

Chartist

SOCIALIST CHARTER MONTHLY NEWS REVIEW

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JUNE 1978 No 67 10p



Callaghan
Or Class Struggle?



A CHALLENGE FOR LABOUR

WHICH WAY TO LABOUR VICTORY — HIS OR OURS?

THE LABOUR LEADERSHIP, in both Transport House and the governmental corridors of power, greeted the results of the May local elections with a huge sigh of relief. The trend towards the Tories seems to have been halted — Labour lost 'only' one metropolitan council and four London borough councils to the Conservatives.

But what can really be deduced from the May local election results? Working class approval for the policies of the Callaghan Government? Has the argument in favour of lower living standards, higher unemployment and reduced health, welfare and education services been accepted by the 10 million-strong labour movement? Can the labour and trade union leadership produce any evidence that their pro-capitalist policies have been approved by working class people?

The fact of the matter is that any Labour Party and trade union campaign based on purely lauding the 'achievements' of the Labour Government would guarantee a defeat in any election in the near future.

Working class people in the major city areas have no reason to feel grateful to the Callaghan Government and his trade union leadership cohorts. Over the last four years the Government has given way to pressure from the Confederation of British Industry, the National Association for Free-

and a host of other organisations which exist to represent the interests of British and international capital.

The price for succumbing to this pressure has been paid by ordinary working class people in the form of cuts in their real wages, attacks on their right to work, their schools, their hospitals, and their social services. Everything which only ten years ago was considered to be permanent gains won by the working class people has been thrown up for grabs as Callaghan and Co. scabble around for new ways to apply temporary patches the rotting bulk of British capitalism. To the Honorable Ladies and Gentlemen of the Labour Government we say — it will take more than your miserable record to inspire working class people to vote, in their millions, for your Labour Government.

But, fortunately, the labour movement has not been passively suffering the blows inflicted on it by the Government. On the contrary, in its ranks there are now

ready for the future.

These people include the supporters of the Grunwick strikers and the firefighters, the tens of thousands of advocates of a woman's right to choose — free abortion on demand, the opponents of the fascist National Front and their vile racist creed, and the militant defenders of schools and hospitals — particularly the EGA fight in London.

Neither has the wretched record of the Government destroyed the desire for the broadest possible unity in the organisations and ranks of the workers' movement. The numerical strength of the trade unions has actually *grown* in this last period, while the extremely high turn-out in the local elections revealed that hundreds of thousands of people feel that it is important to vote Labour — even if they are disillusioned with its present leadership.

The campaigning experience gained by many trade unionists and Labour supporters in the last period will go a long way to ruling out a repeat of the 1970 election defeat — when mass abstention defeated the Wilson Government and installed Heath and his crew. This experience of political and social campaigning will have the effect of

ensure that *Labour wins the next general election.*

The Left has got a doubly vital role to play in the forthcoming election campaign. Firstly, it has got to ensure that Labour beats the Tories. Secondly, at the same time, it has got to make sure that an alternative socialist voice is heard — alongside the appeals to unthinking 'loyalty' which will doubtless emanate from Downing Street and Westminster. Unity is the keynote for the election campaign — and alongside unity the need to place the popular, progressive campaigns which the most advanced sections of the labour movement have supported in the last four years to the forefront in the election period.

A vital discussion has to be opened up on the Left on how to accomplish this last task. How do we integrate the struggle for women's rights, opposition to racism, opposition to cuts, against imperialism in the underdeveloped world, into our election activities? The supporters of the *Chartist* will be working hard, alongside other people, to bring these campaigns and movements to the campaign for a vote for Labour in the coming general election campaign. This is the very best way

OUT

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Chartist

SOCIALIST CHARTER MONTHLY NEWS REVIEW
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AUEW and the left

"ANTI-STRIKE moderate sweeps into AUEW job" jubilantly proclaimed *The Times* following Terry Duffy's victory over 'Broad Left' candidate Bob Wright in the recent AUEW presidential elections.

Indeed, the bosses and their press can well afford to gloat over Duffy's success, since it represents a major blow to the whole labour and trade union movement. After ten years of 'Broad Left' control under Scanlon's leadership, Britain's second largest union is now thoroughly dominated by the right wing; all 25 Left candidates were defeated, leaving Duffy and Boyd and their cronies with a 6 to 1 majority on the executive.

Duffy, of course, is about as moderate as Frank Chapple of the EEUPTU. He is an extreme right-wing anti-communist who supports pay controls and believes in 'continuous production'. "My policy" says Duffy, "is to project our members' minds beyond the immediate pay packets." (In other words, to accept wage cuts, while making fine speeches about the 'national interest' and 'better days ahead'.)

CLOCK BACK

Within the AUEW he wants to turn the clock back to the days of 'Carron's Law'—when the union was dominated by William Carron and other right-wingers who ruled the AUEW with an iron hand, victimising militants, expelling communists, and riding roughshod over democratic decisions.

Already Duffy has floated proposals for 'progressive changes' within the union. These include: officials to be appointed instead of being elected; the dismantling of district committees and the Final Appeals Court; and amalgamation with the EEUPTU.

On paper, fusion between the two main skilled engineering unions might appear to strengthen the unity of the working class. In practice, however, Duffy, Boyd and Chapple will use the fusion to consolidate right-wing control and to undermine democratic rights within the AUEW. In the process, TASS, the Left white-collar engineering union, would probably be discarded.

On a national level, Duffy's victory also strengthens Callaghan's plans for a further 'Phase Four' extension of the wage-cutting 'Social Contract'. With a major union like the AUEW already sewn up, Callaghan and Healey will have a trump card to play against those union leaders who are making Left noises about an 'end to wage restraint'.

REASONS

The fundamental question which confronts the Community Party/left Labour 'Broad Left' alliance is why is it that Duffy and the right wing were able to achieve such a sweeping victory in the AUEW elections? It was not exactly unexpected—since 1974, when the Labour government was returned to office, the right wing have been making gains within the union.

According to Bob Wright, the main reasons for the right-wing success are "Their machine, the press, and organisations such as Tru-Mid" plus the use of the postal ballot—"If the election had largely been activist members I would've walked it" says Wright.

Certainly there can be little doubt that these factors did play an important part. The press and media trumpeted Duffy's praises. Organisations like Tru-Mid and the NAFF undoubtedly campaigned for

Duffy, and the right wing certainly had access to a well-oiled, adequately financed electoral machine run by right-wing stalwart John Boyd. The postal ballot which atomises union members in the 'secrecy' of their own homes, where they are isolated from discussion with their fellow workers and subjected to regular blasts of propaganda from the TV and the press, also played its part.

However, these organisational factors alone cannot explain the phenomenal rise of the Right which culminated in Duffy's massive victory. The only political reason that Wright offers for his failure is that the rank and file rejected "the Left socialist alternative to present policies." In other words, the engineering workers themselves are to blame for Duffy's victory!

SOCIAL CONTRACT

After three years of the Social Contract, during which real wages have fallen by over ten per cent, social services have been slashed and unemployment has risen drastically, sections of the working class have undoubtedly become demoralised by the lack of any real alternative to the government's policy of making the working class pay for the capitalist crisis.

The arguments put forward by Duffy are the same as those of Callaghan: we must keep the Labour government in office, through supporting the Social Contract, and keep the Tories out. Duffy's success represents the failure of the 'Broad Left' to break from the 'national interest' argument and pose any serious socialist alternative.

Duffy can claim with some justification that he finds "great difficulty in differing from Mr Scanlon." After all, wasn't it Scanlon—the former hero of the Broad Left—who paved the way for the right-wing victory by supporting wage controls? Wasn't it Scanlon's support for the 12 month rule in defiance of the AUEW national committee which set a precedent for undemocratic procedures and compromised the Broad Left with the membership?

CAMPAIGN

While Wright's campaign was based on opposition of the Social Contract, in no way did he openly break from Scanlon, or explain to the membership why Scanlon had ended up in the wage-cutting camp of Murray, Callaghan and Healey. Nor did his opposition to the Social Contract—based on the Tribune programme of deflation and import controls—offer any real alternative which could unite the membership.

Militants in the AUEW are in for a tough time in the coming months. Duffy's attempts to reimpose 'Carron's Law' will mean a major battle for democracy in the union. However, Duffy will find it much more difficult to 'reign' than Carron, whose power was based on the post-war capitalist boom.

Faced with increasing attacks on their living standards and working conditions, the working class—as shown by the firefighters—are beginning to fight back. Union conference after union conference has come out against wage restraint. Militancy alone, however, will not reverse the tide. What is required within the Left in the AUEW, and the unions in general, is a frank and open discussion about the socialist policies which can mobilise the labour movement against the Social Contract and the pro-capitalist policies of the Labour and trade union leadership.

Which way for anti-racists?

The Anti-Nazi League Carnival was a sparkling day on which anti-racists and anti-fascists from throughout Britain actually had the chance to enjoy themselves as well as demonstrating their opposition to the National Front.

It made a change from shivering outside Lancashire town halls and peering through tight-packed lines of blue uniform, and drew in (via the free music) thousands of kids who'd never been near a demonstration in their lives.

Later in the same week the NF votes throughout the country suffered a general decline — which was more good news.

Now, that the dust has settled we are faced with the question of where do we go from here — a question facing the biggest popular anti-fascist movement since the 1930s.

This month it's a question which will be on the agenda for the conference of the National Co-ordinating Committee of anti-fascist and anti-racist groups and the first conference of the Anti-Nazi League.

It is a symptom of much of the criticism of the Anti-Nazi League (although formally correct) that it concentrates on the lack of any opposition to immigration controls /no platform for fascists/anti-racism instead of just reactive anti-fascism.

These are crucial questions which must be taken up by revolutionaries at every level of the movement. At the same time the Left seem blind to some extremely important political questions posed by the Carnival.

The way in which most critiques deal with the Socialist Workers Party and the Anti-Nazi League and completely ignore the involvement of Rock Against Racism demonstrates the miserable cultural (as well as political) isolation of the revolutionary left from working class youth.

ROCK AGAINST RACISM

The *New Musical Express* summing up of the Carnival sheds light on this area: "Considering the historically wary — even at times bigoted — stance by much of the hard party line British Left towards rock, Rock Against Racism is fairly unique. 'For some reason or other', says one RAR organiser, 'the British Left have always thought that anything electric couldn't possess any true political awareness and that acoustic folk was the only possible music they could ally themselves with'."

This doesn't mean that the Left should abandon the circuit of paper-selling, meetings, trades councils, don bin liners and start spitting hatred for capitalism through the microphone at the local punk club.

What it does mean is that the fight against racism and fascism must be developed into a total approach involving all levels — economic, political, sexual, cultural.

The fight against immigration controls — which can only be racist in a capitalist state — is central, as is our opposition to fascists spreading their poison.

However, this said, this in no way absolves us from the need to develop positive initiatives to attack



ANTI-NAZI LEAGUE DEMONSTRATION

By JIM BARROW

the roots of fascist-authoritarian ideology.

Women in capitalist society are doubly oppressed in this society — as women and as wage workers (or unemployed). Fascists and authoritarians intend to drive women back into the home, remove the right to control their own bodies (attacking the right to an abortion), and reduce them to appendages to wage slaves.

For this reason the fight, at all levels, for women's rights — free abortion on demand, free contraception, equal pay, nursery facilities, the right to organise, against being treated as de-humanised sexual objects must be incorporated into our work.

DISCIPLINE YOUTH

Similarly fascists and authoritarians seek to discipline youth and restrict its freedom to develop its own music/culture, distort and stunt youth sexually, and subject youth to a general round of haircuts, birching, short sharp spells in the army, etc.

In a period when young people are being flung off the end of a sterile educational production line to rot on the dole or in some dead-end job, the fight for youth against their oppression in a decaying capitalist society is a further line of attack.

Blacks have recently been on the receiving end of racist violence ending in a number of killings. Gays have also come under physical attack. The right of these groups to defend themselves against attack (while calling on the labour movement to unite in their defence) is one that must be argued for throughout the movement — nobody else will defend them.

FESTERING

White racism — which pre-dates capitalism — has been festering in our heads for generations. The domination of colonies and the enslavement of the people in those colonies, created and fostered an — at best — paternalistic, 'white superiority' myth.

This racism isn't going to be

waved away by a fairy wand overnight — especially while international (mainly white) capital continues to dominate so much of the underdeveloped world. For this reason the development of acts of international solidarity with subject peoples struggling against imperialism in Southern Africa, and other areas of the world can play an important role in challenging racist assumptions.

Similarly, a positive and consistent campaign against racism in the media, trade unions, jobs and education is a further facet of an overall strategy.

There are no short cuts to building a revolutionary socialist current and demonstrating objectively to oppressed groups and the working class that the overthrow of capitalism is absolutely necessary and long overdue.

LINE OF DEFENCE

The anti-racist/anti-fascist movement is not the embryo of a revolutionary party but it is a vital line of defence (and attack) against Capital. So what way forward should revolutionaries argue for?

* In order for the movement to go on the offensive, an opening up of sympathetic discussion internally and externally (how many committees actually go out and talk to people on the streets? How many talk about what they are going to say to people before they go out — if at all?)

* A national democratic structure for the pooling of resources, experiences and the opening up of lines of communications (this could result in CARF taking on a national format). At present the national co-ordinating committee is neither national nor able to co-ordinate very much.

* Close co-operation and work with the Anti-Nazi League to develop democracy, perspectives and work beyond the equation NF = Nazis.

* Discussion and action to take the anti-racist, anti-fascist movement onto a positive offensive, hammering home the message that the struggles against fascism, racism, sexism, authoritarianism are inextricably bound up in the struggle for revolutionary socialism.

ASIANS RESIST RACIST ATTACKS

BY LIZ ADAMS

ON MAY 14th, thousands of Asians and white supporters marched together to protest against the brutal murder of 24 year old Altab Ali, a Bengali worker living in Tower Hamlets, London. The march, supported by many Asians who would not normally come out on the streets, was a forceful display of solidarity and anger against the growing wave of racist attacks.

Slogans chanted, such as "Law And Order For Whom?" and "Self Defence Is No Offence" showed that many Asians were becoming more aware of the need to organise themselves for protection—and local feeling amongst immigrants was bitterly resentful of the police's

failure to act quickly and effectively to track down the murderer.

Spurred on by this racist outrage, many young Bengalis are more critical of their elders' passive attitude towards organised protest. They realise that more police is not the answer to their problems of racist aggression.

Altab Ali was not the only victim. Two weeks earlier a 10 year old Asian, Kenneth Singh, was also brutally murdered in the same East End area, and in Wolverhampton young West Indians were also subjected to racist shooting attacks. The local election results show

quite clearly that support for the fascist National Front is on the decline. The NF's failure to persuade any significant numbers that they are a serious 'political' party through electoral means could be the signal for the hooligan members to resort to the weapons of terror and paramilitary activity.

Supporters of racist policies and propaganda reveal their true colours at this time. Socialists must fight to get the whole labour movement to oppose every filthy racist activity, and to support actively all local initiatives by local immigrant organisations to organise self defence groups, meetings and campaigns and anti-racist activity.

Lambeth Labour Leader says 'the first fight will be with the government'

"COUNCIL BOSS WARNS against 'Left-wing dictatorship'" headlined the pre-election edition of the *South London Press*. National papers too took up the story of the alleged possibility of a 'Marxist-controlled council' in Lambeth, and the Right Honourable Member for Streatham (Lambeth's only Tory constituency) was moved to raise the issue in the House of Commons with the Prime Minister on polling day. The Prime Minister had himself cast his votes that very morning for three left-wing candidates in Lambeth.

Despite the 'red scare', or perhaps because of it, not only was an overwhelming Labour majority elected, but at the Labour Group meeting on the night following the polls the man at the centre of the press stories, Ted Knight, was elected the new Leader of the Council. The man who had warned in the local press that his election would be "a disaster", former Leader David Stimpson was carved up by his former associates and did not stand.

The press scare was aimed at Ted Knight because of his expulsion from the Labour Party in 1954 and his history of militancy on the far left of the party since his re-admittance in 1970. The campaign, however, also served to obscure, by personalising, a more general leftward movement in many traditional Labour areas. Haringey, Hackney, Brent, Hounslow, were among the other boroughs where Labour councils were elected with a greatly reinforced left wing.

However, the problems facing any administration in these areas, particularly the decaying inner city boroughs of Hackney and Lambeth, are considerable. For a council committed to radical change, they are immense. To investigate how the new Lambeth administration will tackle these problems, the *Chartist* interviewed Lambeth's new Leader.

Chartist: What effect do you think the press scare about a 'Marxist-controlled council' and the question in the House of Commons had on the poll and on the vote in the Labour Group?

Ted Knight: The pre-election publicity had two purposes. One, the Tories were intent on trying to turn the election into a 'red scare' situation. It had another purpose, initiated by the former Leader of Lambeth Council, who was attempting to influence the votes in the Labour Group against myself and other left-wingers who were coming onto the council. *Neither worked*. The red scare had no effect on the election generally. In Norwood [Ted Knight's constituency] we had a swing towards Labour; in my own ward [Ferndale Ward, Brixton] we had the largest swing to Labour in the entire borough. In the Labour Group, the new councillors who came on voted decisively for a change of leadership and for a left-wing administration.

C: The manifesto on which the Labour Group was elected was drawn up by the Local Government Committee with the help of a number of working parites from the rank and file of the party, and contained a number of radical proposals as well as more compromise measures. To what extent are the present Labour Group committed to carrying out the manifesto pledges?

TK: I think the Labour Group is committed to carrying out the manifesto because in the pre-election situation the local parties were very much involved in bringing the manifesto about. That is why there has been a change in outgoing and incoming councillors. That is why we are having a meeting of Labour councillors on every council committee, and their purpose is to work out a programme of objectives for the next twelve months and also to lay down guidelines for development over the next few years.

This will be done in conjunction with the manifesto and discussion papers produced by the party over the pre-election situation. They will then be in a position to monitor the progress of those commitments and objectives, will be able to direct the officers on carrying out that

control over the implementation of our programme.

C: What obstacles do you foresee to implementing the programme?

TK: The most obvious obstacle will



Ted Knight

be finance. The problem is, if we are to make an impact on the situation in Lambeth we have to have additional financial resources. The present input of finance from central government is not enough to make any impact on the social and economic situation in Lambeth. *The first fight will be with the government* to force more resources into Lambeth. We have a situation where Lambeth is what is termed a 'partnership area'. What it means is that we get £5 million a year for the next three years. We have to use the £5 million to jack up the programmes which were suffering from cuts previously made in public expenditure by the same government. So the 'inner cities partnership programme' has got to be exposed as only a palliative and not a programme for actually doing anything. Therefore we have to fight the government for more resources. By that I'm not suggesting in any way that we can have 'socialism in one borough'. Because we can't solve the problems of Lambeth in Lambeth alone. We have to have the national input into the borough.

C: How would you envisage a Labour council challenging a Labour government on the question of finance, in a general election year?

TK: I think we have to mount a political campaign against the government, explaining that without these resources there can be no real change in Lambeth. We will have to use all the local organisations of the labour movement, the trade unions as well as the Labour Parties, together with community groups, to expose government policy in this field. I don't think that in any way we should hold back from that fight and it is not our intention to do so. The government must realise in a general election year—and any year—we were elected here in Lambeth to do a job, and that is to improve the living conditions, social conditions and economic conditions of the working class families in Lambeth. *That's our job and that's what we intend to do*. If this means a fight with the government then that fight must go on independent of any electoral considerations.

C: Another obstacle to the implementation of socialist measures at a local level has proved to be the bureaucratic structures of local government—corporate management and so forth. How do you intend to attempt to overcome this?

TK: Yes, what we have done immediately is to set up a committee of the council which will meet in public to review the structure and administration of the council services. It will be a thoroughgoing investigation which will draw evidence in from the public, from users of services, from community

of people in this inner city area. We believe that this will mean certain changes in the corporate management structure.

C: The previous council in Wandsworth is often held up as an example of a 'left wing' council. The electoral results were disastrous for the Labour Party. What do you see at the reasons for that defeat, and how could it have been avoided?

TK: It is very difficult to comment on the role of Labour Parties outside one's own immediate area, but it does seem to me that there were some mistakes made from which we can possibly learn some lessons. I think that one of the difficulties we face is that to push forward our programmes, to consider that the *only* source of income must be from the ratepayers is not necessarily true. We have to give consideration to other forms of accounting and at the same time to mount the political offensive. I feel that it is very easy to try to solve one's problems without adequate political explanation to the people that you represent. We had an unfortunate situation in Wandsworth in this last year whereby the rents of council properties were increased by a proportion and at the same time a

massive rate increase was applied. It may be that we should look carefully at just seeing the answer as just drawing more money out of the pockets of working class families in the area. This means a radical look at council financing. Possibly we have to look at deficit financing in the future.

C: One of the central problems you've raised is the need to challenge central government policies. What measures will the Lambeth Labour Group Council use to build links with local Labour Groups/Labour Councils facing similar problems, particularly those where new left wing majorities have come to office?

TK: We will be seeking to have a link with other Labour Groups. We have experience early in the last year which serves us well. Lambeth Borough Council fought the government on the question of linking of rent increases for council tenants with the high cost subsidy towards housing. We refused to accept that situation. As a consequence of that refusal we were able to draw other councils and Labour Groups to our support. In the end, the threat of a massive fight back from Labour councils in London forced the Labour government to withdraw that condition. And it was a victory for the Labour Party.

Now, I believe that having once done it—here, we did it against the advice of the right wing, we had to defeat the right wing on the council in order to carry that fight forward—I believe we can learn from that, and begin to organise and co-ordinate Labour groups throughout London. We look forward to that situation. We will, if necessary, call a joint meeting of Labour Groups on particular issues. In other words, we intend not to fight alone, not in isolation, but to bring round us and work within a co-ordinated opposition as much as possible.

C: Clearly, a central issue in an area like Lambeth is the question of racism. There have been bodies in the borough active on this issue and there have been allegations of racism in housing allocation policy.

What steps will the new council take to eradicate racism from the council structures and in the community at large?

TK: In our manifesto we are committed to setting up a race relations unit within the council administration. The purpose of that unit is to investigate both in council machinery itself and in all services in which the council is involved, and to remove all forms of discrimination and to maintain a continuous campaign against such discrimination. There is evidence that we have in our housing allocations policy, if not consciously, at least subconsciously, directed the black population towards central Brixton so we have almost ghetto situations developing. We will be taking steps to counter that. We've also had approaches directly from ethnic communities within the borough to participate in providing an expansion of our race relations policy—we intend to be working with them on this problem.

Employment is another factor. Where we are in a situation when especially black youth unemployment is amongst the highest in London, we are about to see what we as a borough council can do about this situation. This will require working with everyone, both in the labour movement and the ethnic communities. Apart from that, you know, until that begins to work out there is little to say. That's what we are committed to.

Throughout the country, doubtless other Labour councillors are expressing similar commitments to implement manifestos and to challenge government policies. *Chartist* supporters will be working alongside other labour movement militants to ensure that such councillors will be held to these commitments and that they will get the kind of support necessary to challenge central government policies. In the coming months, the *Chartist* will be monitoring the progress of Lambeth and other Labour councils in carrying forward the fight to carry out their election manifestos.

OFFICIAL SECRETS COMEDY

By MARK DOUGLAS

"A STATE ORCHESTRATED comedy". That was the way Phil Kelly of *The Leveller* described the prosecution case in the now infamous 'Colonel B' affair.

Two radical journals, the *Peace News* and the *Leveller* were fined £500 each for 'contempt of court' in naming 'Colonel B' in the long awaited trial of Aubrey, Berry and Campbell who are being charged with being 'a threat to national security'. The 'ABC Trial' is due to come up in September.

The low fines against the journals together with a fine of £200 against *The Journalist*, paper of the National Union of Journalists, aided by the highly effective defence campaign waged since January marks a decisive rebuff against the state intelligence industry and the judicial establishment in Britain.

The public exposure of 'Colonel B' has itself become a mass market of the counter state intelligence campaign. 'Colonel B' is Colonel Hugh A Johnston, OBE., former head of the British Army's section of British Signals Intelligence (SIG-INT). This is part of the Defence Intelligence Staff whose reference is DI 24 Army.

SIGINT is the centre of all civil and military intelligence in

supposed to be doubled classified and ultra secret. Unfortunately the whole game has been exposed in the last few months.

Many citizens have traditionally believed that MI5 and MI6 were the state's secret intelligence sections. Not so. Over the past few years all the state's operations in covert and overt interception of information, whether from domestic or international mail, radio and telegraph communication or spy planes, ships, satellites or ground aeriels has been centralised under civil command. Military intelligence has been grouped under 'defence intelligence'—it is an accommodation to the peace-time mood—yet always ready to operate under covert war-time plans.

Double and triple covers have had to be designed to protect these operations. Many of their activities are held to be illegal—having never been cleared by Parliament. Yet under the 'Official Secrets' ethos no-one, not MPs, or many civil servants or even some government ministers can gain information.

The intelligence industry is so big, with so many tentacles that almost no-one knows about every aspect of

George's Liberal Government in an old-style red agents scare.

Section 2 refers to the protection of state secrecy within the 'domestic domain'. Section 1 refers to the operations of 'foreign agents' against the interests of the state. Nobody has seen fit to challenge the first section—yet the present Labour Government is supposed to be repealing Section 2. It has, for long, been a discredited law. It is the section that all civil servants, postworkers and any body else to do with Government service is asked to sign and abide with.

The 1974 Labour manifesto pledges its repeal and replacement by a 'Freedom of Information' law like that in the United States.

This measure is a favoured reform by the Liberals, and a part of the Lib-Lab pact. Yet with a general election planned for October—nothing will happen. A 'White Paper' is scheduled to state merely the Government's intention in the next few months—an academic exercise.

The ABC Trial is still to come and the qualified victory of the *Peace News/Leveller* defence has done more to attack the 'the secret state' than anything Labour has done over the past few years. As long as the state can protect its



National Front fascists at Lewisham, August 1977

WHY THE NF ARE NAZIS

'HITLER BLAMED THE Jews, the National Front blames the blacks!'. Using this slogan next to pictures of NF leader John Tyndall in Nazi uniform fifteen years ago, the Anti-Nazi League, and other anti-fascists, have labelled the NF as Nazi. But what happens when Tyndall and Webster are succeeded by those who never wore Nazi regalia? Any drawing of parallels between the NF and pre-war fascist movements must be based on a thorough understanding of fascism and not just a few statements that are now denied.

The word 'fascist' has been bandied about pretty loosely on the Left to describe any particularly vicious capitalist dictatorship — such as Chile, Francoist Spain or South Africa. The Right sometimes call the USSR 'Red Fascists'. The NF themselves have called the SWP fascist because of their violent tactics at anti-NF demos.

Yet if the term is to mean anything other than just 'nasty' it must describe a form of capitalist regime or movement that is different from other reactionary regimes or movements, that arises under different conditions and has to be fought in different ways.

MASS-MOVEMENT

What distinguishes Hitler and Mussolini from Franco or Pinochet is that they won power leading a mass movement. Bands of fascist thugs in Italy and Germany murdered socialists and trade union militants and burnt down their headquarters. They paraded in their tens of thousands through the working class strongholds of their enemies in the way the NF wish they could march through Lewisham or Brixton. Pinochet and Franco might have had substantial support in Chile and Spain. But these supporters let the conventional army deal with the workers and did not form their own army as Hitler and Mussolini did and Jose Antonio (the Spanish fascist leader) and Mosley failed to do.

Such a movement has tended to be composed mainly of 'petty-bourgeois' — that is, small shopkeepers, farmers and other entrepreneurs, students, ex-soldiers as well as unorganised workers. They are people who feel threatened both by organised labour in the trade unions and workers' parties and by big business. They fight for a third path which purports to be neither capitalist nor socialist. Unfortunately for them, fascist parties only succeed in winning power when they are backed by a substantial proportion of the enemies of the poor fascists — the big capitalists.



Hitler — led a mass movement

By BERNARD MISRAHI

money when they believe that neither a reactionary parliamentary government nor even a military dictatorship can drive down workers wages as much as they think is necessary. A fascist government gives them grants and concessions which further impoverish and bankrupt the small owners. Too late, the petty bourgeois might realise that they've backed the wrong horse.

The National Front so far hasn't succeeded in winning much support from the capitalists. Furthermore, in a country with a relatively small petty-bourgeoisie, most of their following are manual workers, many of whom are active in unions. Nevertheless there are remarkable similarities between the political programme of the NF and their predecessors.

Like the Nazis they are extreme nationalists. They believe that it is race rather than class that fundamentally divides the human species. Most people, unfortunately, might agree, but not with the same intensity.

The NF do not treat the blacks as the Nazis treated the Jews. In fact, the Jews play an identical role in modern fascist conspiracy theories as they did to Hitler and Mosley (but not Mussolini.) To the fascists the Jews are not inferior as the blacks are, but demonic. The Nazis could not really point to an inferior race within Germany. The Slavs ('Slav' is German for 'Slave') came nearest to fitting the bill here.

SUBVERTING

The Jews are accused of subverting the Anglo-Saxon race through a conspiracy of International Finance and International Communism, both of which they control. Yes, the NF declare this publicly in their 'theoretical journal' *'Spearhead'*. (March 1975, No 81, p 14). I bet you didn't know that Wall Street financiers paid for the Russian Revolution. The NF quote the Nazis about 'Moses Cohen' being the managing director while his son was in charge of the agitator amongst

Jews in the socialist movement and in finance and some other capitalist sectors helped make such wild theories credible.

The NF admire the Jews for their tenacity in avoiding intermarriage and thus keeping their 'race pure'. They accuse them of plotting to pollute the white race by persuading them to do the opposite. (*Spearhead* No 71, Dec. 1973). But the NF wouldn't call themselves 'anti-semitic'. Rather, they are 'anti-Zionists'.

Fascists hate all communists. Robert Relf, who put up a 'For Sale to an English family (only)' notice advertising his Leamington house two years ago, lambasted Callaghan's evil communist government'. The Young National Front identify a 'commie teacher' as one who defends black people from racist abuse. The communists are agents of a foreign power, the USSR, who want to enslave Britain. The communists threaten the property of small owners. The Nazis accused the communists of wanting to 'nationalise women'. The author of this article hasn't read the NF claiming that. But for fascism, modern and not so modern, communism threatens not only loss of freedom but greater freedom. It is associated with sexual promiscuity, women's liberation, disrespect of children towards parents and wives towards husbands, long hair, drugs and loss of masculinity. Plus, of course, they're all Jews.

GAMBLERS' CLUB

Neither Hitler nor Mussolini bothered to distinguish between left or right workers' leaders. Communist Party or Social-Democratic Party, they were carted off to the same concentration camps.

Fascists are anti-capitalist, but not anti-ALL capitalists. 'Beyond capitalism and Socialism', a recent NF pamphlet, echoes Nazi hatred of finance capital which charge exorbitant interest to productive capitalists. The Stock Exchange is a gamblers' club which wrecks many viable enterprises. Like the Nazis, they wish to curb monopolies that artificially raise their prices to bankrupt smaller firms, and to drive out foreign capital. They want Britain to withdraw from the Common Market and any other international organisation that interferes with British sovereignty.

Apart from trade with the white Commonwealth (including South Africa), Britain should be as self-sufficient as possible. The Nazis also wanted self-sufficiency, or 'autarky'. They got it, but not in a way they desired. After paying for necessary imports to rearm Germany, there was

goods. Germany had a wartime siege economy, with rationing, long before 1939.

Basically, fascists favour a controlled capitalism where the inherent tendency for bigger firms to drive out smaller ones is removed. 'We're against the money-grabbing capitalists,' they claimed; but insisted, 'we don't mind those who work hard doing well for themselves'. Such sentiments appeal not only to small owners but most workers too.

The NF insist they are not anti trade union but that the red wreckers must be prevented from exploiting the often sincere grievances of their members. The NF would forcibly amalgamate unions so that there was only one in each industry. How they intend to do this they don't say. Workers should be involved in the running of their firms. They should share the profits — and the losses. Strikes would still be legal (official ones) but strikers' families would receive no social security. Tyndall can't envisage a situation when once his economic reforms have been carried through, workers would have any reason to strike.

He insists that unions would still be independent from the state. So did Hitler before he seized power. Some fascist trade unionists believe him and tried to assert the power of



Photograph/John Sturrock Rep.

Immi

IMMIGRATION FROM rural areas to the capitalism from its beginning. During the centuries employers made extensive use of increase the size of the workforce, but, at of working class organisation through the and by exploiting regional and ethnic diff

In the long run, however, they were unsuccessful since the rapid expansion of capitalist industrialisation and the high level of demand for labour acted to break down ethnic antagonisms and differences. Sufficiently, in fact, to fuse together a mass industrial working class with a strong trade unionism relatively unhampered by racial and ethnic differences within the nation state.

DYNAMICS

The dynamics of immigration since the second world war have been somewhat different. A mass industrial working class is no longer in the process of formation. Rather a process of differentiation and fragmentation is taking place within an already mature working class.

Technical changes associated with the rise in the productivity of labour are eliminating many industrial jobs, and at the same time white collar and service employment is increasing relatively.

During the post war boom in the advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe and North America many workers moved out of industrial into white collar employment and from low wage to higher wage industrial jobs. This left a labour shortage in the lowest paid sectors and in occupations with the worst working conditions.

Throughout Western Europe this led to largescale recruitment of unskilled immigrant labour from Mediterranean areas and the Third World and in the USA by the migration of Blacks from the rural South to the industrial North.

During the nineteenth century immigrants had generally been initially drawn into the lowest paid and worst job conditions but high labour demand from industrial expansion had provided opportunities for occupational mobility. But now, because the expansion of higher paid white collar jobs was accompanied by a contraction of industrial employment there was very little economic pressure to break down the concentration of immigrants in low wage jobs and in the areas where such employment was concentrated.

At the same time low wage employment expanded especially in State employment in urban and welfare services. Moreover certain declining older industrial sectors — like the British textile industry —

the workers against their employers. They didn't last long.

The unemployed would be offered work on public works schemes on dole level wages or have their benefit removed altogether. The Nazis reduced unemployment from seven million to nearly nil partly by forcing people to work on subsistence wages on armaments and huge road building projects. The only projects the NF offer in their pamphlet is sweeping railway stations twice as often as at present — hardly more imaginative

Nazi youth — yesterday (below) and today.



HER ZU UNS!

Hinein in die Hitler-Jugend

gratiation and post war boom

city has been a feature of nineteenth and early twentieth migrant labour not simply to the same time, to resist the growth of migrants as strikebreakers and differences among workers.

by JOHN LAYTON

Facing increasing international competition placed a premium on immigrant labour prepared to operate extensive shift systems at low rates of pay.

PRESERVE

In other words, immigrants became crucial during the boom to preserve the low wage labour force and economically there were few opportunities to move out of it. Certain sections of capital, like textiles, were directly dependent on immigrant labour, but Capital in general benefitted from both the availability of a low wage labour force for labour intensive sectors of State employment and from the lower rate of welfare benefits claimed by immigrants due to their age structure, family composition and cultural habits.

All these reduce deductions from surplus value to finance the 'social wage' especially the reproduction cost of the labour force, since immigrants initially migrate as young workers and the cost of education and child rearing is born by the country of origin.

PROBLEMS

However by the early 1960s it was clear, from the viewpoint of Capital that there were some problems. To the extent that the immigrant workforce became a settled community then it would gradually develop the capacity to organise to reject low wages and abysmal working conditions.

This would apply especially to the second generation of children of immigrants, reared in the industrial capitalist cities and demanding the same spectrum of opportunities as working class youth in general, of which it was now a part.

Secondly the concentration of low wage jobs and hence of the immigrant community in areas of social decay, bad housing and high unemployment was leading, especially in Britain, to a rising profile of racial prejudice and violence as some sections of native workers, particularly those left in low wage employment with weaker trade union organisation, directed their frustrations against immigrants.

The ruling class benefitted of course from race prejudice to the

extent that prejudice and discrimination acted as a force of social control forcing immigrants to remain in low wage jobs and accept the working conditions.

However the increasing abilities of immigrants to respond to racial violence through self-organisation opened up a prospect of generalised urban violence and political instability — such as swept the cities of North America in the mid 1960s — which capitalists in Britain had now no desire to encourage.

Since the war the basic strategy of capital towards the working class had been one of institutional incorporation through the reformist leadership of the Trade Unions and the Labour Party rather than the strategy of head-on confrontation which had led capitalists in some European countries before the war to sponsor the growth of fascist movements and regimes relying heavily on racist ideology.

INTEGRATION

Thus, in Britain, the bulk of enlightened ruling class politicians exemplified by 'progressive' Tories such as Peter Walker and the bulk of right wing Labour intellectuals led by Roy Jenkins advocated a policy of racial integration to forestall racial violence on the American scale.

The strategy, embodied in the Race Relations Acts of 1965 and 1968, was to overcome the fact that a high demand for labour was not in existence to force employers to swallow their racism and employ Blacks outside the low wage 'dirty job' sectors and so out of concentration in the decaying inner cities.

This would be done through an effective outlawing of racial discrimination which, by giving immigrants an equal opportunity with all other applicants in the job and housing markets, apart from objective differences such as skill etc, achieve a sufficient diffusion of the immigrant community and especially the second generation Black British youth throughout the working class to diffuse both racial prejudice on the one hand and a growth of Black militancy on the other.

CONTRADICTION

However, such policies on the face of it stood in flat contradiction to the other need of Capital: to preserve the low wage labour force. A programme of racial integration, by weakening racial prejudice and discrimination would weaken one of the major forces keeping immigrants accepting low wages and working



Young black waiting glumly for job possibilities in London employment office

conditions that most native workers would rather be unemployed than face.

There was, however, in theory a solution to this problem: Immigration control. Ideally, from the view point of Capital, the following state of affairs could be achieved: the existing (Black) immigrant population would be integrated through the race relations legislation and the various mechanisms that it had established such as the Race Relations Board and the Community Relations Councils to enforce the anti-discrimination law and to promote 'harmonious community relations' respectively.

But new immigrants would be insulated from this process by a battery of legal restrictions, work permits, police surveillance, provisions for deportation etc, which would prevent them taking advantage of the normal civil rights now being guaranteed to the settled immigrant community. In this way a labour force could be maintained for low wage jobs even under conditions of generalised racial integration.

ELIMINATE CIVIL RIGHTS

The basic aim of Immigration control legislation from the 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act to the 1971 Immigration Act was to eliminate as far as further immigration was concerned, the civil rights that were included in the concept of Commonwealth citizenship.

This was done in two ways. Firstly by changing the composition of the immigrant workforce away from Commonwealth workers. The 1962 Act initiated a voucher

scheme which acted to reduce unskilled labour migration from India, Pakistan and the West Indies and was accompanied by a rising crescendo of 'too many immigrants'.

But meantime the number of work permits issued to non-commonwealth foreign workers falling under the jurisdiction of the 1919 Aliens Act steadily increased throughout the 1960s up until the early 1970s.

Secondly, under the 1971 Immigration Act the category of Commonwealth citizenship lost any claim to normal civil rights in Britain and all new immigrants except those with British parents assumed alien status getting jobs only via work permits which have to be renewed annually with the employers position and under constant surveillance by the police and Home Office.

Two things are clear therefore. Firstly that the real purpose of immigration controls was not to 'stem the flood'. There was never any danger of a flood of immigration in excess of labour demand due to the fact that the cost of migration meant that immigrants could only afford the move if there was a strong chance of a job on arrival.

The purpose of immigration controls was rather to increase the control and surveillance by both the state and the employer over immigrant workers and move towards the regime that had been established at the outset by those European countries such as West Germany 'unburdened' by the Imperial anachronisms of Commonwealth citizenship.

Secondly that the mythology echoed by both Labour and Tory politicians from the early 1960s to

the present day that Immigration controls restricting numbers was a necessary basis for a successful racial integration policy is an inversion of the connection. The connection was rather that given that racial integration was to be pursued then immigration controls were necessary to retain, through direct deprivation of civil rights, the low wage labour force.

RACE RELATIONS

Such a strategy has failed to solve the problem of 'race relations'. The prospect of a stable integrated settled population of immigrant origin and a sub-proletariat of 'guest workers' easily controllable and deportable has not materialised.

A major reason for this has been the total ineffectiveness of anti-discrimination legislation. This stems from the fact that in this legislation the burden of proof rests upon the individual alleging discrimination, something in practice virtually impossible. This principle is continued even in the recent 1976 Race Relations Act which removes the necessity to prove, in addition to actual discriminatory effect, intention to discriminate.

Such a crucial weakness in anti-discrimination legislation is hardly an oversight on the part of the state's legal advisors, since its shortcomings are known widely. It is in fact the form of anti-discrimination legislation which creates minimum interference with the workings of the labour market and hence the survival of the category of low wage labour.

Such weak legislation coupled with the lack of economic pressures drawing Blacks out of low wage jobs during a period of increasing unemployment has resulted in the reproduction of the very problems that the integration programme was designed to avoid. Racial conflict has been reinforced not by the concentration of Black people in decaying areas in itself but by the ideological impact of immigration controls which by their very existence single out the immigrant as a problem and thus an easy explanation of unemployment and bad housing.

Coupled with this the second generation of young Blacks are now increasingly rejecting the role of sub-proletariat offered them by Capital and preferring the streets to the dead end jobs paid at a pittance that are offered them, if at all. The Race Relations legislation has been powerless to stop the growth of the very problems it was devised to avert.

than the government job-creation schemes.

Right-wing Tories might agree with some of this programme. Under most conditions, however, they are incapable of carrying it out. Similarly, most trade union leaders (and members) implicitly agree with the fascists that there is no fundamental conflict between employers and employees and that unions exist to restrict the excesses of the capitalists and not to overthrow capitalism or even make it impossible to operate a capitalist system profitably. Nevertheless, trade unions in a bourgeois democracy usually retain the ability to fight with some effectiveness for their members interests and can prevent the bosses from driving down living standards and worsening working conditions very quickly. Fascist trade unions are not designed to defend the workers in any way whatsoever.

'Nazi' is an abbreviation for 'National Socialist'. Thatcher has accused the NF of being 'socialist'. Certainly, their economic programme of import controls and withdrawal from the EEC is uncomfortably close to that of Tribune and the Communist Party. Fascism is partly a radical movement of the lower classes. The NF get most of their support from the poorest whites. But if they are radical in part of their economic programme

attitude to women.

'Children, kitchen, church' was the Nazi programme for women. They carried it out too. Millions of women were driven from employment back to the home. *Spearhead* of January 1977 (p10) '... would like to see a society that respected and cherished the feminine role as principally one of mother and home maker'. The NF oppose abortion. They claim that the pro-abortionists want to reduce Britain's population through abortion so that the shortfall has to be made up by black immigration.

Tyndall is obsessive in lamenting the permissive, 'unisex' atmosphere prevalent in modern society which is encouraged by pop music which is influenced by the 'jungle rhythms' of the blacks the NF despise as being sexually degenerate. Fascists hate liberals because they are weak, undecisive, effete and unmanly and therefore unable to resist communism. Tyndall harks back to the time when men were men and women knew their place. The Nazis also valued 'virility' which was to be displayed in sporting and military rather than sexual prowess. 'Fascism and the family', an article in the December 1977 *Chartist*, discussed in greater detail than is possible here how the authoritarianism within a fascist party and within the

Incidentally, Kingsley Read declared that he split from the National Front to form the National Party because of the authoritarian way Tyndall ran his party. Not that Read is any different, of course.

Fascist machismo also manifests itself in their obsession with militarism. They love, even need, military marches, uniforms and tunes. Fascists prepare for war as soon as they win power. War is necessary to prove the virility of a nation that has been humiliated in a previous war.

While the NF lament the fact that Britain is much weaker than when she ruled the empire, they have to recognise that fact and are not as belligerent as Hitler was. They oppose NATO because they don't believe that America is really anti-communist and because they resent British troops being under foreign command. They want the troops to really wage war on the Irish. They believe that up to now they have been restrained. They would restore national service. (To make 'men' of today's youth.)

What makes the NF programme so similar to that of the Nazis but different from other political movements is the combination of all the elements in their programme rather than the individual parts. Their racism and nationalism is different



NATIONAL FRONT marchers

from most British people. The same can be said about their attitude to social issues. But their economic programme separates them from Tories who'd agree with them on law and order. Their obsession with conspiracy theories is particularly singular.

Fascism also differs from con-

mass demonstrations. It is the physical power of the fascists that the bourgeoisie turn to when other methods of attacking the working class are inadequate. In a future article, we will discuss what are the conditions most conducive to the rise of a really powerful fascist movement, and what role a fascist

REPUBLICANISM: MYTHS AND REALITY



Part of 30,000 who demonstrated against the Queen's Jubilee visit last Summer.

PHIL TURNER, HARINGEY UNITED

TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT
and itself portrays the Republican movement as a purely military phenomenon. British left wing organisations have often been drawn into debates over whether they should support this or that bombing and in the process find that they have completely isolated the military campaign from the activity of the movement as a whole.

MASS HYSTERIA

This way of approaching Republicanism can contribute to the mass hysteria and paranoia which the British media live off. The Republican movement is a political movement defined by its opposition to British military occupation and its aims of national liberation. It sees a military campaign as an unavoidable necessity to remove the British Army.

But no serious assessment of Republicanism is possible unless its military campaign is seen as *one part* of a struggle which takes place in many areas.

COMPLEX

The Republican Movement includes a complex system of organisation of daily life under armed occupation, transport, welfare and organisation of resistance to day to day harassment by army and police. It has widespread active support in the occupied areas of the North and equally widespread passive, if not active, support in the South and in emigrant communities.

The Provisional Sinn Fein newspaper, *Republican News*, has a circulation of 50,000 (equivalent to two million in Britain). An example from last year indicates the relative support for Republicans. In 1977 the Peace Movement and Better Life For All Campaign (the main representatives of local feeling against the military campaign) held demonstrations which numbered only hundreds. During the summer the Republicans organised 30,000 in militant street demonstrations against the Queen's Jubilee visit.

Such support would be inconceivable if the local population judged the Republican movement on each of its actions, rather than regarding it as *their* movement, a movement of an oppressed people.

PROGRESSIVE

Even when this is accepted, however (amongst British socialists), there remains resistance to the

progressive force. However many socialists the movement has in its ranks it limits its aims to national independence.

Stuck within British methods of thinking about class struggle, socialists often refuse to believe that national independence has anything to do with the liberation of the working class, which can best be achieved by trade unions and an uncompromising socialist party.

These arguments can be forcefully supported by the experience of Southern Ireland, whose liberation seems to have had very few positive consequences for the working class.



Such arguments have many weaknesses but the most important is that they discount and ignore the historical process which has led to the formation of the present day Republican movement. The liberation of Southern Ireland in the early 1920s was 'national liberation' only for those who forgot that the North of Ireland is actually part of Ireland. It was a partial liberation founded upon compromise.

The formation of the Southern Irish Free State was accompanied by a split in the Republican Movement and a bloody civil war. In this war the militant republicans were defeated and the victors (whose ideological heirs are still in power) favoured compromise with Britain, including the separation of the North.

INTEGRATED

It is a maxim of socialism that genuine national independence is not possible for oppressed nations under capitalism because the capitalist class will inevitably find itself compromised and tied to imperialism by economic dependency.

The Republicans themselves naturally do not share this apolitical view of themselves. As far as they are concerned they are soldiers fighting a centuries old war against an oppressor state. The movement as a whole demands national independence and identifies itself with the many attempts to achieve liberation over the years. Many of its members are socialists (although by no means all) and are opposed not only to British rule but also to the capitalist regime in Dublin.

RESOLUTION

In the resolution of the Irish question much depends on which of these conceptions holds sway in Britain. Realistically we must accept that it is Mason's official view of the situation which prevails. British people who look at the Irish question through the eyes of Republicanism are few and far between.

This state of affairs applies not only to the mainstream of the British labour movement, but also to the main British Socialist currents. The *Morning Star*, *Tribune* and the *Militant* are all 'for the Irish people' and against capitalist oppression, but in many respects they share and perpetuate the British stereotype of Republicanism.

In their pages Republicans are referred to as 'men of violence', 'gunmen' and 'anti-working class'. The military struggle is portrayed as the actions of mad bombers or as aimless sectarian violence.

British socialists often have good intentions with regard to Ireland, but in a hundred small ways they help to perpetuate the myths which keep the Republican movement isolated from potential British support.

MYTHOLOGY

Over the past years troops out supporters have faced the problems of countering the British mythology of Republicanism. This has involved a constant repudiation of lies and distortions of the British media. More important, it has involved propaganda which places Republicanism in its historical context, to show that Republicanism has both a historical tradition and significance and that it is not just one more violent threat to British democracy.

A myth that dies hard is that which sees the Republican movement as an isolated terrorist conspiracy. Bombings and shooting of soldiers make 'good news' and the British media are glad to present these as the 'real face of Republicanism'.

The left often follows behind

OVER THE LAST month increasing publicity about the conditions suffered by 340 Republican prisoners in 'H' Block, Long Kesh and the Crumlin Road jail in Belfast has brought to the fore an issue which has always been a problem for anti-imperialists arguing the case for troops out of Ireland. The issue is this: who exactly is the British Army fighting in Ireland, what is the Republican Movement and what does it represent?

The prisoners 'on the blanket' in 'H' Block are protesting against the removal of political status by the British Government and fighting for recognition as prisoners of war. Roy Mason is leading an equally vigorous campaign to present Republican prisoners as criminals and gangsters in the eyes of British public opinion. He is engaged in a futile attempt to break the will to resist of the prisoners, but it is plain to see that much more is involved than prisoners' rights.

At the centre of the debate over political status is a political and ideological war to win the minds of British people. It is a war between British and Irish conceptions of the nature and aims of the Republicans.

REDEFINE

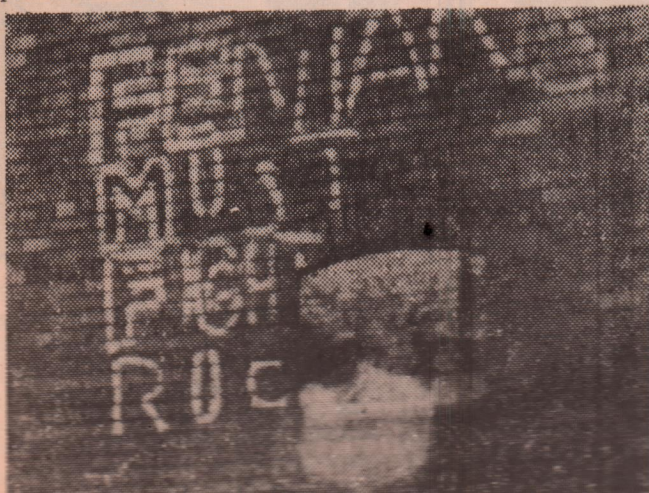
On the British side, Mason is trying to redefine the war in Ireland. Last month in Ireland he denied that there was a war and even that there were Republican and Loyalist, Catholic and Protestant prisoners. There were, he said, only criminals in Ireland's jails.



Roy Mason - 'Irish' Secretary.

The British media also participate in this insidious war of language. Republicans are referred to as 'terrorists' and 'murderers' and neatly parcelled up as part of the international terrorist conspiracy against democracy and freedom.

Although Irish people have taken up arms against British rule many times in the last three centuries, today's Republicans are severed from their history and traditions. From the British point of view they are not even entitled to a political identity of their own.



can Movement, however, is that Ireland has already passed through this process without achieving full national liberation. In both the South and North of Ireland the capitalist class is integrated with and dependent upon Britain. It is incapable of leading a national liberation movement and in fact the representatives of the Southern ruling class in both government parties actively oppose Republicanism by a repressive apparatus which vies with the British Army's apparatus in the North.

The Republican Movement has itself experienced the sellout of its national liberation struggle once already and this historical experience has radically determined its character. Today it is an anti-capitalist movement of the oppressed classes of Ireland. Fears that the Republican struggle will only lead to capitalism if it is successful are unfounded, for no capitalists would be found to support it.

In fact the Republican struggle has already led to a direct conflict with the capitalist Dublin regime, a conflict which has caused many Republicans to rethink traditional notions of national liberation.

REBORN

The Republican Movement is not socialist in the sense traditionally conceived of by its British practitioners. Nor is it likely to become so. It was reborn in 1969 out of the practical need to oppose the British Army in the streets of Northern Ireland. It has developed according to the needs of the moment and according to the historical traditions of Ireland.

Inevitably socialism emerges from the tradition which has historically opposed oppression in practice and that is nationalism. It is still true today that the trade unions and socialist parties have not consistently opposed capitalist oppression where it hurts most via the British occupation of the North. In this sense the Republican Movement is the sole mass-anti-capitalist current in Ireland today.

British socialists who want to see a socialist organisation in Ireland will have to rethink their attitudes to the Republican Movement. Such an organisation cannot be built along British lines in a country with radically different political traditions. It has to emerge from what already exists. Today this means the Republican Movement. Through our solidarity, British socialists can contribute to the process of political development in that movement which is already taking place.

Attitudes of women to their own bodies and the implications that has for the health services have been going through a radical change that has affected women well outside the women's movement. Much of the current discussion is directed to the de-mystification of women's reproductive organs, the menstrual cycle and to a lesser extent, the menopause, with the emphasis on women being much better informed about their own bodies than ever before. However, the health service has a more mundane relationship to most women, who must depend upon it through childbirth and through any subsequent complication of their reproductive system.

Apart from gynaecological and obstetric use of the service, women also use more psychiatric beds and more geriatric beds than men. They also come in contact more directly with the shortcomings of the service, when beds cannot be found for children or relatives who must then be nursed at home by the women.

The supposition that has grown in the wake of the Victorian middle classes that women are the 'weaker sex' and that they are not part of the labour force in the way men are has encouraged the view that women are hysterical and produce hysterical symptoms which can be fobbed off with a few words and a placebo.

For more liberated and informed women this is not now good enough and doctors are being asked to explain diagnoses and justify treatments. Many doctors resent this intrusion into their specialism and, indeed, the new 'Childbirth Book' by C Beels has been referred to as 'dangerous' in the medical press. Women are still not supposed to

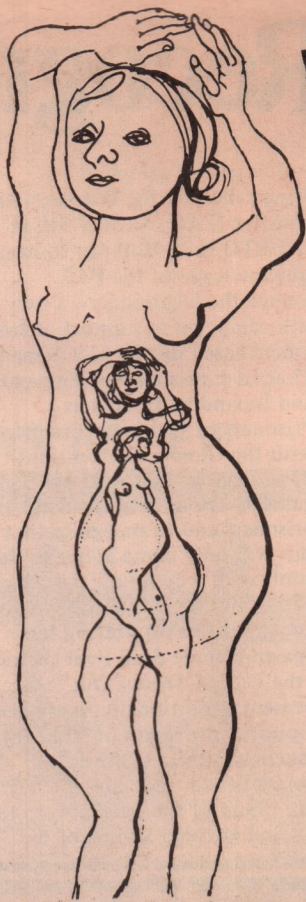
WHOSE WELFARE STATE?

know what is going on with their bodies, even in that most womanly activity of childbirth.

Any sign of understanding of medical jargon or, worse still, actually using that jargon as a patient, throws most doctors into a highly defensive position. Regrettably many women doctors also take this attitude. However in certain quarters a start has been made and doctors are up against a force to be reckoned with, to which doctors react with allegations that these women are using a disproportionate amount of NHS time.

Women need more than this, not just over problems associated with reproduction but even more particularly for the emotional and physical problems associated with the menopause.

The women's movement is only just getting old enough to be personally concerned with this age of woman, and not before time. At menopause the woman comes into conflict with everything that society has told her about being a woman. Men, too, may see this period of womanhood as alienating and arid — the end of something essentially female in their partner.



It is no wonder that women experience so many physically debilitating symptoms at this time. Until society allows women to accept a role that is not linked with reproduction as an end in itself this cannot change.

The health service has not yet seen the need to develop its services fully to aid menopausal women and seems to believe that it will go away more quickly if little attention is paid to it. The menopause in itself must surely be seen

Women and Health

by DINAH MORLEY

as a beginning of a new part of the life cycle — not as the end. This can only come with a change in the relationship of women to society.

For most women things are not necessarily moving in such a reassuring way. Poorer working class men use the service more in relation to their economic position in society, the women go because of the physical symptoms caused by stressful living conditions. The women get no thorough-going relief of symptoms as these will never come through a health service as such.

The lower nutritional value of their diet, the generations of deprivation behind them and a general lack of awareness of services gives these women a bad start and babies are more likely to be handicapped. If family planning clinics are neither accessible nor welcoming, women will fail to regulate the size of families or the frequency of pregnancies, thereby making a rod for their own backs and contributing to their own future health problems. Minor malfunctions and symptoms experienced by many women go

unchecked until it is too late, as women do not know that they should or could get advice and treatment. As they are less articulate they feel unable to confront a general practitioner about less obvious problems or discuss with him (usually) details of their bodies which many women feel are too 'rude' to talk about.

Any sexual difficulties are usually put down to female frigidity and 'being past it' — a symptom rarely accorded to men. Most women are totally unable to take problems of this nature to their G.P.s.

Whilst not wishing to make a wholly separatist case, it is important for women to fight for the establishment of clinics or centres where they feel able to bring these problems — either to other women or to trained staff — and to have expert advice and treatment if needed. To date, the concept of a 'Well woman clinic' has not been enlarged much beyond cancer screening in many areas.

the end for EGA?

AFTER MORE THAN eighteen months of reprieve and compromise, the government and regional health authority—in the interests of cuts in public spending—have finally put the knife into the EGA women's hospital in north London. We reprint the defiant response of the EGA workers indicating their determination to continue the struggle against closure.

RHA SAY EGA HOSPITAL TO CLOSE

On Monday April 24th the North East Thames Regional Health Authority agreed that:

"The only practical advice the RHA can offer the Secretary of State is that the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital on Euston Road be closed. Subject to the Secretary of State's agreement to this, the closure should be completed as rapidly as possible."

This decision was made despite the promise and public commitments of two Secretaries of State to maintain the principles and facilities of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital, one of the only two general hospitals for women in the country, where women are guaranteed treatment by women.

Mend the lift now, Mr Ennals!

Mr Ennals, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Services, is to make the final decision. He has to decide the future of the EGA... and of the 25,000 women a year who use it and the 150 staff who work there.

There is only one way for Mr Ennals to meet his responsibility and commitment to provide these

facilities for women... and that is to make the money available to immediately mend the lift at the EGA, and to upgrade and expand the hospital on its Euston Road site.

WE WON'T LET THEM GET AWAY WITH IT!

The workers at the EGA have had a work-in at the hospital since the first attempts to close it in November 1976. They and their supporters are committed to fighting any attempt to close or run down the hospital. The work-in has official backing from NUPE, COHSE, ASTMS and NALGO, who are also committed to taking contingency action in the event of a move to close the hospital.

On Tuesday April 25th, a unanimous decision was taken by the staff at EGA to continue their work-in, and they called for support from the public and the trade union movement in their fight.

We need your help again urgently!

We need *your* support to keep the EGA open. Cuts in the health service affect us all. The present plans will mean in London the loss of 20,000 hospital beds and 24,000 jobs. We cannot let the NHS, which working people have fought and paid for, be destroyed by these cutbacks. The work-in at the EGA was the first in the health service in this country, and has been an inspiration to numbers of other hospitals to fight the government's massive closure programme. We must actively support the workers at the EGA and stop this hospital from closing.

Save The EGA Campaign
c/o 155 Drummond Street
London NW1

Would this justify its reactionary attempt to maintain control over the former area of the Empire assembled by Menelik II? The Eritrean liberation fighters — particularly the EPLF have made tremendous advances in organising and educating their downtrodden people — whose hatred for the Ethiopians is intense. Now their villages are being flattened by MIG jets and they are subject to the napalm and cluster-bomb genocidal methods pioneered by the Americans in Vietnam. It should be added that the Western powers — for their own reasons have been reluctant to step in and back the Eritreans or Somalis; Israel continues to support Ethiopia, correctly believing that a "Christian" power will be less of a threat to its sea-lane through the Red Sea than a Moslem Eritrean state.

Any "progressive" content in the Dergue's measures has long since been dissipated. All its fury is reserved for the Ethiopian workers and socialists and for those fighting their just national liberation struggles against it.

'Socialism' and Barbarism in the 'Horn of Africa'

MARTIN COOK contributes an initial article to a *Chartist* discussion on the struggle in the Horn of Africa.

A FEW WEEKS ago, tens of thousands of Ethiopian troops — backed by large numbers of Cuban and Soviet advisers and possibly even combat troops — commenced an all-out assault on the rebel people of Eritrea. The Eritrean liberation forces (ELF and EPLF) have controlled about 95% of the 3.5 million people for the last couple of years, penning up the hated Ethiopian occupiers in a few major air-supplied fortresses such as the capital Asmara and the port of Massawa. To explain or discover what is at stake in this suffering corner of Africa — as diplomatic alliances are reversed with bewildering rapidity and lack of principle is far from easy. One thing is for sure. Many more thousands of peasants, workers and soldiers are to be butchered and maimed in a bloody conflict between forces which all claim jealously their "socialist" and "anti-imperialist" credentials.

The origins of all this lie in the collapse of the ramshackle old Ethiopian Empire. Despite the claims of the Amharic Christian monarchs who ruled it, to descent from the Queen of Sheba this was mainly strung together in brilliant military campaigns by the Emperor Menelik II around a hundred years ago. This rapid expansion from the original Amharic area around Addis Adaba brought millions of other peoples under Ethiopian rule — many of them moslems. They were dispossessed of their lands, which were handed over to feudal Amharic lords. Decades of brutal and incompetent rule ensued. The former Italian colony of Eritrea was arbitrarily tacked on after World War II: the Americans seeing in Haile Selassie's staunchly pro-Western regime a force for "stability". The economy of Eritrea — partially industrialised was systematically looted by its hated new overlords. Meanwhile guerilla warfare began among hundreds of thousands of Somalis in the Ogaden region — separated from their 3.5 million kith and kin in Somalia by the irrelevant colonial frontiers.

In early 1974, Haile Selassie's



Above, right: refugees receiving rations from EPLF fighters

kingdom collapsed in ruins — partly due to the government's bumbling inability to deal with a famine that cost hundreds of thousands of lives. By this time, the elderly monarch was probably more popular with the Jamaican Rastafarians than his own subjects. Power passed into the hands of the army, under a junta called the Dergue. The real violence began afterwards, as constant faction fighting between "moderates" and "radicals" led to the triumph of the latter after a series of liquidations of factional opponents. More recently among the handful of leading officers to survive, Lt. Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, the present dictator, established absolute power. The revolutionary changes of the last few years are not to be discounted — wholesale nationalisations and land reforms that provoked violent conflicts with landlords. Influential in many of the changes was a student-based Marxist grouping called Meison-founded in 1968. They decided to work as a pressure-group through the radical military and the *kebeles* (neighbourhood committees), and many of their ideas were taken up. However, by 1977 their former military allies had decided they were too much of a disruptive element and turned their guns on them. Ever since 1974, militants of the

Maoists and anti-military EPRP (Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party) had been suffering the most vicious repression themselves. Now the Junta has publicly embarked on a "Red Terror" campaign of liquidation — allegedly against "reactionaries", but by all accounts against Meison or EPRP supporters and anyone else suspected of criticising the Dergue.

Early in 1977, the Americans refused to supply further military backing for Ethiopia's attempt to reconquer Eritrea with a massive peasant army. Mengistu turned to the Russians and Cubans, who cynically stabbed their former Eritrean and Somali friends in back (denouncing them as "agents of imperialism" for attempting to liberate themselves from Mengistu's tender clutches). Somali forces in the Ogaden had driven out the Ethiopian occupiers and cut off Addis Ababa from the port of Djibouti. However, with massive fire power — largely Russian made and Cuban manned — the tide was turned, and with a scorching tank blitzkrieg this spring the Somalis forced to capitulate. Ironically, the Somali regime in Mogadishu had been a firm friend of Moscow and carried out the same sort of progressive measures as Ethiopia in terms of land reform, for instance.

GARNERS STEAK HOUSES last stand

DEFEATS AT VARIOUS hotels and restaurants from Trust House Forte to the London Metropole, and now Claridges, has meant a serious setback for the cause of unionisation of this notoriously exploitative industry. The movement's last hopes at the moment seem to rest on the hundred or so strikers at Garner's Steak Houses in London. CHRIS STOCKER looks at the background to any prospects for this dispute, now entering its fifth month.

The usual sorry tales of police harassment and assaults on pickets by management staff have added to the more subtle threats of deportation or withdrawal of work permits on the Garner's strikers. The two-year campaign for union recognition throughout this steak restaurant chain has taught the workers, largely immigrants from as far afield as Turkey, Bengal, Spain and Egypt, several hard lessons about 'democratic rights' and the British industrial relations system.

Boss Cyril Margolis was quick to realise that a tame 'staff association' would be infinitely less trouble than the TGWU, and so, after twelve months of negotiation one was established.

It didn't take the workers long to realise that the association was a sham union, and after a year's bitter experience, pressure built up again for T&G recognition. A demonstration by 84 workers to draw attention to the problem and to protest against Margolis' intransigence was used as a pretext for their sacking.

The consequent strike by over 100 TGWU members, including the sacked workers, was made official by the union within a week. Picketing of Garner's string of central London restaurants began immediately and proved very effective—several branches have been forced to close, and others, although 'open', remain largely deserted.

Reaction from the public, often tourists in Oxford Street and the West End, has largely been encouraging, but several incidents have shown at least a few tourists that our 'boys in blue' may not be quite so 'wonderful' after all.

One of Garner's branch managers (presumably having little else to do, with no customers) decided to reinforce his argument with a group of pickets with a meat-axe. He was promptly arrested. But admirers of

British justice need not worry—the 'Garner's axeman' was given a suspended sentence! Presumably it was felt that the manager's loss of commission through the decline in business was sufficient 'punishment' for a mere attempted assault with a deadly weapon.

Not surprisingly, Margolis' wife was undeterred by pickets outside the Bond Street restaurant as she arrived for a meal. However, Ms Margolis decided to reinforce her point by punching one of the pickets in the face, resulting in him losing 50 per cent of his eyesight.

Naturally, such behaviour in Bond Street is most unseemly, and once again the police intervened. Once they had established that she was the boss's wife she was, of course, released! The strikers intend to pursue a private prosecution against Ms Margolis for assault, but the difficulties they will face without these police witnesses can be imagined.

The usual police tactic of trying to limit numbers of pickets to six has resulted in a number of arrests, and there is no doubt that the threat of arrest and possible deportation is a powerful weapon in the hands of the management.

The response from other sections of the movement has been poor, and in particular, from other catering workers. Member of the strikers' T&G International Workers branch committee, Alvaro Miranda, feels that this reflects both the poor organisation of catering workers, the high percentage of immigrant labour in the industry, and the recent down-turn and defeats. Miranda told the *Chartist*:

"What we are looking for, apart from financial support to supplement the £6 a week strike pay, is a commitment from union branches to assist on the picket line on a regular basis and, in particular, at Saturday lunchtime outside the 399 Oxford Street branch (opposite

Over 100 people attended a meeting called by the Prisoners Aid Committee (PAC) on May 5th in the NUFTO Hall, Holborn to hear Jacqueline Kaye of the PAC announce the beginning of a two month campaign in support of Irish prisoners based on the two demands:

1. That Irish prisoners in England and Ireland be treated as Prisoners of War in accordance with the Geneva Convention;
2. That a call be made for an amnesty for all Irish political prisoners and to recognise that this will only come about in the context of a complete British withdrawal from Ireland.

Organisations supporting the campaign include Sinn Fein (Britain) and the United Troops Out Movement. Additionally, messages of support were read out from Irish prisoners and their relatives, two prominent Irish trade union leaders — Phil Flynn of the local government union and Michael Mullen of the

of War

by P. Chalk, Haringey UTOM

Irish Transport and General Workers Union and MPs Joan Maynard and Maureen Colquhoun.

TORTURE

Reference was made at the meeting to the huge campaign in defence of Fenian prisoners during the 1860s and '70s and that today, despite concern over torture of prisoners in Chile, Argentine and South Africa, the British labour movement ignores the plight of nearly 350 male and 30 female Republican prisoners in Long Kesh and Armagh women's prison who are currently refusing to accept 'criminal' status. These men and women are those who have been convicted since March 1976 of political (or related 'terrorist')

offences in 'Special' no-jury courts and who are now denied the Special Category (political) status granted to Republican prisoners in 1972.

For refusing to wear prison clothing (and thus accepting criminal status) the male prisoners are forced to live 'on the blanket' which means close confinement in a 10ft. by 6ft. cell, completely naked except for a covering blanket.

All normal prison 'privileges' are denied including outdoor exercise and they are in virtual solitary confinement. Toothpaste is banned (it might contain hidden gelignite), shaving gear was removed in March 1977, prisoners are not allowed to go to the toilet and many other seemingly petty restrictions are enforced.

All the organisations connected with the prisoners complain of continual beatings and summary punishments meted out for minor and sometimes concocted breaches of rules. Each fortnight, every prisoner is automatically sentenced to three days in a punishment cell from which all bedding and furniture is removed and where the diet consists of bread and water.

PROTEST

Recently, however, the prisoners have stepped up their protest by refusing to 'slop out' their cells giving rise to highly insanitary and dangerous conditions. Ironically, Unionist leaders are beginning to complain because of the serious threat of disease to warders and loyalist prisoners (who accepted 'criminal' status). Nevertheless the prisoners are determined to continue their campaign, as MP Frank Maguire told the *Sunday Times* (7/5/78);

"The conditions are absolutely deplorable and disgusting, but the morale of the men is excellent. They have no intention of giving in."

Women in Armagh suffer similar degrading treatment although, as women are not required to wear prison clothes anyway, they do not yet have to live 'on the blanket'. Nonetheless, those women refusing criminal status are kept in solitary confinement for 23 hours a day — the other hour is usually spent cleaning their cells out. The only reading material available is the bible and contact with the outside world is minimal.

SUPPORT

The campaign in the Six Counties for political status, led by the Relatives Action Committees, and Provisional Sinn Fein, has won steadily increasing support. Despite continual harassment by the British authorities, including arbitrary arrests and the attempted closure of 'Republican News', illegal marches such as the one on April 30th in Belfast which attracted 6,000 people, receive widespread backing throughout the nationalist community. Coupled with mounting allegations of torture in Castlereagh RUC interrogation centre (including the 'suicide' of Brian Maguire last month) the efforts of Roy Mason to ground down Republican resistance by intense, selective repression of political opposition are being exposed and fought.

It is essential that the British working class adds its voice to those opposed to British repression in Ireland, by supporting the demands and campaign of the PAC which culminates in a demonstration on July 9th. All local UTOM branches, community groups, labour movement bodies etc. are urged to hold meetings in support and to send contingents on the march. For further information, PAC can be contacted c/o 182 Upper St., London N1, or see their publications *Irish Prisoner* (50p), and *PAC News* (2p).



Selfridges.)"

Parallels with the Grunwick dispute are obvious, even down to the complete impotence of ACAS in the face of total intransigence of the part of the employer. There is every chance, if support from the movement is forthcoming, that this could be a protracted, but possibly successful, battle. The secret of success and the crucial difference from the Grunwick situation, according to Miranda, is the fact that the picketing is really hitting the company financially, and there are signs that blacking of meat and vegetables at Smithfield and Nine Elms markets has begun to bite.

There remains, however, the danger that Margolis will emulate the infamous London Eating Houses group and go into liquidation rather than give in to the strikers. One thing is certain; wherever he raises his head the movement must be ready to keep up the pressure for union recognition and decent wages and security of employment for catering workers. All donations, messages of support and offers of assistance with picketing to:

Garner's Strike Fund
c/o TGWU Room 84
12/13 Henrietta Street
London WC2
Tel. 01-240 1056

WORLD CUP MASK FOR REPRESSION

TODAY LATIN AMERICA bristles with bayonets and barbed wire. The jails are bursting with political prisoners. Apart from one or two benevolent military regimes, the entire area, embracing hundreds of millions of people, is one giant prison camp where democratic rights are violently suppressed, trade unions barred, and imprisonment the norm.

Argentina is no exception. Yet this month it will be the stage for the biggest public relations facelift since the Olympic Games were held in Nazi Germany in 1936. Internationally, Argentina will be under the world's cameras not to highlight its brutal military dictatorship but to focus on the finals of football's World Cup.

Ever since Buenos Aires was selected as the site for the World Cup, a campaign has been raging to stop the tournament taking place whilst thousands suffer under the iron heel of the junta. In fact, since the bloodless military coup of March 1976 which brought General Videla to power and overthrew the corrupt remains of Isabel Peron's government, the barbaric repression has intensified.

After perhaps 15,000 abductions, 7,000 political murders, and an estimated 10,000 held without trial, the Labour government has yet to publicly condemn the regime and break trade relations.

In fact, the British capitalist media, the Labour leaders and the ruling class maintain a

BBC CENSORSHIP

THE BBC IS planning huge live coverage of the World Cup. "As a result" it was reported in *The Guardian*, "it is somewhat sensitive about how its programmes treat the regime in power."

The Director General of the BBC, Ian Trethowan, it is reported, "has directed that all stories about Argentina should be carefully checked by senior executives before they are transmitted." Already chopped have been items for a *Today* programme on Radio 4 which recorded an interview with Che Guevara's sister, and an interview with *Daily Mail* sports columnist Ian Wooldridge "who has recently returned from the Argentine and written relatively critical pieces about what he saw."

It was decided that the programme should not be transmitted, *The Guardian* reported, "on the grounds that it was too anti-Argentine..." Once again, the BBC excels itself in the interests of freedom and democracy!

conspicuous silence over the repression of democratic rights in Argentina. Hypocrisy masquerades as 'independence of sport from politics'. Because, of course, this silence does not extend to Moscow, site of the 1980 Olympic Games.

Argentina had an immensely powerful labour movement until the 1976 coup, which the previous Peronist regime, under immense pressure from domestic and US capital, had been unable to curb. The object of the coup has been to smash the six million strong trade union movement which had waged successful strikes, massive demonstrations and revolts against Peron's austerity plans and corrupt government.

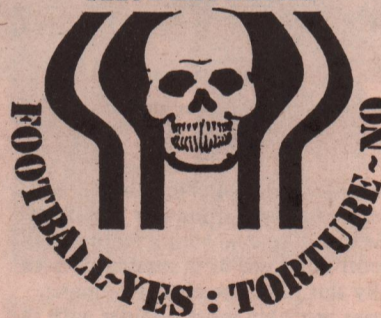
Since the military coup there have been mass sackings, 250,000 laid off in the state sector alone;

savage cuts in public spending—for example, in 1977 health and education expenditure was cut by 13 per cent—whilst defence and security was expanded by 17.6 per cent. This is compounded by an inflation rate of over 160 per cent for 1977. The Argentine CGT (TUC) has been effectively outlawed, the right to organise and strike eliminated by decrees, guns and jails and the anti-communist 'Triple A' fascist death squads have been permitted to run riot, claiming 15 victims a day (700 in May 1977 alone).

Although the working class is seriously weakened, trade unionists and civil rights campaigners continue to battle on underground, and women have courageously demonstrated for the release of political prisoners in the streets.

While the soccer stadiums of Buenos

ARGENTINA



Aires roar to the kicking of a leather ball, human footballs will be disappearing from the streets to be beaten and tortured in dingy cells or never to be heard of again.

The British TUC in its statement says the junta is trying to use the World Cup to portray their country as peaceful and democratic. "Their aim is to disguise the fact that large numbers of Argentinian trade unionists have been detained or disappeared." The statement goes on to call for the release of detainees, the right of return of exiles without fear of ill-treatment and the full restoration of trade union and democratic rights.

Throughout June the British Argentina Campaign will be intensifying its efforts to spotlight the repression in Argentina. It is calling on the Labour government to: end arms sales to the junta; stop the promotion of UK-Argentine trade; set up immediately a visa programme for political prisoners in Argentina; and raise its voice in international forums against the repression in Argentina.

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