stopped sending arms to Nicaragua in about April, after widespread protest about the Somoza regime. In May Israel sent an

enormous consignment, especially of small arms.

Television coverage has shown the National Guard armed principally with Israeli weaponry, especially the Galil automatic assault rifle.

Consignments are known to have been shipped as late as the end of August.

Nicaragua is only one of six Latin American countries, the majority of whose weapons and military supplies (eg kit and uniforms) comes from Israel. The others are Ecuador, San Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico and... Chile.

Chile is a characteristic recipient. The majority of its army supplies come from Israel.



ISRAELI premier Begin (centre) with military advisers

Advocates of 'Israeli socialism' might care to ponder that the Chilean army's helmets are manufactured on the 'leftist' Kibbutz Mishmar Ha'Emek. The uniforms are made in a private factory.

Israel also supplies a valuable propaganda service. In July the retired Israeli Chief of Staff — Mordechai Gur — visited Chile and Argentina. As well as publicly congratulating both armies for being victorious in their struggles, he was photographed with Pinochet. This was widely used for propaganda purposes, in both Chile and the USA.

In a bulletin of the Israeli-Latin America Chamber of Commerce, we can find advertisements for the Westwind Aircraft. While this plane is advertised in the US as a 'business man's plane, in this (Spanish language) bulletin it is promoted as 'easily convertible into an anti-guerilla craft'. Swap the cocktail bar for a few machine guns and presto!

Asia

Israel's role in Asia is concentrated in four countries — Taiwan, Singapore, Thailand and Iran. Taiwan is known to receive missiles and scientific knowledge.

The 'Singapore Connection' is one of the longest standing and deepest of Israel's overseas involvements. The Singapore army was practically founded by Israeli officers and is still advised, if not commanded, by them.

Thailand is a more recent venture. The connection started after the 1976 counter-revolution (when a liberal government and its supporters were ruthlessly crushed in a bloody coup).

Israel began supplying weapons, especially infantry and anti-guerilla equipment, and is still doing so. In spring 1976, only one year after the fall of Saigon, it would have been politically difficult for the US to ship these arms itself.

The links between the Savak, the Iranian Secret Police, and its Israeli counterpart, are already well known. Israel has helped Iran in other ways, notably with the ubiquitous 'agricultural missions'.

One of the main grievances of the Iranian rural workers is that under the guise of agricultural reform the Shah has created vast estates of confiscated land. These have frequently been handed over to multinational companies.

Hired landless labourers are kept in conditions not unlike concentration camps, (surrounded by barbed wire from... Israel). It is in creating such conditions, arguably much worse than the previous semi-feudalism, that Israeli missions have helped.

Africa

Israeli involvement in Africa has changed since 1967. Aid to Ethiopia has diminished after

recent events. Today there is a strong military connection with Kenya (readers will remember the role Kenya played during the Israeli raid on Entebbe).

LICENCE

But it is with southern Africa that Israel's links are strongest. The main Rhodesian Army sub-machine gun is the Israeli Uzzi, manufactured under Israeli licence in Rhodesia (and known locally as the Ruzzi — Rhodesian Uzzi).

A feature of recent military supplies to South Africa has been communications equipment such as walkie-talkies. These are manufactured by Tadiran, who (justly) publicise them as having had long exposure to field conditions.

A large consignment was bought by South Africa immediately after the Soweto riots at a time when no other imperialist country could have openly shipped such supplies without at least some protest.

Other equipment includes powerful projector searchlights and other anti-guerilla material. Israel has also recently supplied and installed an electronic barbed wire fence on the Namibian/Angolan border.

STATUS

However, the most important service rendered by Israel to South Africa is probably not military, but economic. South Africa is excluded from most commercial trade agreements — it receives neither favoured country status from the EEC nor preferential treatment from the USA.

Thus South African goods are imported to Israel and re-exported as Israeli produce, using Israel's considerable customs allowances with the EEC and the United States. This is especially significant in the case of iron and steel.

Since August the Iranian masses have been trying to overthrow the Shah by a mass uprising or insurrection. In a remarkably organised, intelligent and sustained fashion they have set out to win over the rank and file soldiers on the streets, trying to induce them to turn their guns on their officers and join the insurgents in tearing down the old regime.

This is why they threw flowers at the soldiers, kissed them, urged them not to fire on the people, and so on. Some soldiers momentarily mutinied, broke down in tears, some even committed suicide.

In such circumstances, the slogan of a constituent assembly cannot be the central axis of agitation and propaganda as some have argued.

If next time the masses come on to the streets in Iran, they finally succeed in inducing the bulk of the soldiers to mutiny, then the masses will take over Tehran and the other major cities. They will overthrow the government, open the jails, arm the workers, bring SAVAK to justice, and so on.

Power will lie in the streets as it did in Russia, Germany and Spain. This means that the victorious workers and popular masses will, in that moment, hold the future of the Iranian state in their hands. At such an hour, the question of power is posed absolutely point blank.

At the moment of victory, the religious leaders will no doubt call in the liberal bourgeois leaders to form a government and take power, just as the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries called in the Kadets in February 1917.

Are we in favour of this? No, we are not.

The Iranian people face many tasks. These include such democratic tasks as giving the land to the peasants, the right of self-determination to the oppressed nationalities, the liberation of women, religious freedom, freedom of the press, universal suffrage, independence from imperialism, and so on.

But a bourgeois government will accomplish none of these tasks. It will only return the country to monarchy or military dictatorship after first having exhausted and demoralised the people.

In that case, who should take power on the day the masses liberate Tehran? There is only one answer: a workers and peasants government. The demand for a workers and peasants government must be the central axis of agitation and propaganda.

Only a government of the workers and peasants can carry out the democratic tasks in Iran, leave alone the socialist transformation of urban industry desired by the workers, because all these tasks require the suppression of the Iranian bourgeoisie.

During the next wave of the Iranian insurrection there must be sufficient workers leaders — people whom the masses have come to trust in the recent struggles and would accept in government — who understand the need to act decisively the moment the soldiers mutiny in large numbers and the insurgent masses break through.

These people must without delay go and arrest the present government, take possession of the governmental apparatus, and declare a provisional revolutionary government. This should pass decrees on all the major political questions within the first forty-eight hours — without waiting for a constituent assembly — and follow them up with serious organisational work.

But what about the problem of the revolutionary party? There is no mass revolutionary party in Iran today.

The condition of the workers parties in Iran is weak. The Tudeh party does not appear to enjoy the confidence of large numbers of workers. A new party needs to be created.

All those declaring themselves in favour of a workers and peasants government should be invited to form a new party (as in Peru) and the Trotskyists should bid for the leadership along with other tendencies.

However, we should nevertheless call upon all the workers parties to seize power and form a workers and peasants government out of the

IRAN: A CLASSICAL REVOLUTION

'CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY', 'insurrection', 'dual power', 'soviets' - all these terms have been used in recent discussion in Socialist Challenge about the situation in Iran.

Situations like these always demand considerable precision from revolutionaries in the way they pose the question of power. Such precision has not always been the hallmark of recent debate.

In a personal contribution, DAVE BAILEY argues that what we are witnessing in Iran today is a classical revolutionary situation equivalent to that which existed on the even of the February revolution of 1917 that overthrew Czarism, the November revolution of 1918 in Germany that overthrew the Kaiserreich, and the revolution in Spain in July 1936....



uprising. Only practice will really tell who is equal to the tasks of the revolution.

Providing the masses are agitating for a workers and peasants government, then even people known to be reformists can be forced to take the reins of power during the insurrection and form a provisional government (as in Germany in November 1918).

Of course, if reformists did so, this would not be a genuine workers and peasants government. But the workers will be able to replace it with fresh leaders more easily than they would a government of the bourgeois parties — particularly if it is made responsible to workers and soldiers councils (as was the Ebert-Haase government in Germany in 1918, and as would have been the case if the Mensheviks and SRs had formed a government in February, April or July 1917, as demanded by Lenin).

Having tried to set up a provisional revolutionary government, and having ensured the relative security of the capital, the next task is for the masses to elect a central assembly of the workers, soldiers and popular organisations of the capital.

It would be helpful if such a revolutionary parliament, or soviet, could be set up before the insurrection. In 1905, the Petrograd Soviet functioned for nearly two months before the uprising (which took place in Moscow in December).

But it may be that the Soviet cannot be created in Iran much before the day of victory. Repression might rule this out, except in some individual cities which are temporarily liberated (e.g. Tabriz).

However, the absence of a Soviet before the insurrection need not prove decisive. In most of the great European revolutions, the Soviet has usually been set up only on the day

after the victory of the insurrection. This was true in Russia, Germany and Spain. It is however vital to propagate the idea of a Soviet, so that setting it up after the victory becomes easier.

Whatever happens, a Soviet must emerge on the day of the victory — or at least the day after — and assume responsibility for the provisional revolutionary government (or lead the struggle to overthrow the bourgeois government, if that is what emerges from the uprising).

When does the slogan of a constituent assembly assume practical relevance, and what does it mean?

If a bourgeois government is unfortunately born out of the uprising, then the struggle for a constituent assembly assumes considerable importance.

Trotsky once said that if the Provisional Government in Russia had been compelled to call such an assembly during the spring of 1917, it would have hastened the downfall of

the bourgeois government and the transfer of power to the soviets.

Genuine constituent assemblies are normally empowered to decide all aspects of power — unlike conventional parliaments which function under a pre-existing constitution. They decide not only which parties should be the government, but also what form of government the country should have (the constitution) — theoretically they can decide for a parliamentary republic, constitutional monarchy, a soviet republic, and so.

Like Lenin, if we should find ourselves fighting for a constituent assembly under a bourgeois government, we must use it to help organise the overthrow of this government and its replacement by a workers and peasants government and a soviet republic.

However, we must also avoid constitutional fetishism. The Bolsheviks overthrew the bourgeois government in 1917 as soon as the opportunity arose and did not wait for the assembly to be convened.

On the other hand, if the workers and peasants manage to set up a provisional revolutionary government — whether one composed of reformists or, better still, a genuine workers and peasants government — the constituent assembly acquires a different significance.

It would probably still be necessary in a country like Iran, where large parts of the rural population might not immediately understand the need to join the council system. The elections to a constituent assembly can then be used to draw them into the soviet system.

But, historical experience shows that the question of timing (yet again) is quite critical here — even lethal.

The German Revolution of 1918 provides a salutary lesson here. The Ebert-Haase government created by the November revolution looked like a workers government. The Berlin Soviet was the sovereign power in Germany from the day it was set up (10 November), and the government was responsible to it. The government was composed purely of soviet parties, the SPD and the Independent Socialists (USPD).

But Ebert was a reformist who had no intention of carrying out a single revolutionary measure. Instead, by secret agreement with the German High Command, he immediately sought a constituent assembly from the workers' councils.

The USPD sensed the danger of an early constituent assembly (the German countryside was relatively backward) and correctly demanded its postponement until after the proper consolidation of the revolution.

But Ebert got his early constituent assembly and elections to it took place on January 19th, 1919. As Ebert hoped, the bourgeois parties got a majority. Ebert formed a coalition government with the bourgeois parties in early February, and then, while the constituent assembly at Weimar, with its bourgeois majority, set about elaborating a bourgeois parliamentary constitution, the new government used the Freikorps to liquidate the formerly sovereign soviets. This took place during the bitter civil war of January-June 1919.

In Russia, following the October revolution, Lenin went over from demanding the immediate convocation of the assembly to advocating its postponement. He wanted to give the country time to absorb the meaning of October.

Unfortunately, the assembly elections went ahead as planned, a mere two weeks after the October revolution, and before the split in the Social Revolutionary Party (the peasant party) was reflected in the electoral lists.

This produced a counter-revolutionary assembly, unrepresentative of popular feeling. Instead of adding the weight of its authority to the soviet republic, it opposed the soviet power. As a result, the Bolsheviks were forced to dissolve it in January 1918.

A classical revolutionary situation exists in Iran. It calls for classical revolutionary solutions.

Victory to the Iranian Revolution! Victory to the workers and peasants of Iran!

IRELAND

Women fight in the South

Contraception ban defied

CONTRACEPTIVES were sold openly in a shop in Dublin on Tuesday 28 November.

Such an event in London, Paris, Berlin or any other European capital would be as newsworthy as the sun shining on a summer afternoon.

But in Dublin it hit the headlines. The reason is that the open sale was illegal, reports GEOFF BELL.

It has been an offence for anyone to buy, sell or advocate the use of contraceptives in the South of Ireland since 1935. The activists from CAP (Contraception Action Programme) who have opened the shop in Dublin face a possible fine of £50 and/or a jail sentence of up to six months.

Although the law forbidding the actual use of contraceptives was recently ruled unconstitutional by an Irish court, the state authorities continue to harass and intimidate those who try to distribute devices.

LOOPHOLE

In two police and customs swoops — at Dundalk in July and Dublin in September — £10,000 worth of contraceptives were confiscated.

The decision to open the shop was taken because of the imminent introduction of legislation which is expected to further tighten the law.

At present family planning clinics can exploit a legal loophole — they don't actually sell the devices and pills, but give them away free and then ask customers for a 'donation'.

Even this limited availability has been challenged by what Ann Speed of CAP described as 'the Catholic Church and a small minority of right-wing reactionaries'.

HYPOCRISY

Ann, who works in a family planning clinic, explained to Socialist Challenge: 'We want to expose the hypocrisy of the law, to show the growing demand for contraception, and to alert people to the danger of the government removing one set of restrictions for another set

of restrictions'.

The fear of CAP is that the Fianna Fail government will introduce legislation restricting contraception to married people. In this they would be reflecting the views of the Catholic Church, which in a recent statement complained:

RESTRICTION

'The present situation is indeed unsatisfactory. Contraceptives can be imported without legal restriction. They can now be obtained in many places, by young unmarried people.'

Referring to the 'genuine evils' of freely available contraception, the bishops went on:

'Societies in which contraception has been generally accepted and widely used have experienced a lowering of standards in sexual morality.

'Marital infidelity has increased. The stability of family life has been weakened. A whole new attitude towards sexual relations has developed. Promiscuity has tended to increase.'

DEMAND

But figures produced by the Irish Family Planning Association show that the demand for contraception is expressed by all age groups and by both married and single people.

Of those who visited two IFPA clinics in Dublin last year, nearly 50 per cent were single, 11 per cent were aged 19 or under, and another 40 per cent were from 20 to 24 years old.

'In this sense', says Ann Speed, 'any restrictive legislation would not only be an attack on democratic and women's rights, it would be a specific attack on youth who are to the



fore in calling for contraception.'

Majority support for full availability has been shown by a number of opinion polls, while the demand for the facilities provided by the clinics is reflected in the 54 per cent increase in their 'callers' last year.

Such backing for CAP's stand is part of a growing fight by Irish women for more rights. A recent survey carried out by a French magazine revealed that women are more discriminated against in the South of Ireland than in any other West European country.

The most dramatic response to this was Dublin's anti-rape

demonstration in September, in which 10,000 women took part.

The opening of the contraceptive shop presents the government with its most direct challenge so far.

Whether Fianna Fail falls into line with public opinion or pays more attention to the Catholic hierarchy, the fight for women's rights in the South of Ireland has been well and truly joined.

WARNING to all readers in the South of Ireland.

This advertisement is illegal. Contraception available on request.

For sale at: 17 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2.

MPs revolt in extra seats row

TWO Parliamentary Private Secretaries who voted last week against the Labour government's plan to give the North of Ireland six more seats at Westminster resigned their positions on 29 November.

The two, Ivor Clemitson and Bruce Grocott, were among 38 Labour MPs who voted against the proposals — the most significant parliamentary revolt so far against the government's Irish policy.

Liberals also voted against the measure, and an assistant Labour Whip, Jock Stallard, was notable among a large number of abstentions in the 350 to 49 vote.

Another intriguing abstention was Energy Minister Tony Benn, who voted in an earlier division on the Bill at 10pm — with the government and against a Liberal amendment.

But in the main vote, which took place just 15 minutes later, he was not to be found in the voting lobby.

The government has played down the significance of the

measure will be taken. Nor is Tony Benn to be quizzed on his voting behaviour.

The opposition to the extra six seats was based on an assumption that the move represented a further integration of the North of Ireland into



Photo: G. M. COOKSON [Socialist Challenge]

the Westminster political system. The MPs also knew that most of the extra seats would go to Unionists.

The Labour MPs who voted or acted as tellers against were: Norman Atkinson, Norman Buchan, Denis Canavan, Neil Carmichael, Lewis Carter-Jones, Ivor Clemitson, Maureen Colquhoun, Robin Corbett, Martin Flannery, Ted Fletcher, Bruce Grocott, John Home Robertson, Russell Kerr, Arthur Latham, John Lee, Eddie Loyden, Alex Lyon, Michael McGuire, Kevin McNamara, Joan Maynard, Bob Mellish, Ian Mikardo, Stan Newens, Maurice Orbach, John Ovenden, Christopher Price, Jo Richardson, George Rodgers, Paul Rose, Neville Sandelson, Renee Short, Dennis Skinner, Leslie Spriggs, Ron Thomas, Stan Thorne, Alec Woodall, John Ellis, Tom Litterick.

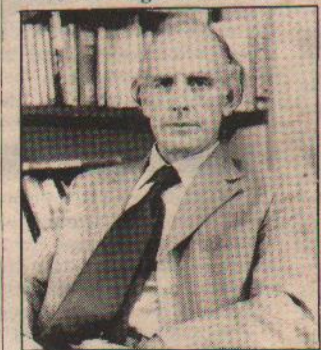


Photo: G. M. COOKSON [Socialist Challenge]

revolt. Normally an assistant Whip who refuses to support government legislation is immediately sacked, but in this case no formal disciplinary

Fusion conference: PD is born

WHERE WERE James Daly, a leading member of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, and Sean Mac Stiofain, the former chief of staff of the Provisional IRA, the weekend before last?

Nowhere else than observing and bringing greetings to the fusion conference of People's Democracy and the Movement for a Socialist Republic.

Another visitor was AILEAN O'CALLAGHAN from the International Marxist Group. He reports.

The prominent figures of the anti-imperialist movement attending the conference — Mac Stiofain actually introduced one session on 'cultural imperialism' — were evidence of the widespread interest caused by the fusion.

For more than twelve months the two constituents of the new organisation, to be called People's Democracy, have been engaging in joint work and hammering out agreement on the fundamental points of a common political programme.

Consequently the framework shared by all members of the new organisation includes:

- ★ an understanding of the centrality of the national question;
- ★ an emphasis on the leading

role the Irish working class must play in resolving it;- ★ an appreciation of the importance of the autonomous women's movement;
- ★ above all, a commitment to building a mass party based on a Marxist strategy.

PD is also internationalist. This was demonstrated when the conference called unanimously for the immediate withdrawal of Irish troops from the UN's 'policing' force in Lebanon, and passed another motion pledging solidarity with the Iranian masses.

The new organisation is not at this stage part of the Fourth International, although the MSR was. Discussion on whether to affiliate to the FI is something members of the new

organisation have to look forward to.

In the meantime, People's Democracy has been invited to participate in the International's forthcoming world congress.

Compared with the larger far left groups in Britain, PD is a relatively small organisation. But it is probably the largest Marxist group in Ireland, with branches already established in Belfast, Dublin, Cork and Limerick.

PRACTICAL

With members strongly based in the resistance movement in the North of Ireland, in the emerging women's movement in the South, and in trade unions both sides of the border, PD is well placed to elaborate a 32 county programme for completing the Irish revolution.

In fact that task was begun when joint work was agreed in October 1977. The 700-strong Coalisland conference in January this year, for which PD/MSR built in collaboration with the Independent Socialist Party, was a practical

demonstration of how the resistance could once more be rooted in the life of the masses.

One comrade divorced from the debates at the conference was Denis Murphy. Denis is presently in prison in the North, convicted of possessing arms he was holding to defend his area from Loyalist attack.

Sentenced to isolated from the fusion process and the internal life of the new organisation by a six year jail term, Denis nevertheless sent enthusiastic greetings to the conference.

His incarceration serves as a reminder to British socialists of the harsh realities of revolutionary struggle in Britain's oldest colony, a struggle which People's Democracy will now wage with the utmost vigour.

★ A fund for Denis Murphy has been established. Contributions can be sent to the Denis Murphy Defence Fund, c/o Connolly Bookshop, Avoca Park, Andersonstown Rd, Belfast.

★ Subscriptions to PD's newspaper, Socialist Republic, can be obtained from the same address, price £2 for 12 issues.

Fighting for a free socialist Wales

Y FANER GOCH

A NEW Welsh socialist paper, 'Y Faner Goch', has sold out of its 3,000 print run within days of publication.

TONI REES, a member of its editorial board, explained to us why such a paper is necessary.

What policy does Y Faner Goch stand on?

We stand for the creation of a Welsh Socialist Republic as the only way to end the cultural and economic exploitation of our country.

We see the struggle for a free Wales and a socialist Wales to be one and the same. From this standpoint, our ultimate objective must be the creation of a free socialist Wales within the wider context of a socialist Europe.

The columns of the paper are open to anyone who feels themselves to be a socialist in Wales. We have contributors and supporters from all left groupings and many who have never been active in any political organisation.

At the moment the Editorial Board is an informal group of comrades mainly in Plaid Cymru. Why did you get together to launch Y Faner Goch?

There were two main reasons. First, we felt there was an urgent need for the left of Plaid Cymru to be heard.

This is the only way to build up support in the industrial areas of Wales and to reactivate the great socialist traditions of those areas where Welshness

and socialism are inextricably combined.

Secondly, we hope this paper will bring together the socialist and nationalist currents within Wales.

What role do you see the paper playing?

It is not intended that its role should be simply passive reporting. It is also going to be an active campaigning paper taking up issues of all sorts.

For example, in this first issue we have started an active campaign to support the Nantgarw Coking Ovens workers in the fight against the closure of the ovens.

The referendum on the Wales Assembly will closely influence future political developments in Wales. What is your position on this?

The Assembly is not in any sense a matter of principle. It is weak and nothing to do with any of our principles. Yet it is, tactically, of immense importance.

First, of course, it does in some strange way recognise the existence of Wales; but more important, it will undoubtedly lead to a demand for more.

Its very weakness, its right to talk and not to ask, makes it potentially the most important development that has come our

The Welsh Socialist Newspaper 12c/p

rhif/no.1 Tachwedd-Rhagfyr 1978 November-December

way.

What type of Yes campaign should revolutionaries and Marxists carry out?

I think it would be very wrong to allow ourselves to become identified with these proposals. After all, they only came into being as a result of nationalist pressure, and as an attempt to defuse this and to destroy the movement for self-determination.

These proposals are the very antithesis of the right to self-determination. We therefore have to fight for a Yes vote but also to make the point that this is not going to be enough.

Can you briefly outline Plaid's economic policies?

Plaid Cymru has already, at previous conferences, outlined its position as one of support for free collective bargaining. This year one of the motions passed committed the party to fight for the creation of a socialist economic framework for Wales.

Socialist Challenge and Socialist Unity both stand for the right of the Welsh and Scottish people to self-determination,

for a Yes vote in the referendum, and for Assemblies with real powers.

Building on this, what do you think are the most important issues we should discuss and formulate a policy on?

The most important point is to look at Wales as a unit from inside, as it were. We are not a 'problem' to be solved by people outside.

Only when you do this will you come to see Wales in its totality as a complex of interlocking problems — cultural, social and economic.

For example, the language is not an isolated problem requiring only a pat answer outlining support for 'minority' languages and cultures; it is inextricably linked with all other problems. None of them can be considered in isolation and seen for what it is.

All socialists working in Wales must look in detail at its history and development, at its present economic and social structure, and decide on tactics in the light of these.

This is no battle for abstract ideals but for real economic and cultural freedom and social justice.

Normansfield Hospital: the tin gods hold on to power

TERENCE LAWLOR, the tyrannical consultant psychiatrist at Normansfield Hospital, has at last been fired.

But the SW Thames regional health authority, which for years ignored the appalling conditions at the mental handicap hospital, has declared that it will not take any disciplinary action against two of its officers sharply criticised in the inquiry report.

MICHAEL WARD, a member of the health authority and a former Labour councillor in Wandsworth, spoke to GEOFFREY SHERIDAN about the RHA's response.

“A lot of people feel that the action of the Confederation of Health Service Employees members at Normansfield, who went on strike to demand Lawlor's suspension, is totally vindicated.

My impression is that the consultants and doctors are fighting a ruthless rearguard action to defend their privileges.

Lawlor had locked up three women in a room and fed them on a diet of gruel. He called this a research programme.

One of the inquiry's recommendations is that research on psychiatric patients should be strictly controlled and only authorised if it's likely to be of some benefit to the patients concerned.

A leading consultant in the RHA declared that this was outside the terms of reference of the inquiry and should only be treated as an expression of personal opinion by the authors of the report.

The vote on the health authority not to discipline two of its officers was 14 to 4. A group of us wanted to further investigate critical remarks made in the report, but the majority view was to give a blanket assurance of no disciplinary action.



While relatively junior nursing staff are recommended for the sack by the report, the control over doctors is very different from that. In my view, they should have a tighter contract of employment and be subject to firmer disciplinary procedure.

I'm in favour of breaking down the hierarchy in the health service. Managing hospitals under workers' control would be a way forward, but that doesn't deal with the immediate situation we have in the hospital.

When health workers go on to the existing management bodies they can simply be sucked into them.”

Language activists jailed

THE CHARGE that a jury was politically vetted, first made in the ABC case, has been repeated in another state trial.

This time the two defendants were not as fortunate as Aubrey, Berry and Campbell, and were jailed for six months.

Nor did they achieve the same publicity. Which probably has something to do with the fact that they are Welsh, and fighting for Welsh rights.

Dafydd Wynfford James and Gruffydd Rhodri Williams, former and present chairpersons of Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymraeg [the Welsh Language Society], were convicted at Carmarthen on 24 November of conspiring to cause criminal damage to television transmission installations in the course of a Cymdeithas campaign for a Welsh language TV channel.

INTERPRETERS

But after the trial, at which evidence was given in Welsh, Wrexham MP Tom Ellis raised the possibility that Welsh speakers had been deliberately excluded from the jury by government legal officers.

Ellis said he was 'worried at reports that a large part of the jury were listening to the evidence through interpreters — a proportion far higher than one would have expected in a Welsh-speaking area.'



WYNFFORD JAMES (left) and Rhodri Williams before the start of their trial in Carmarthen

Ten out of twelve jurors are understood to have used headphones, and only one had a Welsh name. A very strange 'random selection', which makes nonsense of the prosecution claim that 'the Welsh language is not an issue in

this trial'. The thoroughly political nature of the case was further emphasised when four demonstrators who tried to expose this farce in the courtroom were jailed for a month for contempt. But Cymdeithas is not

downhearted. Acting chairperson Wayne Williams announced at a 400-strong rally after the trial that the campaign for a Welsh TV channel would now be intensified.

The nuclear threat to trade unionism

A TRADE union conference on nuclear power was held on 25 November in Oxford. JOHN BORAN reports.

The conference, organised by the Socialist Environmental Resources Association, discussed nuclear health and safety, the effect of nuclear power on employment and trade union rights, and the alternative to nuclear power. Over 100 trade unionists were there, from all the major unions.

The attack on trade union rights comes from the operation of the Official Secrets Act. For example, a worker sacked from a nuclear site can be refused a tribunal hearing on the grounds that secret information would be disclosed.

The claim by bodies like the Atomic Energy Authority (AEA) that nuclear power creates jobs was also put in perspective.

Nuclear power creates fewer

jobs, mostly a very highly skilled technical elite, than the alternatives: wave power, demanding the skills of the shipbuilding industry; wind power, linked to the aerospace industry; and solar heating and insulation, involving the plumbing and building industry.

Finally, Len Dalton, an Australian trade unionist, talked about the international struggle against nuclear power. Many trade unions around the world have been involved in the campaign, including the CFDT in France, the Irish TGWU, and the Northern Territory Trades & Labour Council in Australia.

In Britain the TUC supports nuclear power, as do all trade unions with the exception of the building workers' UCATT and the Yorkshire miners. The fight for a real debate in the labour movement about the consequences of nuclear power is only just beginning.

W H Smith & 'Gay News'

IN THE light of the Monopolies Commission Report on the Wholesaling of Newspapers and Periodicals, which confirmed WH Smith's monopoly position in this field, we the undersigned wish to condemn in the strongest possible terms WH Smith's decision to cease stocking *Gay News* after a two-and-a-half year 'trial' period and their continued refusal to restock it despite widespread protest.

Despite the liberalisation of the law on male homosexuality the majority of gay women and men remain in isolation and fear, constantly under the threat of violence, sackings and harassment by the police. More importantly, most homosexuals are still conditioned to feel guilt and self-disgust, their only problem being that they live in a society that hates homosexuals and denies them all the freedoms that heterosexuals take for granted.

Gay News provides isolated and oppressed homosexual men with a point of contact with the gay world and a source of news generally ignored by the mass press. It also gives a positive image of homosexuality as an alternative to the demeaning and stereotypical image perpetuated by most of the mass media.

WH Smith ignored these considerations in taking their action to ban *Gay News*. Smith's ostensible reasons for the ban, in terms of the content of recent issues of *Gay News*, are belied by the fact that the same subject matter appeared in the newspaper two-and-a-half years ago when it was first stocked.

GAY NEWS

The objections to letters in support of the Paedophile Information Exchange could equally be made against nationals like the *Guardian*, which is still being stocked by WH Smith, and the objection to the contact address of PIE being listed in *Gay News* constitutes a severe attack on the democratic rights of paedophiles to at least discuss with each other the brutality and ostracism which they undergo in this society.

Smith's final argument is that they should be free to stock whichever journals they choose, but their freedom infringes the rights and freedoms of a large section of the population. The principle of

individual liberty cannot be applied to the acts of large, monopolistic concerns. WH Smith may have only 400 retail outlets, but with Menzies and Surridge Dawson they control 69 per cent of wholesale periodical distribution, and a decision to ban a particular journal has widespread effects.

We believe therefore that WH Smith have abused their position, committed a wilful act of discrimination against homosexuals, and behaved in an irresponsible manner which has serious implications for the freedom of the press.

We demand that WH Smith restock *Gay News* and until such time as they do we call upon individuals and groups opposed to this form of censorship to support the initiatives against WH Smith organised by the Gay Activists Alliance.

Time Out Federated Chapel, The Spare Rib Collective, Socialist Challenge Editorial Board, Socialist Worker Editorial Board, The Leveller Collective, Steve Munby (Editor, Challenge), Lord Avebury, Maureen Colquhoun MP, Tom Robinson.

Using the Race Relations Act

COLIN Talbot (23 November) argued that the way to uproot racism in employment, training and promotion is through the strength of the trade unions. He totally rejected the use of the Race Relations Act.

Despite all its weaknesses, the Act can sometimes be used to benefit blacks, and even minor gains can increase the combativity of the black masses. So far the trade union movement has totally ignored it.

Normally local negotiators are trained to use any new legislation by means of special pamphlets and summer schools, but with the Race Relations Act this has not been done. Shop stewards usually assume that it is the property of the race relations machinery and nothing to do with the workplace.

This failure by the trade unions to use the Act is not because they are reluctant to rely on the state in the fight against racism. Far from it. The truth is that they think that using the Act will mean committing suicide — that if they are seen to be favouring the blacks, they will provoke a white backlash. In other words, they are racist.

Last January I argued at the General Council of the shopworkers' union USDAW that they should support some victimised Asian workers on the basis of the Race Relations Act. The president, Stan Tierney, a Labour MP, rejected this out of hand by

saying, 'we can't differentiate between our black and white members'.

Black workers can hardly 'rely on the strength of the trade unions', as Colin suggests, while the unions are frightened to use even the limited Race Relations Act, never mind affirmative action. The danger is that, by also calling the Act a 'non-starter', revolutionaries can appear to be in the same league as Tierney and his mates.

RAGHIB AHSAN [Birmingham]

Opportunism on BSA

I WAS somewhat surprised to find a review which I had given you over a year ago printed in *Socialist Challenge* (23 November). This raises a number of questions as to the motive behind the printing of this review. If the editorial board think that the mis-education of black children is an important subject worthy of inclusion in the pages of *Socialist Challenge*, then why has it taken so long for this review to be printed?

I and a number of comrades from the Black Socialist Alliance strongly believe that it was not an interest in the mis-education of black children that motivated the printing of this review. We are confident that the *Socialist Challenge* editorial board is aware of the policy of the BSA that we do not want, at this point, to give interviews or articles to the press of white-dominated organisations.

There are a number of reasons for this policy, none of which has anything to do with anti-white leftism. The point is that it is disrespectful and opportunist for *Socialist Challenge* to adopt the method of printing a review by me — a review that was given to you before the BSA was even formed — and printing after my name 'member of the Black Socialist Alliance'.

You thereby give the impression that the BSA has made an exception of *Socialist Challenge* in its declared policy concerning the press of aligned white-dominated organisations.

There is nothing to prevent individual members of the BSA writing for your paper or any other aligned papers. But if and when they do so, it is under the strict understanding that the name of the BSA should not be used to identify the writer — they write strictly in a personal capacity.

If you have criticism of this policy, it is your business — but you have no right to disrespect the wishes of another revolutionary organisation, especially one whose aims you claim to support. We demand an apology, and personally I want an assurance that if I submit an article you will not take it upon yourself to add the name of the BSA, or any other organisation, unless actually stated in the signing of the article.

TUNDE ANTHONY [London]

*Our apologies

Recycling hippy fantasies

KEVIN Wood's enthusiastic review (9 November) of Burchill & Parsons' *The Boy Looked At Johnny* was only qualified by their dedication to Menachim Begin. Why was he not bothered by the incoherence and irrationality of this book?

As Hegel once pointed out — all events in rock culture occur twice: the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce. B & P spend sixty pages berating the coke-cannabis-acid scum elite of the sixties before boldly proposing their own master drug — speed!

They seriously inform us that 'speed is a threatening drug because it increases the IQ by an average of eight points and (if snorted and not injected) is not addictive except in persons desperate for something to blame their deficiencies on'. This seems to me a squalid seventies re-write of the egotistical, omnipotent ravings of Timothy Leary on LSD.

And their concept of politics. Here again, all the most inane hippy fantasies about music as a force for socio-political change are re-cycled and inverted. Instead of endless nostalgia for Woodstock, B & P indulge in endless invocations of Lewisham. One can only guess their enthusiasm springs from the fact that

Lewisham was the most violent demo of recent years, since it is regarded as a one-off moment of glory and never seen as an incident in a context of racial and political conflict.

The only justification I can see for this book is that B & P wanted to create a work as disturbing and unsettling in prose as the Sex Pistols achieved in music. But whereas the Pistols unleashed a wave of energy and an image of revolt (surely rock culture can never achieve more than that) B & P busy their misanthropic and contradictory ideas (enthusiasm for Zionism, contempt for Rastafarianism) in language obsessed with decay and animal disgust.

Faggot, junkie, turd, scum, leper and parasite are the most common critical categories in this book. Is this really *Socialist Challenge*'s idea of 'a highly worthwhile read which separates the acceptable from the unsound'?

MICK GOLD [London SW2]



'Knifed in back'

ONCE again you have knifed in the back the six anarchists now facing charges of conspiracy to cause explosions. The first time was when the arrests first started and you printed a sanctimonious article about how the International Marxist Group had always warned against the 'politics of despair' — and this at a time when not even the bourgeois press had convicted the arrested (they still haven't been committed for trial).

The next time was when you stalled an article from Persons Unknown support group commenting on this and raising the real issues. When eventually you did publish it, it was with all the bits criticising yourselves edited out.

Now, in Richard Carver's article on the state (2 November), you add slander and innuendo to your record of 'defence' for the six anarchists. You say Persons Unknown indulged in physical attacks against potential supporters. When? Why? Certainly the Persons Unknown supporters we know are too busy engaging in concrete material support for the prisoners, publishing pamphlets and spreading the word about state repression, to be bothered with such counter-productive tactics.

As for criticising the group for going 'underground', Carver obviously hasn't been reading the weekly press bulletins sent to *Socialist Challenge* outlining the continual harassment by the police of supporters. People have been arrested on their way to meetings, houses have been raided, and at least three people have been arrested at remand hearings.

You complain that Persons Unknown are in some sort of ghetto, that they cannot spread the important issues, but why are you complaining? It is the kind of attitude that your

WHY PAUL FOOT SHOULD BE A SOCIALIST

The case against the Socialist Workers Party

A recent Communist Workers Movement publication 'A clearly, sometimes amusingly, written contribution to the debate on "socialism and how to get there".' *Time Out*. 'A serious critique of the politics of the Trotskyist tradition... Doing this in an amusing and readable style (another first for a Marxist-Leninist group), they at the same time give a clear outline of their own politics.' *The Leveller*. A 'devastating critique'. *Undercurrents*. Reprint. Still only £1.20 (200 pages). All good bookshops, or by post from October Books, 4B Temple Court, Liverpool 2. (25p p&p, trade terms available.)

paper reflects that has pushed them there.

OXFORD ANARCHISTS

• On a point of fact, our first direct contact with Persons Unknown was when a group of their supporters repeatedly visited the Other Bookshop and abused and threatened members of the shop and editorial staff if we did not print their article.

This sort of thing is still going on: a libertarian supporter of the paper was recently threatened by a group of Persons Unknown supporters for defending the Anti Nazi League.

Such people may not be representative of the campaign, but the group's very anonymity means that this is the face it tends to present to the world.

Doctrinaire approach

READING your unsigned article on 'Marxist theory and the British labour movement' (23 November) reminded me of an editorial I had read on the same subject in an early issue of *International Socialism*. The fact that I recalled this so many years after its publication in 1961, when I first read it, reflects not only the rarity of such essays but also the impression which it made on me at the time. When I reread it, I found a comparison with the present article highly illuminating.

Compared with the *Socialist Challenge* article it possesses the great advantage of recognising that there are two sides to the question — Marxist theory and the British labour movement — which must be brought into a dialectical relationship with each other as they exist in reality, as against the one-sided and doctrinaire approach of the author of your article.

The point I wish to make is that unless revolutionary Marxism can become fused with at least a part of the British labour movement and its traditions, such as the Socialist Workers Party, then it can never become an effective political force in this country. Surely this is self-evident, but it is so often ignored, though it appears to have been understood at least once in IS.

If I seem to have been suddenly re-converted to the 'IS tradition' (and I have), this is not because I believe that their 'own particular dogmatic schematism' was correct — this has been disproved often enough — but because of this specific, close and dialectical relationship with the actual British labour movement, and what the editorial called its 'self-changing activity'.

In this respect, the old IS editorial still seems to me to be one of the best surviving expressions of what was once most positive in the 'IS tradition', which we need to reclaim and learn from.

JOHN STRAUTHER [Liverpool]

No 'right to be heard'?

DAVE Laing (23 November) is wrong to minimise the criticism of Monstrous Regiment's performance of *Time Gentlemen Please* in Leeds and wrong to raise the question of the left's 'internal democracy and right to be heard' without arguing his point in any detail.

There was some private discussion during the show about whether to quietly walk out in protest at the, at best, mistaken politics coming out in the show, or whether to stay and argue at the end. I was among those who wanted to stay and argue, but many walked out. When some feminists started shouting their protests, saying that the show degraded and exploited

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COMMENT

women, and the performers and some of the audience claimed that they had a right to perform/see the show, it became a case of 'which side' the rest of us were on.

The claim that the left has a 'right' to put over its ideas has to be dismissed. In my opinion, the oppressed, whether they be 'the working class', women, black people, or gays, have a right to use whatever means they see fit in their effort to throw off the exploiter. There can be no absolute rights to have your arguments heard.

Dave Laing has got it the wrong way round when he says he is more concerned about the fact of the left being disrupted than about the criticism. The first question must always be 'do these ideas and activities further our liberation?' In the case of Monstrous Regiment, some comrades felt so strongly that the ideas were harmful that they had to disrupt.

You can disagree with their judgement of the ideas in the play, and you can disagree with their tactics — but you can't deny their right to employ whatever means they see fit, unless you want to deny their autonomy.
MAX FARRAR [Leeds Big Flame]

Local broadcasting

AT the end of July the government issued its long-awaited White Paper on broadcasting which set out its intentions for new legislation. I have waited with increasing impatience for a response from the left to this document.

So far as I am aware the only radical critique of the White Paper (and of the Annan Committee Report which preceded it) has come from a broad-front pressure group, the Community Communications Group (COMCOM). This has produced a policy statement calling for the setting up of a Community Broadcasting Agency to foster the development of democratically controlled, non-profit-distributing local radio and cable TV stations which the Annan Committee proposed.

COMCOM sees these stations as a potential 'third force' in local broadcasting: an alternative to the establishment paternalism of the BBC and the populist commercialism of the so-called 'independent' stations supervised by the IBA. Local people would be ensured access to the production facilities of the station and its governing board; and station staff and volunteers would be accountable to a local policy board representative of community interests, which in turn would be accountable to the proposed Community Broadcasting Agency.

Is there any chance that the left will wake up and start shouting on behalf of democratically controlled non-profit-distributing local broadcasting? Or is the prospect of a democratic socialist form of broadcasting now too threatening for revolutionary minds engrossed in millennialist fantasies?

SIMON PARTRIDGE [London N7]



Intellectual bickering?

I AM puzzled (well, not really) at your publishing the reply by comrades Manson, Smith and Singh (16 November) to Tony Sharp's letter (2 November). Such intellectual bickering and comic in-fighting should be set aside for the confines of some theoretical organ (or comic, as the case may be).

I could only explain the letter as some less than serious parody. But they could at least have done it in a less exclusive way. I presume it was the letter's pretentious verbosity and intellectual gloss which conned you into publishing it.

That letter is not an isolated example. Articles and letters of this nature appear frequently. How the hell do you want workers to participate in the debate about socialism when the columns of your paper are devoted to such intellectually elitist subject matter?

In a vain attempt to sound learned, I too quote Lenin: 'The flaunting of high-sounding phrases is characteristic of the declassed petty-bourgeois intellectuals'. So I await your answer with interest — and a dictionary!

Let's not cut the revolution's throat, comrades.
S. KERRY [Trawden]

Materialism as philosophy

THE five comrades who took issue (16 November) with my first letter (2 November) misunderstand me if they think I accuse Engels of reformism. But he is guilty, while attempting to popularise Marxism, of creating a 'materialist philosophy'. This is quite contrary to Marx's intention — 'We do not wish to command people to "kneel here" to another philosophy'.

Engels commits just this error whilst attacking Dühring's 'force' theory (quite excellent so far as it did that). But any attempt to make dialectical materialism a science (in the bourgeois sense, i.e. detach it from its critical class basis) could only lead to positivist sociology and

reformist practice. A dialectics of nature can only be Hegel with 'materialism' transposed for 'idea'.

Bernstein's revision only apparently predates Kautsky's. Their underlying assumptions were similar. Kautsky argues that in the 'materialistic conception of history' the Marxist laws are quite universal and general; the proletariat is quite incidental. Hilferding's argument that Marxist economics are 'value free' derives from the same philosophical background.

Do the comrades deny that the First World War would have been a non-starter if the Second International's position, instead of being equivocal, had been anti-war and for revolution? Because of the acceptance of dialectical materialism as immutable natural law, both reformism and later Stalinism were able to give their crimes a socialist gloss which is still a quite acceptable position in the workers movement today, albeit with the admission of 'mistakes'.

The Marxian system is taken exclusively from the standpoint of the proletariat. It is concerned not with supplanting bourgeois philosophy, sociology or history with a new philosophy, sociology or history, but with their criticism; it uncovers their class conditioned ideological character. Capital is a critique of political economy, not a socialist economics textbook!

When I say 'do it now' I mean that capitalism gives us the conditions for socialism. We convince the rest of our class that this is so in struggle, 'practical critical activity'. Of course it will take a conjoint political/economic crisis and development of class consciousness to realise socialism. The 'necessity' of this we infer from Marx's theory of history.

Could it be, though, that the five comrades mistake my attack on dialectical materialism as one on historical materialism!

TONY SHARP [Liverpool]

Facts on food

YOU'VE done it again. 'I await the first case of wholewheat bread poisoning and grievous bodily harm done by too much muesli', writes Colin Smith (9 November). Vegetarians and wholefood eaters are not

averse to jokes, but where are the signs of a serious commitment to investigating the issues of food on the part of your paper?

These are very important to take up. It isn't enough to talk dismissively of agribusiness. Internationalism and socialism demand an understanding of what happens to create the 'food shortages' of which we read so much, and also how the beginnings of a socialist life-style can be found in vegetarianism.

A few facts, lifted from **The Vegan**. 370 million tons of the world's harvest is fed to cattle in the West (?) every year — enough to meet the combined needs of all the people in China and India, a large fraction of the world's population. Ninety-five per cent of US soya bean production is fed to cattle.

Meanwhile we eat steak, and the agricultural producers of cash crops in Third World countries often starve because the staples of their diet have become too scarce and expensive. An acre of good land used for pasture will produce 18lb of dry matter protein in a year. Soya bean yield would be 500lb.

Thus, as the affluent, especially capitalist, countries consume vast quantities, it comes close to eating the poor of others. Obviously much work, both in research and publicity, still needs to be done to tie these issues in to the others that we associate with socialism. However, until now resolutely cranky organisations have held the initiative.

Their utopianism puts many off, but if there are no others at work the disillusioned will give up. So why doesn't **Socialist Challenge** take the initiative?

PAUL HUBERT [Newcastle]

Feudalism lives — in Scotland

THE Scottish information office has issued a form on the abolition of feu duties. This may puzzle some folk, who believe that feudalism has passed away in the United Kingdoms. However, this is just not the case in Scotland.

In the old days knights were an early form of gangster, who carved up a country into spheres of interest. They roamed the countryside heavily armed, offering protection to the populace. In return for this

protection, the population gave a considerable part of their substance to their feudal superiors.

Now this system still exists — technically — in Scotland. Every year those who own a house or flat which is not freehold have to pay feu duties. But for what reason?

The old feudal superiors of my great great great grandfather's days at least offered protection to him. The modern feudal superiors screw cash out of me and give absolutely nothing in return. Why should this be? Just because his forefathers screwed cash out of mine by menaces, does that allow him to do the same with me?

Well, the law is on his side. If I refuse to submit to his will, he can point (impound) my goods to the value of the feudal payments I owe him as my superior. And he has a whole lot more power than that.

The feudal superior can appoint me as the collector of his dues from all the folk in a street. What is more, he does not have to pay me for doing this. If I refuse, he can take out a court order against me, sell my gear to the value of his dues, and leave me with nothing.

If I get wise to my position in the eyes of the law, and collect my master's dues from his other vassals, and they refuse to pay, it is no use me complaining to him. I must take the offender to court myself, and point his gear, until he learns sense and pays up like a good vassal of his feudal superior.

This is an issue which should be part of the platform of any organisation calling itself by the name of socialist. Let us totally abolish feudal dues. What is more, let them not be given any compensation for their loss of this revenue of extortion. Feudal superiors are mere parasites in our society. Let us treat them as such.
H.C. MULLIN [Glasgow]

THE LENGTH of letters printed will usually be kept down to 400 words in order to encourage as wide a range of contributions as possible. All letters may be cut at the Editor's discretion. Unsigned letters will not normally be published, although we will withhold real names from publication on request.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE EVENTS

THE DEADLINE for this column is midday on the Saturday before publication.

NORTH WEST

WARRINGTON Socialist Challenge group meets regularly. Ring Manchester Socialist Challenge offices for details. 061-236 2352.

GREATER MANCHESTER Socialist Challenge. School students who support the paper and would like to get involved in anti-fascist activity, please contact Chris (273 5947, day) or Steve (226 4287, evening), or write to Manchester SC Centre, 14 Piccadilly.

SALFORD Socialist Challenge supporters can be contacted at the Manchester Socialist Challenge offices. Tel 061-236 2352 or, by writing to Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre, c/o 14 Piccadilly, Manchester with a view to forming a Salford Socialist Challenge group.

MANCHESTER Socialist Challenge Jumble Sale and Xmas Fair, Sat 16 Dec, 2.30pm. Slade Lane Neighbourhood Centre, 642 Stockport Rd., Longsight, M/cr. Contact SC centre (236 2352) if you have any jumble—we will collect.

LIVERPOOL Socialist Challenge Xmas Party, Friday 15 December, Caribbean Centre, Upper Parliament St, starts 8pm.

MOSS SIDE Socialist Challenge supporters sell the paper at Moss Side Centre, Saturday, 11-1.

NORTH EAST

NEWCASTLE Socialist Challenge local supporters are active! If you want to join them, phone Pete on (0632) 29057.

LIVERPOOL supporters meetings on 'Revolutionaries and Trade Unions': Wed 13 Dec, 'Industrial Democracy or Workers Control' (Tommy Healey), 7.30pm in the Committee Rooms, AUEW Building, Mount Pleasant.

DURHAM Socialist Challenge Supporters Group. For details contact: Dave Brown, 2 Pioneer Cottages, Low Pittington, Durham.

MIDDLESBROUGH Socialist Challenge sales, Saturday lunch time near the lottery stand at Cleveland Centre. Paper also available at Harrisons (newsagent) opp. McKenna & Brown in Linthorpe Road.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES readers can buy Socialist Challenge from Green Books, upstairs in the Spencer Hall shopping centre.

LONDON

TOWER HAMLETS Socialist Challenge supporters sell every weekend: Saturdays meet 10.30am, Whitechapel tube; Sundays meet 10am, Brick Lane (corner of Buxton St.).

WALTHAM FOREST paper sales every Saturday, 11am-noon outside the post office, Hoe St, Walthamstow, London: E17.

HARROW Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly, details from Box 50, London N1 2XP.

TOWER HAMLETS Socialist Challenge Group meets every fortnight (phone 247 2717 for details).

HARINGEY supporters are showing **Divide and Rule** — Never, the anti-racist film described in SC as 'superb'. Includes TRB and Clash at Carnival 1. Thur 14 Dec, 7.30pm, West Green Community Centre, Stanley Rd., N15 (Turnpike Lane tube). Adm. 60p (30p unwaged).

SW LONDON supporters group meets next on Wed 13 Dec, 8pm, Clapham Library, Clapham Common North Side (Clapham Common tube). Discussion on 'The role of SC groups' — and what we feel about our group. All local supporters welcome to contribute.

BRENT supporters sell every Saturday, 2.30pm, at Kilburn Sq., Kilburn High Rd., London NW6.

SW LONDON sales every Saturday, 11am-1pm, at Clapham Junction (Northcote Rd), Brixton tube, Clapham Common tube, Balham tube. Also on bookstalls outside Oval tube, Herne Hill BR, and at Shepherd's newsagents, Braganza St.

HACKNEY supporters sell every Saturday, 12-2pm, in Kingsland High St., Dalston — meet outside Sainsbury's.

WALTHAMSTOW readers can buy Socialist Challenge regularly from Sheridan's Newsagents, 86 Hoe St, E17.

HACKNEY Socialist Challenge supporters group now meets fortnightly on Thursdays at 7.30pm in the Britannia Pub, Mare St. E8. 7 Dec: 'Hackney Girls Project' — discussion led by some of the women who helped to organise it.

LEYTON readers can buy Socialist Challenge from Patel's Newsagents, 326 Lea Bridge Road, E10.

SOUTH WEST

ISLE OF WIGHT readers can buy Socialist Challenge from the Oz Shop, 44 Union St., Ryde.

BATH Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday, 2-3.30pm, outside Macfisheries, Ring Bath 20298 for further details.

SOUTHAMPTON Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday from 10am-1pm above bar, Post Office, Bargate.

PORTSMOUTH Socialist Challenge sales, Saturdays, 11.30am-1pm, Commercial Road Precinct.

SWINDON supporters sell Socialist Challenge 11am-1pm, Saturdays,

Regent St (Brunel Centre).

FOR INFORMATION on activities in the South-West, write to Box 002, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Road, Bristol 6.

BRISTOL Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday, 11am-1pm in the 'Hole in the Ground', Haymarket.

YORKSHIRE

HUDDERSFIELD SC group meets fortnightly on Thursdays at the Friendly & Trades Club, Northumberland St. 7 Dec: 'Women's Liberation and the struggle for socialism' (speaker Penny Duggan).

DEWSBURY Socialist Challenge sales regularly on Saturday mornings in Westgate at the Nat. Westminster Bank, 12.30-2.00pm.

HUDDERSFIELD Socialist Challenge sales regularly Saturdays 11am-1pm in the Piazza.

YORK Socialist Challenge is on sale at the York Community Bookshop, 73 Walmgate or from sellers on Thursdays (12.30-1.45) at York University, Vanbrugh College, Saturdays (11.30-3.30) at Coney Street.

MIDLANDS

For details of activities of local supporters throughout the Midlands contact the Socialist Challenge Centre, 76b Digbeth High Street, Birmingham: (021) 643 9209.

SOUTH EAST BRIGHTON SC forums fortnightly on Tuesdays. Contact Micky on 605052 for details.

NORWICH Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday in Davey Place (opp. market) and bookstall Thursdays at University of East Anglia.

COLCHESTER Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly. For details phone Steve on Wivenhoe 2949.

SCOTLAND

For information about the paper or its supporters' activities throughout Scotland please contact **Socialist Challenge Books**, 64 Queen St, Glasgow. Open Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday afternoons. Phone for alternative arrangement (221 7481). Wide range of Fourth International publications.

EDINBURGH Socialist Challenge supporters group meets regularly. Phone George at 031-346 0466 for details.

DUNDEE information about Socialist Challenge activities from 64 Queen St, Glasgow. Join in SC sales outside Boots (corner of Reform St) each Saturday, 11am-2pm.

Socialist Challenge

THE ALTERNATIVE IN WESTERN EUROPE

One-day school on 'Eurocommunism and revolutionary strategy in the West'

Introduced by ERNEST MANDEL, followed by discussion

Saturday 13 January, 10am - 5pm
Holborn Assembly Rooms, London

Tickets: £1.50 at the door or £1.25 before 1 January, from: Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

POLICE BATONS ENFORCE 5% LAW

THE IMPORTANCE of the bakers' strike was dramatically illustrated again last week.

How? By the continuing and increasing use of police violence to smash the picket lines.

One Bakers Union senior steward, **RONNIE DRAPER** from Scott's Bakery in Liverpool, described to 'Socialist Challenge' what happened last Friday at his picket line:

"A lot of pickets had been here all night. Some of them came between 6am and 7am.

We were all standing here, round the fire. It was a peaceful picket.

We got the backing of the

lorry drivers' union, the URTU. Our fitters, electricians and garage workers haven't gone into work.

There were just 22 scabs who went out in vans, with the aid of about 60 to 80 police who used the big stick and put the boot in.

The police intimidation was incredible. They used their batons — not truncheons, big sticks — to keep us back.

There were three vanloads of the Special Squad, Liverpool's equivalent to the Special Patrol Group.

They kicked as though they were playing at Cardiff Arms Park.

STOPPED

The inspector had told me to take two of the stewards with me and speak to the vans. So three of us went over by the far side of the gate.

The first van was stopped by an inspector. I went over to



On the picket line in Birmingham

Photo: SECOND CITY PHOTOGRAPHERS

speak to him and then this copper came up and just stuck one on us.

Two of them had a go at Joe, one of the stewards. They dragged him away by his throat. I said I'd complain officially about this.

But another inspector came up and said that I'd better be sure of my facts, because my name would be on the com-

plaint sheet and I'd be in trouble if I didn't get things

BAKERS STRIKE XMAS BENEFIT: Monday 11 December, 8pm, at Francis Shaw Social Club, Corbett St., Manchester 11. Featuring North West Spanner in 'Partisans' and speaker from strike committee.

right.

But I'm not going to be scared off from complaining. And we're not going to be scared off from picketing.

The vans got out today and six of our pickets were arrested and beaten up. Tomorrow we're going to turn out in massive numbers.

TOMMARLOWE writes:

The threat to increase the picket at Scott's Bakery was enough for management, and they have now shut up shop.

But elsewhere management and police continue to mount military manoeuvres to smash the picket lines.

Bakers Union district officer Paul Sagoo described what happened outside Parslows Bakery in Reading on Sunday:

'While our members were negotiating with supervisors at the gate, a van drove into the picket line injuring one of our members.'

The van in question was a police vehicle, one of two on the scene full of policemen. Two strikers are now in hospital as a result of this attack.

The pattern is obvious. Wherever mass pickets gather the police do all in their power to smash them up.

For although bread continues to appear in the shops, the truth is that the strike is having a big effect.

The large bakeries are losing custom to the independents, and with the Christmas season coming on it is custom they cannot afford to lose.

So the employers, with the aid of the police, are doing all in their power to smash the strike physically.

Accordingly, the strike is now not just about the 5 per cent law, important as that issue is. It is also about the right to picket.

For both these reasons bakery workers need all the support they can get. Money, help with flying pickets, support on the picket lines are what is needed most.

Organise collections in your workplace, send delegations to the picket-line, organise solidarity in your union branch.

Defend the right to picket! Smash the 5 per cent! Victory to the bakers!

THE OTHER BOOKSHOP

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New books by mail order

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- The Second Slump — Ernest Mandel £6.50
- Political Writings 1921-26 — Gramsci £3.95
- The Nuclear Disaster — CIS .65

TERMS: add 10% under £7; £7 or more post free.

OUR FUND DRIVE

THERE is only one more issue of Socialist Challenge before Xmas. But there are still three weeks before this quarter's fund

drive is over.

And we hope that readers are going to make sure the festive spirit extends to the interests of

the paper during that time by having a fund-raising party.

There will be many social events in the coming weeks, so

why not keep Socialist Challenge in mind?

We need it. This week our total hit an all-time low since the paper was launched in June 1977: a mere £39 this week.

The cumulative total reaches £1161.03, and so the head of the Shah remains intact. If you don't hurry up the Iranian masses will get there first!

The pennies haven't been coming in, but supporters have helped out in other ways. Manchester comrades brought in two entire albums of stamps last week, and just a few days ago another album arrived by post from a Surrey comrade.

The Leicester supporter who spends many hours of his time sorting through the bundles of stamps will doubtless have more financial benefits of the paper in store once these are sold.

DIET

Bernard Regan, the comrade who has agreed to a nationally sponsored diet in aid of the paper, has decided to give his starvation efforts a clear run of several weeks.

He will now begin his diet after Xmas, so there is still time to send in your pledge saying how much you will give the paper for every pound of flesh which disappears from Bernard.

Our thanks this week to:

Arnold Tortorella	£3
SPage	£1
Sharon, E London	£10
M. Brennan	£3
Bolton supporters	£17
H. Khamis	£5
TOTAL	£39

JOIN IN THE THIRD NATIONAL SALES DAY

Saturday 9 December 1978

Each month this quarter we have set aside a day when we ask all supporters of the paper to join us in selling on the high streets, at the bus stops or tube stations, and on the estates. If you live in a town where there are no regular sales of the paper, just fill in the form below and we will send you a bundle of 10 on a sale-or-return basis to see if you can establish regular sales.

Post to PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

NAME

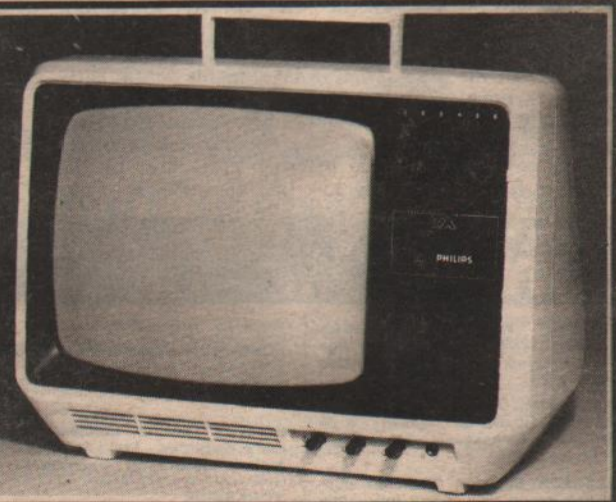
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Please send me 10 papers on a sale-or-return basis.

WHY NOT try your luck in our Xmas lottery?

For 10p per ticket or £1 a book of tickets, plus sae, you can have a chance to win one of the following: a portable 12-inch black and white TV; a case of French wine; an autographed copy of Ernest Mandel's new book, The Second Slump; a record token; or a year's subscription to Socialist Challenge, International and Socialist Woman.

The draw will take place on 18 December in our offices, and the winning number will be printed in the issue of 4 January 1979. Organised by D. Weppler of 328 Upper St., London N1.



SUBSCRIBE NOW!

Domestic: 6 months, £5; 12 months, £10
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