

Socialist Challenge

CZECHOSLOVAKIA — THE EXPERIMENT THEY ALL CONSPIRED TO CRUSH

THIS WEEKEND is the tenth anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Socialists will be reminded of their responsibility to those struggling for socialist democracy in Eastern Europe.

Ten years later we are also beginning to learn of the shared responsibility of the British Labour Government for the invasion.

STARTLING

A startling passage from the third volume of Richard Crossman's Cabinet Diaries reveals:

...on his own initiative the Russian Ambassador had come to ask Michael Stewart (the Foreign Secretary) to join an inter-Sputnik organisation of a singularly unimportant kind and then, just when he was leaving the room, had said, "I want to talk to you about Czechoslovakia".

"I found out later that the Russians had given their Ambassadors in every capital instructions to make an identical approach in order to test Western reactions. I hope Michael gave ours."

What it was is revealed

elsewhere by Crossman when he says that Stewart and Denis Healey were adamant in Cabinet that there should be no British response.

Crossman's version of events is confirmed by a former leader of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, Zdenek Mlynar, now in exile in the West. In a new book, he reveals that Soviet leader Brezhnev told Czechoslovak leaders that he had an assurance of non-intervention in advance from US President Johnson.

Brezhnev apparently also said: "Our soldiers reached the Elbe in the course of the war; since then, that is our border." IBI apparently concurred.

NO ANSWER

So the Labour Government 'nodded through' the invasion. But if it had simply told the world of this Russian approach, the element of surprise so fundamental to the invasion's success would have been destroyed.

And having in practice backed the invasion, the Labour bureaucracy went on to use it to strengthen NATO!

The NEC statement for

voting at that year's party conference both condemned the invasion and pledged Labour's support for a strengthened NATO.

SURPRISE

This weekend the cold warriors of the National Association for Freedom will be out on the streets repeating the Labour Party's argument: condemn the Soviet Union and strengthen NATO.

But what these behind the scenes deals underline is that imperialism has no answer to the democratic demands of the East European workers.

So make this weekend a labour movement event of solidarity with the Czechoslovak masses. And we should also demand the full facts about Labour collusion in 1968.

* Saturday 19 August, public meeting 7.00, Conway Hall, London WC2.

* Sunday 20 August, demonstrate 2.00, Speakers Corner, Hyde Park, London — organised by Committee to Defend Czechoslovak Socialists.

SEVEN MORE REASONS TO BE AT BRICK LANE THIS SUNDAY

RACIST TERROR struck again in Brick Lane, East London on Saturday night.

Seven Asians were returning home from the Lane when they were attacked by a gang of 25 white youths. The racists were armed with bottles and clubs and all seven of the Asians ended up in hospital.

The police acted in line with the expectations of the local community — they arrested one of the seven Asians and allowed the 25 racists to go on their way.

The attacks and the police response emphasise the need

for a large turn-out for the national demonstration in Brick Lane this Sunday. The demonstration has been backed by all the major immigrant organisations as well as the local anti-racist organisations and the Anti-Nazi League.

But support for 20 August has not come from the TUC. A statement on Brick Lane issued on Monday and signed by TUC general secretary Len Murray and Bill Keys of the TUC Equal Rights Committee made no reference to the demonstration.

Yet both Murray and Keys had been asked to support this

action by representatives of the Asian community and local labour movement when the TUC leaders visited Brick Lane on 6 August.

Instead the TUC statement was full of pious phrasemongering. The only action it advocated was for the local Asian community to join trade unions.

That is all very well and good in the long term. But the racist violence in Brick Lane and the National Front presence there needs a response now. Be there on 20 August.

* Assemble 8.00am Nuz Cinema, Brick Lane.



HOME NEWS

Action for 35 hours

PO engineers defy bosses' threats

LAST WEEK branch secretaries of the Post Office Engineering Union received a letter from their Post Office regional directors about their battle for a 35-hour week.

The letter was an undisguised attempt to bully the engineers back to work. But as DAVE WARD [Horsham POEU] reports, it also offered a rare insight into the increasing concern being felt in ruling circles about the dispute.

"If you reject the McCarthy proposals, the letter ran, 'some will see it as a direct challenge to the democratically elected government'."

So apparently the fight for the 35-hour week has now been transformed into a life-or-death struggle with the Labour Government.

This government is theoretically committed to a 35-hour week for manual workers. Yet in the case of the Post Office dispute it has backed the proposals from Lord McCarthy for a 37½ working week with an increase in productivity.

LETTER

Having put the stakes so high, the letter from the regional directors goes on to promise an increasing management resistance to the engineers' action.

"I ask you to return to normal work immediately" is the plea.

But behind this 'request' there is a not-so-veiled threat that the Post Office intends to send many more engineers home if they don't capitulate.

SURVEY

Within the last week, however, the engineers themselves have shown that they have the determination to more than match that offered by management.

On 7 August, Tyburn branch of the POEU announced the results of a survey of union branches concerning their willingness to maintain the work-to-rule.

The idea for the survey came after the union executive had called off the national action because the branches allegedly didn't support it.

Tyburn branch then rang every branch in the union and came up with some remarkable results. By working out how many members were in each



PO engineers march in London last Friday

branch, they discovered that 72,649 union members were in favour of the national action with only 9,289 against.

Faced with this information, and an aggressive lobby of the union executive last Wednesday, the leadership retreated. They agreed to re-impose the national action, which is now

taking the form of a work-to-rule plus overtime ban.

Under pressure they also agreed to call a meeting of the union regional councils at which the local branch delegates would be asked to suggest ways of increasing the pressure on the Post Office.

An example of the pressure was seen last week when the Stock Exchange was boycotted by the engineers. As the branch involved, the London City branch, said, this action hit at 'the bastion of capitalism'. Combined with the determination of the large majority of union members to win the

35-hour week is the increasing effect of their actions.

The Post Office has now listed six crucial areas in which the engineers' dispute is affecting business. That is six further reasons why the workers should continue their action.

The great jobs slaughter

LEADERS of the Post Office Engineering Union have chosen to discuss away their members' claim for the 35-hour week rather than take the fight into the rest of the labour movement.

They argue that the POEU is a special case — that no other section of workers faces the same problems of massive new technological innovation as their members. It isn't true. STEVE POTTER explains why not.

One of the most shocking predictions of recent months came from a group of Cambridge economists who forecast five million unemployed by 1990.

They were greeted with hoots of derision. How could these people possibly know what levels of production and demand would prevail in the 1980s?

But that wasn't what they were trying to predict. They were merely looking at the growing capital intensity of British industry — the rate at which machines are replacing workers.

There is no doubt that the world crisis of profitability has dramatically boosted the number of unemployed in the advanced capitalist countries. The total number of unemployed in the seven leading countries is now 16.3 million,

and this seems certain to rise to 17 million by the end of 1978.

Because the capitalist class internationally are producing more than they can sell at the rate of profit they need, the 1970s have seen the greatest waste of human and material resources since the 1930s.

Britain, as the oldest and weakest imperialist power, has been hit hardest as the inter-imperialist competition for profitable markets heats up.

But this competition has produced a much more long term process. Technical progress has created 'technological' unemployment as machines have replaced workers in the struggle for higher and higher levels of labour productivity.

This 'structural unemployment' now accounts for half of the total registered unemployment in Britain — about 800,000 jobs.

It is this trend which makes the class collaborationist schemes of left Labourites so utopian. Their solution for Britain's ills centres on increased investment. Yet investment schemes have little impact on unemployment.

Research carried out by NALGO, the local government officers' union, shows that major investment projects in the manufacturing sector in Wales in 1977 involved a total expenditure of £1,506m and created only 1,900 new jobs. That's nearly £800,000 per job.

There is increasing evidence that in the future new investment, far from creating jobs, will dramatically increase the dole queues. Take the case of micro-processors.

CHIPS

Micro-processors are part of the third generation of electronics. They are mini-computers, manufactured in the form of a silicon chip. Often no longer than a little fingernail, they can consist of 20,000 components and yet still cost less than £5.

There was never much chance of room-sized computers taking over production.

They were too complex and subject to costly error.

But the micro-processor in this form is different. Programmed to do one simple task, it can be introduced straight onto the production line.

And in offices, banking, and local government the effects could be really drastic. Siemens of West Germany estimate that, by 1990, 40 per cent of these office-centred jobs will be carried out by computerised equipment based on automatic typing machines linked to the telephone system.

If you combine this with another estimate that, with full computerisation, total British industrial output could be carried out by two per cent of the present manual workforce, the tremendous consequences of this new historical stage in technology can start to be grasped.

Among the first groups of workers to realise that this scale of job loss is involved have been the Post Office engineers. They have had to. New technological innovations there could cut the work force by 80 per cent.

The most far-sighted POEU militants have understood that a 35-hour week with no loss of

pay or productivity strings is only the first step. Some have changed the '35' inscriptions on their campaign buttons to '26'.

They know the radical steps which have to be taken if new technology is going to benefit the working class rather than increasing the misery and waste that presently exists.

Without ever letting up on the struggle for a united fight around the widely supported demand for 35 hours, the general principle of work-sharing without loss of pay has to be popularised and defended in the trade unions.

ISOLATE

Otherwise 35 hours could be a divisive demand, used to isolate those who go for necessarily more ambitious targets.

But in another sense too the labour movement has to go further. It has to ensure that the job-creating effects of a cut in hours are not eaten up by increases in overtime, rising output per hour and falling total output.

The demand for the 35-hour week therefore has to be part of an overall strategy against unemployment for the trade

union movement. Higher basic wages to reduce the need to work overtime are part and parcel of any such plan.

A massive programme of useful public works can start to create jobs and meet social need. Aiming to take out of private hands the commanding heights of the economy, which dictate developments in the rest of the economy, and place them under workers control has to be the mainspring of such a strategy.

The trade union leaders will never set to work on such a plan. Following the example of the Lucas workers, it would take workers meeting in every sector of industry and the economy as a whole and coordinating their efforts and knowledge at a national, central level.

This scale of planning in the workers movement may seem gigantically ambitious to experienced militants. But the developments that we will have to confront in the next 12 years are gigantically threatening.

It will also be a giant step on the road to replacing the capitalist anarchy of a system based on profits with a socialist system based on social need.

OUR POLICIES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

* I would like additional literature and enclose 50p to cover costs.

[Delete if not applicable]

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

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

Music that knows who the real enemy is



RAR, BOX M,
27 CLERKENWELL
CLOSE, EC1

DELEGATES at the TUC in Brighton next month aren't going to know what hit them. They will have the Right to Work march, the CPSA-sponsored lobby, and the Other TUC converging on them from all sides. This year the RTW march is being organised with Rock Against Racism: four days of Anger on the Road, followed by putting The Heat on the TUC. RICHARD CARVER talked to JO and BOB of RAR to find out what it was about — and they ended up throwing around all sorts of ideas for the future of RAR.

A lot of people's reaction to a lobby of the TUC would be: the TUC's just sold us out over and over again. Why bother with them?

Jo: Because the TUC's supposed to represent working people and it should represent people who can't get jobs as well. So we want to show that we're still there, still angry, and still without a job.

I know there's been a past relation with RTW, but this does mark a change. This time RAR is doing more than just booking the bands. Does that mean you're broadening the basis of RAR?

Bob: The point about RTW is that unemployment breeds racism. We started off together about two years ago. May Day two years ago was a joint venture with RTW, but then we went our separate ways.

RAR is basically a propaganda organisation and we saw the importance of enjoying the RTW marches.

RAR has changed left politics — left cultural politics — over the past two years, quite a lot. And this is just another aspect of that development.

No, I think it's great. But I can imagine people saying: RAR is a very broad based organisation and don't you sacrifice some of that by being identified

with something as specific as RTW?

Bob: We just thought that if RTW was getting 500 kids to march down to Brighton, then that was doing something.

So why not help them out if we can and make it enjoyable

ment)?

Bob: Well, I don't know what the line is, but we in RAR are taking a non-sectarian view of the whole thing. If we can put on a better gig for the young unemployed workers together then we're prepared to coordinate.

What's striking about the latest Temporary Hoarding is the way that sexism keeps on coming up. This is related. Because when you're dealing with racism, the same way as you have to confront unemployment, you have to take up sexism.

Bob: Our first real taste of the problem was Brighton (when

If we were to stop all sexist bands, then we wouldn't have any bands left.

Jo: We try and strike a balance, don't we. We exclude those that are really too much, like Black Slate, who say that the abortion campaign is worse than the National Front.

We had really long discussions about the Fabulous Poodles. Four weeks later we used Adam and the Ants. This time we decided that what we had to do was talk to the bands first.

Cos we're not just out to educate the kids, but the bands as well.

Bob: What you're saying is that RAR is becoming more political.

More political on more issues.

Bob: Well, the most active and forward moving thing in people's heads over the last ten years is the question of women.

There's a number of ways we could go. We could build up the local groups and create a network of venues and clubs where kids can go.

Like a kind of little youth movement in different places all over the country.

The other way is that it could become very commercial. We could start getting up our own record shops, our own record publicity.

Jo: What we don't want is to be just a booking agency for other people.

Bob: We want to get rid of this idea that we're just the entertainments branch of the ANL. RAR is RAR.

We're fighting the same fight, but we're doing it in our own way.

What's our slogan? We want music that breaks down people's fear of each other.



Enjoying the Nottingham Carnival

for the kids? I mean, I don't know if the Right to Work march is sectarian or not.

Are you going to be linking up with CAYU [the Campaign Against Youth Unemploy-

ment] the Fabulous Poodles played a really sexist set?

The problem is that most rock music is sexist — from Adam and the Ants talking about little girls in uniform to, I don't know, the Kinks.

Giro kids

THE Giro Kids were on the march last Tuesday, disturbing the cloisters of capitalism in Glasgow's stock exchange and Chamber of Commerce, writes CHRIS BAMBERY.

Under the eyes of the boys in blue — who have a 40 per cent wage rise under their belts, which compares with £10 for a jobless school leaver — 20 kids from the Right to Work Committee demonstrated for their right to work.

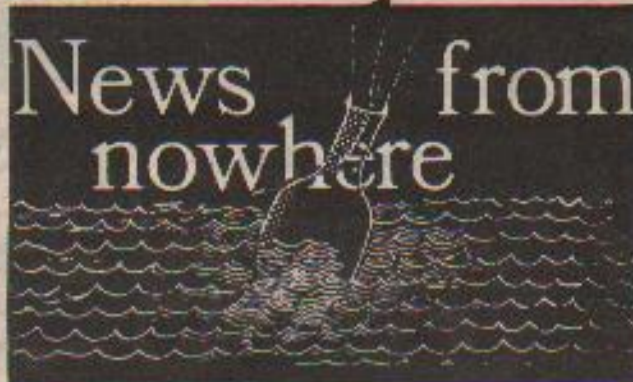
As the stockbrokers hurried past, the chants went up: 'Dole money isn't funny, fight for the right to work' and 'The Giro Kids are innocent OK'.

With over 27,000 teenagers

on the dole, and with more hanging on in school, the future for Glasgow's kids is easy to see. No work, no money, no fun.

To give the kids a better future the Right to Work Campaign is holding a Right to Work march in September from Clydebank, where 2,800 face the chop at Singer's, to Glasgow, before going on the London-Brighton march.

This led in the fight for jobs couldn't come at a better time. At Singer's all the union has done is hire management consultants, at a cost of over £25,000, to see if the factory could be run better!



Full Frontal

ALL IS NOT well in the leadership of the National Front. NFN has this on the authority of John Tyndall from a letter he sent to Martin Webster on 31 July, with copies to the rest of the mob on the National Directorate.

(We'll leave it to their paranoia to worry about how a copy of this letter — the original was addressed from the home of Tyndall's father-in-law in Hove — found its way to NFN.)

Some extracts. 'You were at pains at the meeting (on 29 July) to point out to the Directorate — quite rightly — that the NF is now under a pressure from all sides the like of which we have never felt before and that it is imperative that we adjust ourselves to cope with this pressure...

'I just cannot see how the morale which we all acknowledge it is so important to maintain in the party can be maintained when morale among the Directorate itself is less than what it should be.

'It is up to you and me as two of the leading members of the Directorate to do all we can to maintain morale on the Directorate and the first step we can take in this direction is to make a real effort to build some much wanted harmony between the two of us. I am willing to make this effort: I hope you are...'

NFN would recommend the unity of the graveyard.

Starry eyed

VISITORS to the Morning Star's office block in Farringdon Road, London EC4, will need to keep their eyes shut if they are to avoid the male chauvinism the party claims to oppose.

Currently on display among the holiday postcards decorating the caretaker's office is one of those grotesque cartoon 'funnies' from the seaside.

The statutory large-breasted young female illustrated is sitting in a bikini with her legs apart and her feet in the water. One male character asks the other: 'Have you been in yet?' 'No,' he replies, 'but I'm hoping to.'

If the editorial chiefs cure to step downstairs to remove this piece of sexist rubbish, they might also cross the road and deface the anti-abortion slogan that's been opposite their offices for some months now.

Trade tariff

THE PRESENT opposition to the closure of the Royal Group of Docks, as any property developer would assure you, is counter to the interests of the nation, rooted in 19th century reaction, and so on.

This view is supported by the prices charged at the Ivory House hotel which is attached to the World Trade Centre, occupying the former site of St Katherine's Docks by Tower Bridge.

A one-bedroomed apartment costs £250 a week. Add another £100 if you want an additional room. It is well known that the

dockland development is being carried out exclusively in the interests of the local community.



Claude R. Eatherly
a 1959 photograph.

No break

THE United States, bastion of the free world, has of course no political prisoners, and wouldn't dream of incarcerating political oppositionists in psychiatric hospitals. Which brings us to the death last month of Claude Robert Eatherly.

Eatherly was the pilot who picked out Hiroshima through a hole in the clouds on 6 August 1945, and radioed the Enola Gay B-29 to drop an atomic bomb on the city. Two years later he was discharged from the US air force after psychiatric tests indicated 'a severe neurosis and guilt complex'.

The US government had reason enough to keep Eatherly quiet. The former major felt responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Japanese at Hiroshima, and was determined to say so. Over the years he was imprisoned many times in psychiatric hospitals; in 1969 he was ruled insane by a jury.

Several psychiatrists testified that Eatherly had 'chronic schizophrenia'. 'All I want is a break,' Eatherly said. 'There is no peace.'

Gay in Glasgow

'QUEERBASHING' is all too common a sport in Glasgow, with two deaths in recent months. In their hunt for the killers of the two men, Strathclyde police have been appealing for help from the city's gay community. All information will be treated as strictly confidential, gays have been told.

In Scotland all male homosexual acts are illegal. So it is hardly surprising that Glasgow's gays have treated the police appeal with some scepticism.

A teenage boy who had been living with a middle-aged man claimed in Glasgow Sheriff court that he had been hit across the back of the head by police officers trying to get him to make a false statement to implicate a man in one of the murders.

Meanwhile his boyfriend faces four charges of sodomy and seven of indecent practices.



Photo: TRAVIS TOWNSON

Photo: MARK RUSHER (JEL)

HOME NEWS

Focus of the fightback

What's at stake in Brick Lane

SUNDAY 20 AUGUST will see a national day of action in defence of the embattled Bengali community of Brick Lane in London's East End.

MICK GOSLING, London organiser of the International Marxist Group, and HILDA KEAN, twice Socialist Unity candidate for the Brick Lane area, take a look at what is at stake.

Brick Lane is a vital area for the National Front. In the coming General Election, Martin Webster is contesting the Bethnal Green and Bow seat, which includes the predominantly Bengali area of Spitalfields.

John Tyndall is standing in the adjacent Hackney South and Shoreditch constituency. The Hackney South seat includes Hoxton, an area the Front like to think of as 'theirs'.

The selling of papers in Brick Lane is of great psychological importance to the Nazis. They see it as their territory, a reminder that they have always had a presence in the area, an insult to the Bengali community and a challenge to the left and anti-fascist forces who have been selling their literature, with much greater effect, further down the market.

FIGHTBACK

But what has made Brick Lane a national issue and a national focus has been the determined fightback waged by the Bengali community and anti-fascists.

The role of the police and the state has been to stifle the moves towards self-organisation and the building of self-defence groups which have taken place in the wake of the racist murders.

But they have not succeeded. There has been a growing radicalisation inside the Bengali community, especially amongst the youth.

It was the Bengali community, with the assistance of other Asian and West Indian organisations in the area, who

moved the struggle against racism onto a higher level with the historic strike against racism organised by the Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee on Monday 17 July.

SELF-DEFENCE

The occupation of Bethnal Green Road by thousands of demonstrators to demand the release of their comrades after police arrested anti-fascists during the march on 17 July gave a clear example of self-defence in practice.

White anti-racist activity has been centralised by the Anti Nazi League, which has been mobilising contingents for the regular Sunday morning pickets.

Such actions must aim to solidarise with the Bengali community in the organisation of its own self-defence against the fascists.

Publicising the setting up of self-defence groups is important both to win the confidence of the whole of the community for these groups and to explain to the local white community how they can be involved.

Self-defence is not a question of self-appointed heavies defending the area against the fascists. It must be a genuine mobilisation of the whole community, all of whom are affected by police harassment in the area.

In two consecutive elections in Spitalfields, Socialist Unity obtained 20 per cent of the vote with other left-wing candidates also doing well. Many of these votes came from the white community, which, like the Bengalis, lives in run-down slum housing estates.

Local members of the International Marxist Group have argued that Tenants Against the Nazis groups should be formed to monitor attacks on the estates, to stop harassment of Bengali and black families, and to sound the alarm for fascist attacks.

The labour movement throughout London has a responsibility to build mass action against the fascists in Brick Lane. For a start, different trade union and Labour Party branches can adopt a Sunday for Brick Lane. Women's groups, gay organisations and school students should also organise contingents in the same way.

The fight against Webster and the fascists must also be taken into the General Election itself — not just by countering the Front through the ANL, but by fighting for a positive, socialist alternative.

RESPONSE

The response of local MP Ian Mikardo and the Labour Council to the Brick Lane struggle and other militant campaigns in the area has been predictable.

They are willing to throw up their hands in horror at the closure of Bethnal Green Hospital, at the closure of Robert Montefiore school, at the rundown of dockland.

But when it comes to organising and actually leading action and using their weight in the labour movement and Labour Party to mobilise support on an all-London and national scale, they do nothing.

The leader of the Council, Paul Beasley, has condemned the National Front and even joined the sit-down in Brick Lane. But on the question of self-defence, of the removal of the Special Patrol Group from the area, of automatic re-housing for Asian families harassed off estates by white thugs, he is strangely silent.

Similarly, Ian Mikardo can voice opposition to the Front and even prosecute the local NF for infringement of electoral laws, but he hasn't called for an enquiry into police activity in the area — a demand taken up by his Tribune group colleague, Arthur Latham.

And, of course, none of them campaign against the racist immigration laws which lead to continual police harassment of the Bengali community.

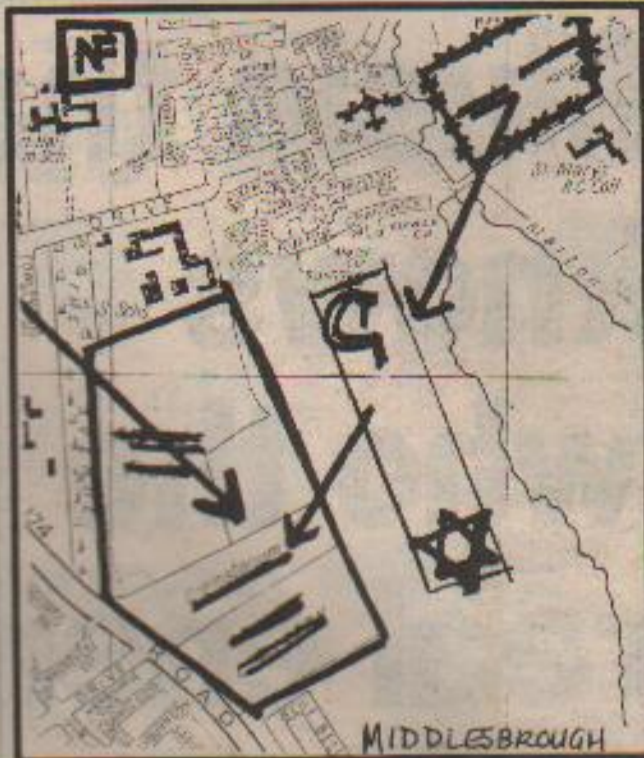
Socialist Unity is already committed to supporting a fighting socialist alternative candidate in Bethnal Green and Bow. We think such a campaign would be strengthened tenfold if agreement could be reached with the Socialist Workers Party and all other individuals and groups committed to a socialist fightback against Labour's policies.

Brick Lane is a national focus for the anti-racist struggle. The fascists want it to be their focus for the General Election campaign. We can hardly expect the press and television to ignore it.

ALTERNATIVE

Our task for the next two months is not only to help build mass self-defence against the fascists, but when the General Election comes to wage the broadest possible campaign for a socialist alternative to Labour's policies — the only basis on which we can clear the fascists out of the East End for good.

BIRMINGHAM Anti Nazi League is organising a rally and march against the Nazis on Saturday 2 September. It assembles at Handsworth Park at 12.30pm and will march to Victoria Square in the city centre. Speakers at the rally will include Tom Litterick MP, Paul Holborow, and Tariq Ali.



This doctored map of part of Middlesbrough was found in the toilets at the local AUEW Hall after members of the National Front attempted to disrupt an Anti Nazi League meeting there. Its message is self-explanatory. And people wonder why we call them Nazis!

Dave Stevens defence

Make this a national campaign!

THE DAVE STEVENS defence campaign continues, reports CHRIS ROSEBLADE. Some failures — but more successes.

Among the failures, it grieves us to report that the Hon Nicholas Budgen, Tory MP for Wolverhampton SW, will not be sponsoring our campaign.

Budgen told us that although he was prepared to discuss the matter, he won't pre-judge the findings of a court.

From some MPs there has been a much better response. Many thanks to Audrey Wise for her £5, and to Tom Litterick who said he would write to the Home Secretary for us.

Litterick told us: 'Since the Grunwick affair, in which Labour MPs found themselves in court on the most extraordinary charges, there's greater awareness that our brave boys in blue are less than virgin pure.'

This feeling is not confined to Labour MPs, as is shown by the publicity the campaign has received. There have been features in the Birmingham Post, Wolverhampton's Express and Star, and the Morning Star.

The issue of racist violence is very much alive in Wolverhampton. A white racist has just been on trial for attacking a black youth, and the magistrate was prepared to declare that this was an unprovoked racist attack.

The committal proceedings for another defendant, David Hines, opened this week, and several black youth clubs have been leafleted to ensure that a large picket will be there to support him.

The ANL is sponsoring a national speaking tour for Stevens, and meetings have already been arranged in Birmingham, Preston, Bolton, Liverpool, Bristol, Southampton, and Hampstead.

Much work still needs to be done. The campaign must now be made a national issue. Make sure it is an item on the agenda of your local ANL and anti-racist committee.

The trials will not begin until September or October, so we need to maintain the momentum of the campaign that we build up. For that we need your support — and cash.

Defence Campaign, c/o Student Union, W'ton Poly, Wolverhampton.

NEW SPONSORS INCLUDE: Rev. Geoffrey Winne, Chaplain W'ton Poly; G S Keadels, assistant secretary IWA; A S Chohan, Guru Nanak Temple, W'ton; Bob Brettie, UCATT convenor, W'ton; David Edgar, ACTT, author of *Deathly*; Councillor N Davis, W'ton.



Sit-down in Brick Lane last Sunday.

Socialist Challenge/Socialist Voice Joint School

'RACISM AND BLACK LIBERATION'

Saturday/Sunday, 2/3 September, at Polytechnic of Central London

This school is jointly organised by Socialist Challenge and Socialist Voice newspapers. Its aim is to start a much needed discussion amongst revolutionaries on the strategy to fight racism and for black liberation.

The agenda will include sessions on 'Racism and the State', 'How to fight racism — what programme?', 'Black self-organisation — what does it mean?', as well as workshops on various aspects of racism and sessions on the politics of the black communities.

The school is open to all supporters of Socialist Challenge and Socialist Voice. For details contact your local Socialist Challenge Group or Socialist Voice sellers.

Bradford Asians explain Why we're fighting immigration laws

MANJIT SINGH, NERMAL SINGH, and TARLOCHAN GATA-AURA are all members of the Bradford Asian Youth Movement, which has initiated a campaign against the immigration laws. Last week they explained why in an interview with 'Socialist Challenge'.

What are the general aims of the AYM?

T.G. We see it as particularly important to break down racism in the labour movement, but we see this as a dual role in the sense of participating in the labour movement and taking up struggles independently of the labour movement and forcing it to take a position on those struggles.

We are by no means only prepared to work with Asians, but also with progressive whites.

M.S. We are not black separatists, but if questions are raised from black workers about independent black unions then we will have to support that struggle.

T.G. On that question I am not in favour of having separate

black trade unions. But I am in favour of black people having black caucuses inside the trade union movement.

What are AYM's major successes so far?

T.G. One of the successes we've had is in gaining the release of Saeed Rahman, who was being kept in Arnley jail awaiting deportation. We don't see that campaign as an isolated one. We are raising the whole question of how immigration controls affect black people.

We have drawn together a number of activists from the Asian community and our next task is to escalate the campaign on a national level. We are already planning a demonstration in Bradford on 21 October.

N.S. I see it as very interesting that it is an independent black

organisation which is actually initiating a grass roots campaign against immigration controls.

Many on the left had thought this issue too difficult or unattractive to take up. However we have forced sceptics into action.

M.S. If we are really talking about fascism then we can't fight it in isolation from racism. We mustn't be scared about 'respectable' people dropping out of the fight against fascism because they are unwilling to tackle the question of racism.

How are you going to continue the anti-immigration controls campaign?

T.G. Our very first aim is to get in contact with all the AYM's across the country and encourage our brothers and sisters to take up the campaign in their groups and unions, etc., and to support the demonstration on 21 October. We want public meetings to take place in all areas before the demonstration, and we are prepared to send speakers if they are needed.

We also want to mobilise in our area in support of the



London and Cardiff Socialist Challenge supporters' call for a national day of picketing the jails and detention centres against deportations on 23 September.

There is no way we will sit back and let the Labour

Government implement these racist laws.

Bradford AYM can be contacted via M. Singh, c/o Community Relations Council, 1 Marlborough Road, Bradford 9.

Black liberation & socialism (3)

How the immigration laws work

IN THE 'numbers game' over immigration, one set of figures you never hear about is the number of people being detained under the immigration laws. Below we publish some of the statistics which convey the horror of those laws and how they are enforced.

HOW MANY?

Almost five and a half thousand people have been held under the 1971 Act since it came into effect in 1973. The only 'crime' of these people is that they wanted to live here.

overcrowded cells for 20/22 hours a day. None of them has any definite knowledge of when they will be released or deported.

In 1976 one prisoner committed suicide, and three more tried to, while waiting.

WHERE?

The prisoners are held in ordinary prison establishments in Bedford, Bristol, Birmingham, Cardiff, Canterbury, Durham, London (Holloway and Pentonville), Leeds, Lincoln, - Lewes (near

COLIN TALBOT continues our series on the views of left-wing groups towards the anti-racist movement by looking at those such as the Workers Revolutionary Party who reject involvement in its structures.

The WRP has announced that it will field 60 candidates in the General Election, thus making it the only organisation to the left of the Labour Party which will get television time. But this great opportunity will not be used to build important movements like the Anti Nazi League.

The WRP, although it claims to be 'Trotskyist', in practice abstains from the anti-racist and anti-fascist movements. It is not alone in this.

A multitude of groups have pronounced the ANL 'a Popular Front' and have similarly refused to have anything to do with it. The WRP, as usual, adds a little spice to this political position by slandering the ANL.

PROOF

'The sectarian lives by ready made formulas', wrote Leon Trotsky more than 40 years ago. The WRP is today living proof of that fact.

For them only two types of alliance exist: the United Front and the Popular Front. The former is only made up of

workers organisations, the latter includes other forces. The first is acceptable, the second not.

TACTICS

The WRP draws these categories like Holy Writ from some of the writings of Lenin and Trotsky and some of the history of the workers movement. Thus they accused organisations like the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign in the late 1960s of being a Popular Front.

But the classical Popular Fronts were above all programmatic agreements between workers and bourgeois parties, on the basis of the workers abandoning their programme.

No Marxist would rule out any joint action with bourgeois forces without looking at the concrete circumstances. Lenin said that 'the whole history of Bolshevism... is full of instances of manoeuvring, making agreements and compromises with other parties, bourgeois parties included.' What Lenin and Trotsky

always ruled out was any programmatic unity, any idea that workers and bourgeois parties could 'jointly' rule. The essence of united front tactics was explained by Lenin when he wrote that the 'whole point lies in knowing how to apply these tactics in order to raise, and not lower, the general level of proletarian class consciousness, revolutionary spirit, and ability to fight and win'.

The 100,000 mobilised by the VSC in October 1968, or the 80,000 mobilised by the ANL in April 1978, hardly demoralised the working class!

DIVIDE

In the debate on 'black self-defence', some groups such as the Workers Socialist League have counterposed 'workers self-defence' going on to argue that 'black self-organisation' and black nationalism are reactionary and divide the working class.

The WRP, however, is way ahead of these people.

They began attacking black nationalism 15 years ago as the American ghettos erupted, echoing the outraged cries of the liberals about 'reverse racism'.

The Workers Socialist League broke with the WRP

partly because they rejected its sectarian abstraction from mass movements. The WSL, unlike the heroes of the WRP, have mobilised for anti-racist actions such as Brick Lane.

But their political position towards the ANL, minus the slanders, is identical to the WRP's. Their political position of counterposing 'workers self-defence' to 'black self-defence' leads in the same direction as the WRP's attacks on black nationalism.

SCHOOL

Thus while they have broken from the excesses of the Healy school of falsification and abstention, they maintain many of the political concepts which led the WRP down the path to degeneration.

The late James P Cannon, the veteran US Trotskyist, once remarked that he would like his epitaph to be, 'Don't stand on the bank and tell me how to swim'. He was echoing Trotsky's description of a sectarian as one who 'sits on the shore and reads lectures on morality to the flood of the class struggle'.

The WRP, and far too many other groups, fit this description perfectly. To all of them we can only say: 'Come on in, the water's fine!'

	Number detained	Average daily number held in custody
1975	715	
1976	1027	121
1977 (first 6 months)	680	220
1977 (July-Nov.)	520	238

Not only have the numbers being detained increased dramatically, but so has the length of duration of the detention.

THE CONDITIONS

The detainees have no idea how long they are to be held. Some have been held for over a year. Others have been detained for months and then let free, apparently exonerated.

Conditions are so overcrowded that prison governors have suggested that special centres should be set up, and that the immigration service should be charged the cost of holding detainees as a 'valuable incentive to keep the number in and period of custody to a minimum'. Prisoners are often kept in

Brighton), Risley (near Manchester), and Winchester.

WHAT CAN YOU DO

The successful campaign which forced the release of 18 detainees in Arnley goal (Bradford/Leeds) is now being extended nationally. Pickets are being organised of detention centres on Saturday 23 September. Make sure there's one of your local prison. Free the Prisoners of Race!

*The next meeting of the London-based Campaign Against Immigration Laws [CAIL] will be held on Monday 21 August at 7.30pm in the Roebuck pub, Tottenham Court Rd.



ALEXANDER Dubcek became first secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (CPC) on 5 January 1968.

This man, who is the figure most identified with the Prague Spring, came to power as a result of a coalition of opposition forces inside the party: on the one hand Slovaks who raised the question of national rights; on the other, those who were concerned with economic reform.

20 years of Stalinism

When it seized power and established its political monopoly in 1948 the CPCs had a lot going for it. Czechoslovakia was already an advanced capitalist country, unlike most of the rest of Eastern Europe.

The CPCs was both the biggest political party in the country and had a genuine mass base inside the working class.

It soon squandered those advantages. For the next five years hundreds of thousands, including top party leaders, went to labour camps and many to their deaths.

The national autonomy promised to Slovakia was destroyed, and the economy was subject to rigid bureaucratic command.

Demands for reform

The state of the economy — in 1963 national income actually dropped by 3.7 per cent — led to the growth of a current arguing for a market-oriented reform.

Demands were raised for the rehabilitation of the victims of the purges. Calls for the rehabilitation of the 'bourgeois nationalists' in Slovakia were a way of raising the question of national rights again.

In the Czech Lands students began to demand an end to party control of the official youth union. Two of the leaders of the group known as 'Prague Radicals', Jiri Mueller and Lubos Holocek, were expelled from the university in late 1966.

The campaign for their re-instatement increased political awareness among the students.

In 1967 the threads began to come together. The liberals won control of the Writers' Union. Prague students demonstrating over bad electricity supply were attacked by police, causing a riot. Students organised an occupation in protest.

With the election of Dubcek it became clear that an important change was taking place at the top of the party, but between January and April 1968 the new leadership came up with no definite policy.

Initiatives from below

Seeing the possibilities for profound change the population began to take things into their own hands. Although censorship had not yet been formally abolished, writers, journalists and media workers stopped paying any attention to it.

The mass organisations of farmers, workers and students, which had served as transmission belts for orders from the centre, came under intense pressure from their membership to reverse their role, while in some cases entirely new organisations were formed.

A wave of strikes broke out from March onwards against such things as poor wages and unpopular managers.

According to the party daily *Rude Pravo*, at the March party conferences there had been an almost universal demand for free information within the party and the general democratisation of party life.

Leadership zigzags

For the Dubcekites the mass movement was a mixed blessing. On the one hand it ensured their position as party leaders. But it also pushed the other Warsaw Pact regimes into thoroughgoing opposition.

The reformists could not 'reassure' Moscow by cracking down on the mass movement, since that was the only guarantee of their leadership.

So, at the same time as (sincerely) professing loyalty to the Warsaw Pact, and Soviet Union, the Dubcekites took steps such as clearing Soviet agents out of the security services.

This could only increase paranoia in the other East European capitals.

At first glance the Dubcek leadership could have based itself on the mass

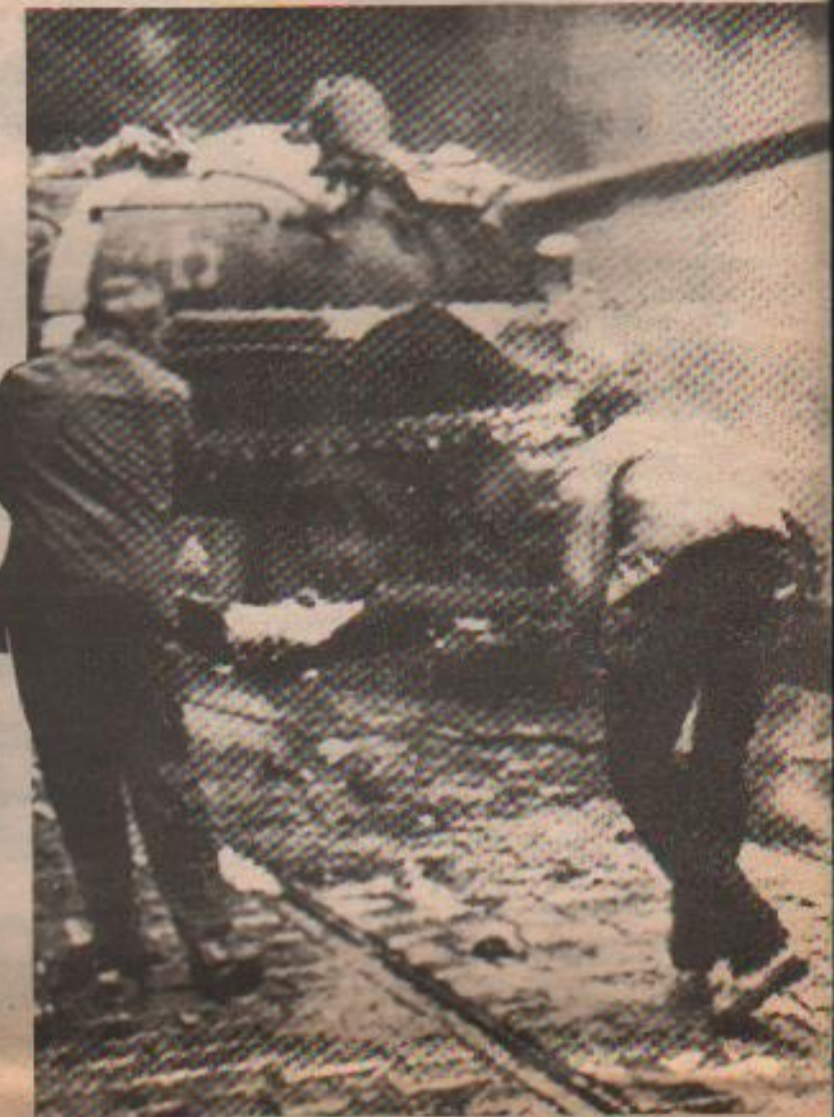
Czechoslovakia 1968-1978

The day the tanks rolled in



TEN years ago this week Warsaw Pact tanks trundled into Prague, ending the Prague Spring experiment and opening a crisis inside the European Communist movement.

On Sunday there will be a solidarity rally at 2pm, at Speakers Corner, London.



movement and gone all the way with it. But that would have been against its nature.

Politically the Dubcek leadership was deeply loyal to Moscow, and socially it did not aim at the destruction of bureaucratic power.

The Action Programme, adopted by the April Central Committee plenum, outlines the need for economic reform and federalisation. But it remains firmly wedded to the idea of the monopoly party, the backbone of bureaucratic rule.

The Dubcek leadership could only zigzag between Moscow and the mass movement, trying to keep everyone sweet and ending up satisfying no-one.

Leadership retreats

As the pressure from the other Warsaw Pact regimes increased, the new leadership began to bend. Over and over again it was summoned to give an account of itself to the other East European countries; on each occasion demonstrators urged them to stand firm.

At one of these encounters, recalls Josef Smrkovsky, who was present, a delegation came 'from nearby Trencin or Zilava' bringing a petition 'containing 20,000 and a few dozen more signatures'.

The delegation emphasised that 'all the citizens of the region had signed, including the sick. No-one was missing. And when the party leaders came back from Cierna, they were met by a crowd of about 10,000, mostly students, who demanded the truth about the talks.'

Invasion

On 21 August the Warsaw Pact tanks rolled into Prague. This was meant to be the solution of Brezhnev's Czechoslovak problem.

It would prevent the 14th Party Congress from meeting and force Dubcek and his supporters to resign.

But the Kremlin seriously miscalculated. The party leadership condemned the invasion and the congress was convened.

Although, according to *Pravda*, the invasion had been carried out at the request of 'healthy forces' within Czechoslovakia, the occupiers were unable to find anyone willing to collaborate with them openly.

A general strike broke out and underground television and radio networks co-ordinated a campaign of non-cooperation.

Signposts were removed and soldiers could only get a glass of water at gunpoint.

The glacial hostility of the Czechs and Slovaks, whom, they had been told, they were going to rescue from the grip of counter-revolution and the menace of West German revanchism, baffled and disturbed many of the Warsaw Pact soldiers. Suicides were reported.

The Soviet leadership was under attack from inside the official Communist movement: all the most important West European CPs condemned the invasion.

Capitulation

But the Dubcekite leaders themselves gave Moscow the solution. A number of them were kidnapped to Moscow where, under threat, they signed the Moscow protocols which bound them to annul the decisions of the 14th Congress, curb the development of alternative political organisations to the CP, muzzle the media and get rid of certain leading figures who were particularly disliked in Moscow.

Of the Dubcekite leaders in Moscow only Frantisek Kriegel refused to sign. By signing this document the Dubcekites pledged themselves to demobilise the mass movement.

Over the next few months the repeated mass actions in defence of the gains of the Prague Spring took place against the opposition of the party leaders.

Mass resistance

From now on it was the workers and students who occupied the centre of the

stage. In particular the Prague group played a major part in providing political leadership to the mass movement.

In November 1968 there was a wave of student occupations backed by many workers organisations.

When an attempt was made to remove Dubcek supporter Josef Smrkovsky as chairperson of the Federal Assembly many working class organisations were prepared to strike in his defence.

This was only stopped by Smrkovsky himself going on television to appeal for restraint.

On 16 January 1969 the student Jan Palach burned himself to death, leaving a note calling for an end to censorship and an unlimited general strike to win this demand. Hundreds of thousands of people attended funeral processions in his honour.

At the end of March 1969 riots in celebration of an ice-hockey win over the Soviet Union were used as a pretext to replace the Dubcek leadership with a new one under Gustav Husak.

This new leadership was prepared to use repression to stamp out opposition.

Some half a million party members were purged, censorship re-introduced and all the independent mass organisations of the Prague Spring dissolved.

Then in 1971 the trials began. Oppositionist Jiri Pelikan estimates that over 3,000 were arrested for political crimes in 1971-2.

The Prague Spring was over.

Some conclusions

*The aims of the Dubcek leadership were quite limited and by no means added up to a programme for the installation of socialist democracy.

*The Dubcekites did not 'lead' the Prague Spring. Their position was rather like that of someone driving a very large truck down a long and winding hill without the benefit of brakes.

Formally speaking they were in the driving seat, they could use the steering wheel to prevent themselves coming off the road, and most of the people in the back of the truck expected them to get to the bottom safely.

But as to whether or not the truck went downhill the Dubcekites had no influence.

*Because of their political attachment to international Stalinism and to their social role as guardians of the bureaucratic order, this leadership could not fight even for its own limited programme if it meant basing itself on the untrammelled activity of the masses.

*The masses, despite their creativity and courage, could not win their demands without an alternative political leadership to that of the Dubcek current.

The moment when Josef Smrkovsky went on television to implore the working class not to strike in his defence encapsulates the political problems faced by those fighting for workers' democracy in 1968.



On this page we look at August 1968 ten years on. **PETR UHL**, a revolutionary socialist who was imprisoned after 1968, discusses the future of the Charter 77 human rights movement.

And **MARK JACKSON** reviews the events of 1968, focussing especially on the role of Alexander Dubcek and his supporters in the Communist Party.



Petr Uhl writes The Charter and the future

BUREAUCRATIC power does not then derive from the links peculiar to capital, from private or collective ownership of the means of production. Both historically and factually, it is rather of a distinct political character.

Although the bureaucracy as a whole disposes of the means of production, its individual members are brought into the social hierarchy according to political criteria: they stand in a relationship of alienation to the means of production, although it is not of the same kind as the alienation suffered by the workers, who are completely excluded from the decision-making process.

I therefore think that the bureaucracy is not a class but a parasitic layer; that the system of bureaucratic centralism is not one of state capitalism or any other capitalism, and still less, a form of socialism; and that the bureaucratic dictatorship, while totalitarian in character, is not a species of fascism.

With regard to Stalinism and the bureaucratic degeneration or deformation of the workers' states, it may be theoretically valuable and even correct to propagate the concept of a transitional phase between capitalism

and socialism, as we revolutionary Marxists normally do on such occasions as the present.

But it may quite legitimately be argued that these concepts can have a disorienting or demoralising effect on the workers of both East and West.

And yet, hypotheses which refer to state capitalism or fascism, although fairly 'understandable' to workers, are based on impoverished constructions and are untenable from the point of view of the Marxist understanding of social relations.

Indeed, the authors and defenders of such schemas often know this best of all.

We must here say clearly with Gramsci that only the truth is revolutionary. And departure from it savours of the bitter fruits of Stalinism, at least for us who have lived through the experience.

Perhaps, in our ongoing agitational and propaganda work, we might dispense with concepts like 'bureaucratic centralism', which, apart from anything else, was very widely used in 1968 as a semi-official term to denote the economic and overall social system of sixties Czechoslovakia.

Perhaps we might also do without

'bureaucratic dictatorship', 'Stalinism', 'Soviet-type totalitarian dictatorship', and so on. Today it is not a question of deciding how this system should be called, but of understanding it and co-ordinating one's own forces in order to overcome it.

As far as I'm concerned, I have many reasons for thinking that the system cannot be reformed, although it can be given a different form.

I therefore envisage it as being overcome in a revolutionary process stemming from revolutionary negation of the political system — that is to say, from the shattering of bureaucratic power, its 'coming down from on high' and progressive 'dissipation', and the simultaneous centralisation of power in institutions of the workers themselves.

It is this revolutionary process which safeguards the development of the productive forces, the development of all social relations, the development of culture, and last but not least the realisation of human rights and the overcoming of alienation.

I see this socialist future as dependent on a political system of the broadest democracy, based on political pluralism of all currents, organisations and parties — non-socialist ones as well!

SELF-MANAGEMENT

The form of democracy is (social, i.e. not merely economic) **self-management**: it guarantees increasingly direct workers' participation (producers' democracy) and the involvement of the whole population in resolving the problems of the given social order.

Such a **council system** (workers' councils, citizens' councils, etc.) also lies at the heart of political pluralism and prevents one or more parties or party leaderships from ruling in the name of the voters or the people.

Although there are strong tendencies to parliamentarism in the Czechoslovak opposition, we also discuss the disadvantages of a parliamentary system — rigid delegation of power and possibilities of abuse, manipulation of the masses by powerful interest groups, difficulties in the way of a transition to the form of direct democracy.

It will be understood that, in these discussions, I am among those who reject parliamentarism and support self-management and the forms of direct democracy.

In Czechoslovakia today, however, there is neither a parliamentary system nor self-management; and it would be as well to return from the future to our own times.

Above all, it should be stressed that Charter 77 is neither a political, a social nor any other kind of organisation. It is rather a loose combination of people who have decided to speak the truth aloud and to advance critical thinking.

They seek to analyse certain areas of Czechoslovak life not from a political viewpoint (that of power), but from the viewpoint of the laws of the existing power itself and the respect it shows for human rights. In Charter 77, then, there can be no generally accepted opinion on the problems under discussion.

DISCUSSION

Represented in the Charter are communists who have been expelled from the Party — not only 'Eurocommunists' but also those of a centralist, reforming (social-democratic), liberal or other orientation; there are socialists and democrats of various persuasions; and there are the far left, Christians and the cultural underground.

But most typical are the citizens with no precise political, religious or cultural alignment. Agreement on the question of human rights does not preclude differences of opinion on a number of political problems — ranging from critical analysis of the system to ideas about the future.

It is of value that Charter 77 has made a discussion possible, and that the discussion is not limited to the Charter itself. But it would be wrong to conclude that, in the near future, political currents will emerge from the discussion, grow stronger and pass over into a confrontation with the state power.

Such a short-cut does not correspond to present-day relations in Czechoslovakia. Political conceptions will crystallise, and people will once again **publicly** come together in a political

form. But that is still not enough for there to be mass political life.

The stress given to open activity in the realm of social criticism points to another road: namely, the emergence and functioning of diverse committees, organs and institutions independent of the state power and, in the strict sense of the term, not political in character. That is, they do not presuppose that those who take part will have the same or similar ideological positions.

PARALLEL BODIES

The task of these bodies is to defend the specific interests of the population, especially the workers and youth, against the existing state power.

I have in mind defence committees for political prisoners and those struck by political **Berufsverbot**; a 'parallel' university; an independent trade-union organisation; a number of periodicals and books; the organisation of concerts, exhibitions, interest groups, discussion clubs, and so on.

Some of these initiatives have already been taken, both receiving support from Charter 77 and giving it in return. Others are beginning to emerge or will emerge on the ground already laid, while still others appear outside Charter 77 itself, even though Charter signatories are the most prominent in the initiative.

The creation of such open parallel institutions, structures and initiatives, and their permanent confrontation with the state power is, in my opinion, the most important form of the class struggle in Czechoslovakia: it is the road with a perspective before it.

And it seems to me that it will also be followed through successfully in the USSR and, above all, Poland. Revolutionary secret societies belong to the 19th century.

It is on the road of these parallel forms of social life that an ever-growing number of people, especially young people, will undergo politicisation, and that a differentiated political opposition will thereby become progressively stronger.

This is a road that helps us to overcome the relative isolation into which the state power seeks to drive us. Despite everything, their goal of turning Charter 77 into a ghetto is a complete wash-out.

At present I am working in the Committee to Defend the Unjustly Persecuted, which seeks to fulfil a partial task of Charter 77 by defending political prisoners and others who, in the committee's view, are being

subjected to persecution.

The main way of assisting our endeavours is the organisation of international solidarity — solidarity which must help **everyone** repressed for his or her opinions or activities, **irrespective** of political alignment.

Personally, I welcome such solidarity on the part of workers' and socialist organisations (parties, unions, student organisations), but also on the part of the governments of bourgeois states — whenever it is forced on them by their national public opinion, and whenever they are not thereby pursuing the interests of international capital.

Now, I have a specific request to make. Last week, the police took some Charter signatories to headquarters and beat them up; this happened on 19 May to Matras and Karlik, who were then bundled on a train heading for their town of residence, Chotěboř.

Others were picked up off the street and taken to a place where a group of men set upon them, tied them up, and drove them blindfolded at night to a forest some 40-50 kms from Prague. There they were eventually beaten up and left to their fate: Ivan Medek on 16 May, and Bohumil Dolezal on 22 May.

PROTEST!

So far no one has been killed, but this may happen in the near future. Through such terrorist actions they wish to sow fear and panic in our midst.

'We ask for your help! Make the world know of these cases, which will be reported in detail in our statements.'

Protest with every means at your disposal! Only thus can you help us, only thus will the state power hold back from open terror.

I have now come to what you can do for us, who are fighting for human rights in the countries of Eastern Europe. Most important is that the greatest possible number of workers in your country should obtain true information.

Information about **concrete** cases, about the real situation. In that way, not only can people make a commitment — working in their neighbourhood, trade union or other organisation, but they can also develop ideas about how they should not proceed in the future.

The idea, for example, that socialism is not a bureaucratic dictatorship, or that Stalinism is not a necessary detour through which society must pass on the road from capitalism to socialism.

Our great hope, in any case, is for a socialist revolution in the West.



INTERNATIONAL

Shah gives opponents a lesson in democracy

Iran's 'Islamic Marxists' are at it again. And the Shah's dictatorship is looking shakier than at any time in the last eight months of anti-regime demonstrations. CHRIS O'BRIEN reports.

Despite the imposition of martial law in a number of major towns, all the indications are of a continued escalation of the protests.

The official figures of seven dead — as of the weekend — are generally believed to be an underestimate.

The government has denounced the demonstrators as 'saboteurs whose aim was to hinder the Shah's efforts to liberalise political life'.

These 'efforts' include presiding over the country with the largest number of political prisoners in the world.

The Shah has announced his intention of holding elections next summer, as part of his

strategy for handing power over to his young son.

The problem at the moment is that all the institutions of the dictatorship are so closely tailored to one man that it is unlikely that they would outlast him.

The idea of elections is that they would establish some rather more permanent constitutional structure — but not a democratic one, as the events of the last week have shown.

The Shah faces the perennial problem of the liberalising autocrat: there will always be some naive souls who take you at your word.

Over the past few months

there has been a spiral of anti-Shah protests, each one brutally repressed by police and plainclothed thugs. Then, 40 days later, at the end of the Moslem period of mourning, will come another protest.

These are gradually undermining the Shah's propaganda offensive abroad.

FEAR

With a combination of a few shining skyscrapers and a record of super-exploitation, the Iranian regime has tried to build a reputation as a modernising and civilised oil state. Hence the label 'Islamic Marxist' for the opponents of the regime.

On the one hand is the implication that these are the forces of backward and benighted religion. On the other, the Shah is trying to persuade a deeply religious population that they are being manipulated from Moscow.

In fact all this reveals is the Shah's fear of the twin forces capable of mobilising the population.

Although the pro-Moscow Communist Party counts for little, the regime is aware of the social convulsions created by rapid and uneven industrialisation.

At the same time the Mosque is a massively powerful political institution in Iran, with a strong hold on the allegiance of the peasantry.

All in all, the Shah cannot be very confident about his future — which goes a long way to explaining why the period of industrialisation has also been one of phenomenal military spending.

Britain has been the Shah's main military quartermaster. Already the Iranian armed forces have twice as many Chieftain tanks as the British army and the recent £750m arms deal between the two countries will make sure that they get plenty more.

This is happily accepted by the Shah's apologists on Fleet Street, who parrot his claims that next year's election will be '100 per cent free'.

But then plenty of his opponents are 100 per cent dead.

★ 25 years ago the CIA organised a coup to remove the radical nationalist Mossadegh from power and re-install the Shah. March in commemoration this Saturday, 19 August, Assemble Lincoln's Inn Fields, London at 1pm [nearest tube Holborn]. March to the Iranian Embassy via Oxford Street.



Heavy days in Salisbury

Editor: This Zimbabwe coverage is getting dead boring. Can't you do something about it?

Foreign Hack: It's because I need a holiday, boss. I'm right out of bright ideas. Hold on a minute. Why not reprint that brilliantly perceptive piece of Marxist analysis from the latest 'Temporary Hoarding'?

Ed: Why not indeed?

FH: Over to you, Andy Xerox and Gristly Peach.

Those who thought you could get something without a fight are looking even stupider.

Out in the bush the war is hotting up and the Patriotic Front is winning. It's a marauding war almost like the end of the American Civil War with irregular teams stalking each other out.

The Rhodesian Security are vicious bastards. When they go 'in hot pursuit' they just charge over the nearest border and shoot every black in sight till their supplies run out.

They also executed a group of black civilians in the tribal trust land in June. Of course the Daily Express virtually ignored it, because the victims weren't white.

Smithie's forces are known to have black 'boys' loyal to the whites who are sent out to do 'dirty tricks'. That oh-so-well organised missionary massacre might well be down to Smithie's boys.

Wonder how the world's press got out to the 'remote mission farm' so fast? They were all given an expenses paid lift by the Rhodesian Air Force.

Now the Patriotic ain't as sussed as the Viet Cong...ye.

But they've only got to kill two whites a week and they will have taken control of most of the countryside within a couple of years.

They got the numbers.

Popes against the nazis?

THE only sad thing about the death of the Pope is that he will be replaced by another one, writes RICHARD CARVER.

In particular, women all over the world will be rejoicing at the demise of the senile old celibate who decreed that they should continue to be denied contraception and abortion.

Given all the misery he has caused, the world is well rid of

Giovanni Battista Montini. But contempt for the rights of women is common to all popes.

This one had a particularly cynical career, which was in sharp contrast to the popular image of a saintly old gentleman with big ears.

From 1924 to 1954 — more than half his career — Montini worked for the Secretariat of State in the Vatican, the department which deals with foreign diplomacy.

Pius XII, the pope at that time, maintained relations with the Nazi regime in Germany. Hitler returned the compliment by easing off his persecution of German Catholics.

Montini faithfully applied Pius' diplomatic line.

At the end of the war he was in charge of the department which included the Vatican's refugee bureau, which ran a network to provide Nazi refugees with papers. This allowed them to find legal sanctuary in South America.

It is estimated that more than 5000 Gestapo and SS officers escaped by this means. Among them were Adolf Eichmann, Klaus Barbie and Walter Ruff, now an adviser to the Chilean secret police.

Montini was obviously considered something of an expert at this sort of thing; since it was also he who was charged with relations with the remnants of the Italian fascist regime in the last days before the Liberation.

They're saying that Paul VI has no obvious successor. With a record like that it's hardly surprising!

Why Khrushchev wouldn't clear Bukharin

MAURICE THOREZ, long-time leader of the French Communist Party, played an important part in preventing the rehabilitation of Bolshevik leader Nikolai Bukharin, executed by Stalin after the Moscow Trials of the 1930s.

The revelation is contained in a letter from Soviet dissident Zhores Medvedev to Ken Coates, author of a new book on Bukharin.

Medvedev claims that in 1968 former Soviet leader Khrushchev visited the theatre to see a play about the events of 1918. Afterwards he met the play's author, M. Shatrov.

Khrushchev enjoyed the play, but asked why neither Kamenev nor Bukharin were represented as being at the

Central Committee meeting. Shatrov pointed out that they were not rehabilitated.

Khrushchev then explained that their rehabilitation had been considered.

'Maurice Thorez, however, urgently flew to Moscow and urged Khrushchev to postpone the rehabilitation of Bukharin, Rykov, Zinoviev and others.'

'After the XXth Congress and the Hungarian events we lost almost half our Party', said Thorez. 'If you were formally to rehabilitate these who have been tried in the open trials, we could lose the rest... You can rehabilitate them later, not all at the same time, but one after another, slowly.'

*The Case of Nikolai Bukharin (Spokesman £1.25)



Montini in 1951

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE EVENTS

NORTH WEST

WARRINGTON Socialist Challenge group meets regularly. Ring Manchester Socialist Challenge office for details: 061-238 7552.

GREATER MANCHESTER Socialist Challenge. School students who support the paper and would like to get involved in anti-fascist activity, please contact Chris (1273 5847, day) or Steve (1226 4287, evening) or write to Manchester SC Centre, 14 Piccadilly.

PRESTON Socialist Challenge public meeting: No Phase 4, for 36 hours now — speaker Pat Hickey (British Leyland, Haver Southall). Wednesday 30 August, 7.45pm at Windsor Castle pub.

PRESTON Socialist Challenge supporters can be contacted by ringing Preston 54515.

LIVERPOOL Speaks Socialist Challenge Group meets every Wednesday at Nosh's A-k pub, Speke, 8pm.

SOUTH MANCHESTER Socialist Challenge group meets every other Thursday at the Airedale Inn off Wilmslow Rd. Help sell Socialist Challenge between 11.30am and 1pm at Moss Side shopping centre or Longsight Market, Dickenson Rd.

SALFORD Socialist Challenge supporters can be contacted at the

Manchester Socialist Challenge office, Tel 061-238 2352 or, by writing to Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre, c/o 14 Piccadilly, Manchester with a view to forming a Socialist Challenge group.

LEIGH Socialist Challenge group will be holding regular meetings shortly. For details ring Roy on Altherton 88 2830.

NORTH EAST

NEWCASTLE Socialist Challenge local supporters are active. If you want to join them, phone Pat on (0532) 28057.

DURHAM Socialist Challenge Supporters Group. For details contact Dave Brown, 2 Plover Cottages, Low Broughton, Durham.

MIDDLESBROUGH Socialist Challenge sales on Saturdays outside entrance to Cleveland Centre (opp. Woolworths), 11am to 1pm. Socialist Challenge is also available from Harbours Newsagents in Linthorpe Road.

LONDON

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

TOWER HAMLETS Socialist Challenge supporters sell the paper every

Sunday in Brick Lane. Meet at the Nazari Restaurant at 10.30am.

HACKNEY Socialist Challenge supporters sell the paper regularly at Dalton Junction, Fridays (4.30-6pm) and Saturdays, Stamford Hill (11am).

SOUTH WEST LONDON Socialist Challenge supporters group meets alternate Wednesdays at 7.30pm in St Anne's Community Centre, Vaux St (Clapham Common tube). 16 August: 'Czechoslovakia — 10 years on', with Oliver Morrison.

GREENWICH/LEWISHAM Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly — details from Ray, 658 1187. Socialist Challenge can be bought on the community groups stall in Deptford market.

NEWHAM Socialist Challenge Forums occur regularly. Details from PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

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

LONDON CPSA Socialist Challenge readers. We are establishing a CPSA supporters group to work in the union and Broad Left. If you are sympathetic to Socialist Challenge's views, write to London SC organisers, c/o PO Box 94, London N1 2XP.

TOWER HAMLETS Socialist Challenge group meets fortnightly. Next

meeting: Richmond, O'Neill FMG Youth Organiser on 'Youth in Revolt', Tues. 22 August, 7.30pm, at Oxford House (Derbyshire St, E1). All Socialist Challenge supporters welcome.

CAMDEN Socialist Challenge supporters sell papers every Saturday at Ipswich St market in Camden Town from 11am-3pm. Join us every Saturday 12-3 on the Gamers' picket at the Oxford Circus branch.

HELP SOCIALIST CHALLENGE Greenwich and Lewisham supporters are organising a jumble sale. If you have any jumble to be collected ring Jo on 328 9571 or drop it into the paper's office at 325/9 Upper St.

YORKSHIRE

HULL Socialist Challenge supporters need lots of jumble for a sale soon. We can arrange collection. Offers of jumble to Annette 443243. Have a clear-out and help build the paper!

Huddersfield Socialist Challenge Group meets next on Thursday 3 August, 8pm at Friendly 8 Trades Club, Northumberland St (opp. station). Discussion on 'Youth and Unemployment'.

Huddersfield Socialist Challenge sales regularly Saturdays 11am-1pm

in the Piazza

YORK Socialist Challenge on sale at the York Community Bookshop, 79 Walmgate or from sellers on Thursdays (12.30-1.45) at York University, Vanbrugh College, Saturdays (11.30-3.30) at Cony Street.

YORK Socialist Challenge group produces a regular local news bulletin. Any enquiries about the group or the bulletin to SC, c/o 43, Grosvenor Terrace, York.

MIDLANDS

For details of activities of local supporters throughout the Midlands contact the Socialist Challenge Centre, 76b Digbeth High Street, Birmingham (021 643 9229).

SOUTH WEST

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

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

SOUTH EAST

COLCHESTER Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly. For details phone Steve on Wivenhoe 2929.

BRIGHTON Socialist Challenge sales regularly on Saturdays at the Open Market, London Road, from 11am-1pm.

SCOTLAND

For information about the paper or its supporters' activities throughout Scotland please contact Socialist Challenge Books, 64 Queen St, Glasgow. Open Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday afternoons. (021 7481). Wide range of Fourth International publications.

EDINBURGH Socialist Challenge supporters group meets regularly. Phone George at 031-346 0656 for details.

DUNDEE Information about Socialist Challenge activities from 84 Queen St, Glasgow. Join in SC sales outside Books (corner of Reform St) each Saturday, 11am-3pm.

WALES

CARDIFF Socialist Challenge Forum. Workers control and workers participation. Friday 11 August, 7.30pm, at the Four Elms pub, Clifton St (off Newport Road).

COMMENT

CP and racism

COLIN TALBOT's attack on the Communist Party's anti-racist work (3 August) makes a few snide comments on Gideon Ben-Tovim's recent *Marxism Today* article which in no way even connect with, let alone refute, comrade Ben-Tovim's argument.

That argument, put very briefly, is that racism exists at three quite distinct levels within British society — ideologically, in racist ideas widespread amongst the white population, institutionally in the education system, the police force, the immigration laws, etc., and organisationally in racist parties such as the National Front.

None of these forms of racism emanates purely and simply from the needs of capitalism (and may be irrelevant or even antagonistic to those needs); therefore the anti-racist struggle cannot be collapsed into the general class struggle, but requires a developed strategy to attack racism at all three levels.

Talbot throws up his hands in horror at the idea of the 'broad democratic alliance' against racism, simply because this alliance will involve a few 'progressive Tories'. Should we then refuse to allow anti-racist Tories into our meetings, or on our pickets or demonstrations? Shall we stick up notices declaring 'Socialists only!'?

To say that this concept of a broad alliance leads the CP to drop any policy aimed at mass mobilisation to defeat fascism is evident nonsense. After a lamentable period of equivocation (shared by the IMG),

the CP has committed itself to the Anti-Nazi League. Party and YCL members have been present in the defence of Brick Lane, and our comrades are working on anti-racist committees and local ANL branches throughout the country.

Talbot also attacks the CP for wanting to strengthen the Race Relations Act, and for calling on the Government to ban NF marches.

This is not a reliance on the bourgeois state; it's simply a recognition of the fact that, short of the socialist revolution, the only way in which the gains of the anti-racist movement are going to remain gains is if they are enshrined in legislation.

The choice is brutally obvious: either you make relevant and realisable demands on the bourgeois state, or you ignore that state. And if you do the latter, no-one outside the various Trotskyist sects will take you very seriously.

The greatest single merit of the Communist Party is that it has abandoned the with-one-mighty-leap-he-was-free model of the transition to socialism, and is prepared to seek more realistic avenues of advance, ones which bear more relation to the experiences and aspirations of working people than Talbot's arid sloganising.

PAUL FAUVET (West London)

Brick Lane

GEOFF BELL's account of Brick Lane (27 July) leaves a lot to be desired, containing, as it does, one straightforward untruth. A corrective is called for.

The dispersal: if comrade Bell had tried to research a bit further, he

would have found that a stewards' meeting of white and Bengali anti-fascists decided to fool the massive police presence by publicly announcing a 'stay put' message (spoken by Holborrow!) whilst privately (by word of mouth) organising into squads of six plus to filter through the back streets.

This was to ensure that, if the rumoured march by the NF took place, at least it would be heckled by regrouping anti-fascists and thus demonstrate against such a morale-boosting, police-protected strut. Our back street guides were largely Bengali; the market was saturated by police (even though an incognito presence was maintained there).

As it turned out, the NF national mobilisation was so feeble as to make a march derisory. It therefore did not achieve its primary objective — a morale-boosting mass recapture of Brick Lane.

Sure, it was a police victory, but not entirely — it was a nice sight to see 2-300 coppers plus three big brass standing like lemons wondering (out loud) where the crowd they were 'guarding' was vanishing to? What it was not an NF victory — they were humiliated by an even more pitiful turn-out than usual.

TIM NICHOLLS [Central London Students SWP]

Rock against Internment

FIRST CAME the Right to Work Campaign, then we had Rock Against

Racism, and now we have the Anti-Nazi League. All were and still are much needed campaigns, but I can't help wondering if they were and are very convenient substitutes for what our main concern of action should be.

Now, on the seventh anniversary of the rebirth of internment in Ireland, I still have not seen any right to self-determination marches going round the country, I still have not seen any rock against internment concerts, I still have not seen any anti-imperialist marches and concerts.

Why has it always got to be left to the same few people to do or say anything about what is happening in Ireland? When will we see the people of the Right to Work Campaign, Rock Against Racism, and the Anti-Nazi League stand up for the people of Ireland and demand political status for Irish POWs, troops out of Ireland now, and self-determination for the Irish people?

Or are we all going to wait another seven years and hope the problem goes away?

DAVE BISIO (Stirling)

WSL - put politics first

FOR A paper whose avowed aim is to combat the sectarian traditions of the British left, you do occasionally produce some spectacular examples of sectarian irresponsibility. In the item 'Front Piece' in 'News from Nowhere' (27 July) you set up a

classical amalgam between the comrades of the Workers Socialist League, the degenerate 'Workers Revolutionary Party' — and the National Front.

You equate the opposition to ANL affiliation of the NF (for obvious reasons) with that of the WRP, who for any verbal fireworks they may have produced have not lifted a finger in fighting fascism: and with that of the WSL comrades.

These comrades' political criticisms of the ANL lead them (wrongly, as we see it) to oppose fighting within the ANL for correct policies. Nevertheless, Socialist Press supporters did not oppose ANL affiliation in Oxford Labour Party GMC, and the WSL have participated in and built for every major anti-fascist mobilisation.

It should be obvious that revolutionists will on occasion vote the same way as fascists in trade union meetings. For or against the EEC is one example.

And suppose a motion was put to a trade union conference to expel 'fascists, Communists and Trotskyists' from the union and fascists were present — which way would Socialist Challenge urge delegates to vote? With the fascists! They might even applaud our comrades' speeches.

Socialist Challenge has said that it doesn't think that the ANL is a Popular Front. But it hasn't bothered to take up the arguments of the comrades opposed to affiliation. Put politics first, comrades, and withdraw this slander on the comrades of the WSL.

JON APPLETON and 17 other Socialist Challenge supporters and ANL members (Oxford)

UNDER REVIEW

Who's holding the baby?

Don't change the subject

'A PHOTOGRAPH, while recording what has been seen, always and by its nature refers to what is not seen. It isolates, preserves and presents a moment taken from a continuum' — John Berger.

ANNIE JANOWITZ reviews 'Who's Holding the Baby?' an exhibition on women and childcare.

The Hackney Flashers' exhibition explores this question of a continuum in a variety of ways, and by the juxtaposition of their photographs with adverts, and printed texts, raises questions as to the relationship between political strategy and the form of agitprop.

If you look at the two photos placed side by side here (as they were in the exhibition when it was on display at Centerprise in East London), you can imagine two very different sorts of 'continuum'.

HISTORY

Look first at the photo on the left — the moment of the image seems to be an arbitrary stop in a continuing struggle to overcome insufficient space, lack of adequate nursery facilities, and loneliness.

The photograph's intention is to place the viewer within a

history of oppressive conditions.

In the photo on the right, however — the advert — the 'continuum' into which the image might be inserted really has no movement at all.

Rather it refers to, on the one hand, a host of other advertisements, all equally static in time, and on the other, a seemingly endless set of repetitions of that moment before the biscuits will emerge from the oven.

In other words, while the photograph on the left invites the viewer into history, the advert suggests that there is no history beyond the limits of the paper on which the image has been printed.

The effect of the juxtaposition of the two photos is to produce a clash of continuums in the viewer, and the result is a sharper appreciation of the gap between life as it is lived and as it is represented through the



bourgeois media than any single vision of each photo might elicit.

The effect of the technique of juxtaposition is not only to invite the viewer to experience a sense of continuum, but also to force the viewer to make political judgements along possible continuums.

If the adverts act as one set of comparative boundaries to the photos, the bits of written text which accompany the pictures create a very different kind of limit.

A picture may say a thousand words, but a combination of the two can set boundaries for the kind of words the photo

may suggest.

The written texts make the intentions of the photos specific, and it is at this point that what seemed to me to be problems with the exhibition begin to emerge.

For the texts which comment on the photos suggest an answer to the exhibit's question of 'Who's Holding the Baby?' which forecloses the possibility of a revolutionary answer or strategy.

The exhibition is arranged in what you might call a storyline, or plot, taking the viewer from a vision of the oppressive conditions under which mothers without proper nur-

series facilities for their children live, conditions which are oppressive not only materially but emotionally, into a more general analysis and exposition of lack of government funding.

Again, an important contrast is graphically explored between nursery funding during the war and the cuts of today's Labour Government.

The exhibition then moves its analysis into a report of the struggle to establish the Market nursery in Hackney, where parents created a community-controlled nursery through council grants.

This struggle, though clearly

important, is rendered in the accompanying texts in a manner which suggests that the way to deal with cuts is to find an alternative to full State financing.

Because the answer suggested is simply 'more Market nurseries', the exhibit is forced to quickly degenerate into a premature closing — shifting the terrain of analysis away from a fight against the cuts into a look at the ways in which advertising, toy, and book industries reinforce sexist attitudes in society.

While the exhibit certainly opens up areas of technique for making agitpropaganda more effective, it seems unable to carry those areas to their political end, and seems to cover up its own tracks by changing the subject at a crucial juncture.

'Who's Holding the Baby?' is available for hire from: Hackney Flashers Collective, c/o 152 Upper Street, London N1. Tel 01-226 0367.

It will be on display at Holborn library, Theobalds Rd, WC1, from 4-20 September.

WHAT'S LEFT

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

TOWER HAMLETS Socialist Unity is holding a 'media jumble sale' (books, tapes, records, posters, etc.) in the autumn. Bring anything suitable to The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper Street, N1, or phone 247 2717 for arrangement to collect.

NATIONAL March and Rally to mark International Anti-Apartheid Year. Assemble 1.30pm, Speakers Corner, Hyde Park, London. Sat 21 Oct. Information and publicity from Anti-Apartheid Movement, 89 Charlotte St, London W1. Tel: 01-580 5311.

THE HOMELESS Action and Accommodation collectives want an office worker. The position requires a campaigning interest in women's rights especially in the areas of housing and mental health. The applicant will need a basic knowledge of accounting (to trial balance), PAYE, and the ability to budget and project budgets. A working knowledge of mental hospitals, hostels or day centres is essential. For job description apply to Homeless Action and Accommodation, 2nd Floor, 357 The Strand, WC2. Tel 01-240 1401/2. Closing date for applications 1 September.

ARE YOU a Socialist Challenge supporter in London who is reliable, committed, and maybe short of cash? The paper needs a comrade to work every Tuesday evening starting at the end of August. The only skill required is reliability, but own transport or ability to drive an advantage. Pay £5 if needed. If you have a free evening and want to help the paper, please apply to Dodie Wappler on 01-359 0371.

HELP Socialist Challenge. Greenwich Lewisham supporters are organising a jumble sale! If you have any jumble to be collected ring Jo on 359 8371 or drop it into the paper's offices at 328/9 Upper St.

PICKET GARNERS: Main pickets every day, noon to 3pm and 5.30 to 11 pm at 399 Oxford St., London W1 (opp. Selfridges); 243 Oxford St. (Oxford Circus); 40-41 Haymarket; 56 Whitechapel St. (Leicester Sq.). Mass picket every Saturday at noon, 399 Oxford St. Donations urgently needed as strike pay is only £6. All donations to Gamers Strike Fund, c/o TGWU, Rm 24, 12-13 Henrietta St., London WC2. 01-2401056.

PALESTINE at the Edinburgh Festival. Visit the Exhibition on Palestine at Societies Centre, 21 Hill Place, Edinburgh (11am - 4pm) from 21 Aug to 1 Sept. Entry free. Organised by Arab Students Union (Edinburgh) and British Anti-Zionist Organisation (BAZO).

INTERVENTION No 2 out now! 'Revolutionary politics as a hobby' — Jim Masters asks the unmentionables of the left! An essay on the irrational in politics — the left as a subculture. Copies 62p (inc p&p) from Intervention, 539 Battersea Park Rd, London SW11.

'CAPITAL' fortnightly reading group just started in Hackney. Next meeting 20 Aug. Details Sue 01-245 6866.

REVOLUTIONARY Communist Pamphlet 'Under a National Flag: Fascism, Racism and the Labour Movement' by Frank Richards. This second edition of the pamphlet which sold out in two months contains a new afterword. 30p plus 15p p&p. Cheques and POs payable to RCT Association. Write to BM RCT(4), London WC1V 8XX.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION badges, red on white available from J Wilson, 50C Badger, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Cost: 15p each plus 7p p&p, or 11p each for orders of 10 or more.

IRELAND

Message from Belfast

'Dear Brits, wish you weren't here'

FOUR MEMBERS of the United Troops Out Movement and a member of the Poster Collective are now touring the North of Ireland with the film 'Home Soldier Home'.

LIZ CURTIS, one of the UTOM members, reports from Belfast on a week that saw the seventh anniversary of internment.

Great bonfires burned all over Belfast on the night of 8/9 August, the anniversary of internment. The kids had been collecting wood for weeks. They organised into what one woman described as 'wee patrols' to guard the wood from the British Army — or, as they're known throughout the

North of Ireland, 'the Brits'. On the night of the anniversary, tyres are added to make the fires burn longer. Buses are gutted on key road junctions.

The Brits are out in force; armoured cars, patrols and squads in riot gear. The next night, 11-year-old Martin Tully

loses an eye after being hit by a plastic bullet.

In the streets of Short Strand where we are staying, RUC land rovers go persistently around and around. As they near the bonfires they are met with a hail of bottles.

On the street corner, women sing Provie songs and shake their fists at the Royal Ulster Constabulary barracks. In the middle of the night the RUC snatches a 12 year old into custody.

BINLIDS

There are some 23 arrests throughout the city. At 4am the binlid banging begins.

This year the internment day protests are dedicated to the prisoners demanding political status in the H block of Long Kesh and Armagh women's prison.

Before the bonfires are lit a massive march of some 8,000 people winds through West Belfast. Old, young, even babies in pushchairs are there.

BANNER

The pace of the march is set by bands from different areas. Thirty feet above the road flies a huge banner, 'Stonemason will not break them'.

The prisoners in Long Kesh are, say their relatives, in such poor condition that many of them are unrecognisable.

DEFORMED

Men previously 13 stone are reduced to eight stone, their ankles deformed through the denial of exercise, their skin white and erupting with rashes, their eyes failing.

Yet their morale is high, and they are somehow managing to conduct political debates on such subjects as the comparative politics of socialist countries.

We visited a Republican News worker who is now in Crumlin Road jail, Belfast.

CUBICLES

Visitors have to be let through a succession of huge iron gates to reach the cubicles where the visits are taken. Even the silver paper from cigarette packets is removed before you can go through.

The remand prisoners are interned under another name. They could be in jail for 18 months — one remand prisoner has been in for 22 months — without trial.

But spirits are high in the 'Crum'. Although Republican



A THOUSAND people marched in London on Sunday to mark the 7th anniversary of the introduction of internment.

literature is forbidden, political discussion continues.

As in Long Kesh, letters are smuggled out in minute handwriting on precious scraps of paper. One showed two clasped hands with one hand inscribed 'Irish Resistance' and the other 'English Support Groups'.

Going night after night to packed social clubs in Republican areas to show the film proved to us that the struggle is far from over. In these clubs we were enthusiastically welcomed.

Everyone stressed that the light goes on until the last British soldier leaves Irish soil.

Glasgow demo

ON SATURDAY 19 August a march in support of Irish political prisoners will take place in Glasgow. The march has been called by the Glasgow-Irish Committee and is being built by the Irish Defence League. Speakers from prisoners organisations have been invited for a rally afterwards.

There is always a danger in mounting an Irish march in Glasgow. Orange sectarianism is strong in the city — just how

strong was demonstrated last autumn when an Irish bar was bombed.

On top of this the National Front have been putting up anti-Republican stickers in the centre of town.

We believe that militants should not be intimidated by the sectarian thugs. The best answer to them is to have the largest possible numbers out on the streets demanding POW status for the prisoners and Britain Out.

HOME NEWS

TU conference on abortion

ONLY THE trade union movement can organise the sort of mass support needed to win abortion rights for women.

That's why the National Abortion Campaign and the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign have called a trade union conference as a major step towards involving the unions in the battle for a woman's right to choose, writes KATE HOLMAN

The one-day conference, to be held on 25 November at Caxton Hall, in London, aims to get the TUC and Women's TUC policies on abortion implemented. This will include organising the defence of the 1967 Abortion Act, and building local campaigns for better abortion facilities.

Since the Abortion Act was passed, the slender rights

conceded to women have been threatened both by changes in the law and health service cuts.

The TUC, as well as many unions at national and branch level, have passed resolutions supporting free abortion on demand and opposing legal restrictions. But often the support has stopped there.

At this year's Women's TUC conference, a resolution carried overwhelmingly called for the TUC to organise a national demonstration against any Bill seeking to restrict abortion. It also urged unions to campaign for better NHS abortion facilities and contraceptive advice.

This is the strongest resolution yet to the TUC, calling as it does for an active show of support by the unions for abortion rights.

Abortion directly affects the working lives of women who now make up 30 per cent of trade unionists and 40 per cent of the labour force.

Women are the lowest paid

section of workers and have little or no voice in the trade union movement. How can they play a full role in the trade unions or organise their working lives, when they have no control over the number of children they have or how they are looked after?

Society should provide abortion, contraception, and childcare, so that women can make a choice about when to have children or whether to work. For women, these are basic rights.

In a time of economic crisis like the present women suffer most. Their choice becomes negligible because the existing meagre services are cut back still further.

Since the 1967 Act was passed, three anti-abortion MPs have introduced unsuccessful Private Members Bills aimed at restricting it. It is clear that the next session of Parliament — especially if the Tories are elected — is likely to see an even more ferocious attack on the Abortion Act.

However, the fanatical anti-abortionists — too impatient to wait till then — have turned to the courts to attack women's rights.

In Leamington Spa, a 13 year old was prosecuted for taking laxative pills to bring on a late period. A Manchester con-

sultant was threatened with prosecution if he continued to perform early menstrual extraction (the simplest and safest form of abortion yet devised) without waiting to find out if women were pregnant.

And we had the infamous case of William Paton who, egged on by the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child, tried to get a High Court injunction to stop his wife Joan having an abortion.

The trade union conference on abortion needs the support

of all trade unionists who believe a woman should be free to choose when to have a child. Speakers will include Judith Hunt of AUEW (TASS), Mel Read, Pat Turner, Marie Patterson, former President of the TUC, and Alan Fisher, general secretary of the Public Employees union.

Your union branch, shop stewards committee or trades council can give support now by: sponsoring the conference and electing delegates; sending

a donation to the conference fund; care of NAC; inviting a NAC speaker to a meeting; contacting other local unions about the campaign. And trying to make sure the issue is raised at national level.

Delegate forms and further details from: National Abortion Campaign, 30 Camden Road, London NW1.

Copies of this article are available from NAC. Send a copy to the editor of your trade union journal, and ask the editor to publish it.



Save £1 till 1 September

15, 16 & 17 September. The dates to remember for the second **MARXIST SYMPOSIUM**

SPEAKERS AND TOPICS INCLUDE
Bourgeois Democracy and Socialist Revolution — Nicos Poulantzas, Norma Genas.

The English Bourgeois Revolution — Perry Anderson.

Class Analysis and Political Strategy — Robin Blackburn

Scottish Nationalism — Tom Nairn, Neil Williamson.

The Party and the Women's Movement — Sheila Rowbotham, CP, SWP, and IMG speakers invited.

Eurocommunism — Round Table discussion on Ernest Mandel's book 'From Stalinism to Eurocommunism'.



Venue: London, Goldsmiths College. Creche provided.
Cost: £4 for all three days if you pay before 1 September.
£5 for all three days if you pay after 1 September.
Any single session £1.

Make Cheques and Postal Orders out to 'Socialist Challenge'.
Fill in the form below and send to: Symposium, 328 Upper St., London, N.1.

Name

Address

Chrysler take-over

Bribery back-fires

THE CHRYSLER take-over by Peugeot-Citroen seems like something out of one of those marathon American TV series currently adorning our screens.

Unfortunately it is all too real. GEOFF BELL reports.

The signs were there way back in June. Remember the massive advertising campaign which showed Scottish footballers cheerfully jumping in and out of Chrysler cars?

Success would breed success, argued the advertising whizz kids; now has failure bred failure?

BANK

Not quite. Just as Scotland's soccer stars earned tens of thousands of pounds in sponsorship fees despite their humiliation on the football field, so Chrysler UK will be crying about the loss of their British interests all the way to the bank.

First, Chrysler have received £225 million from the French company, which isn't bad for a company which is supposed to be making a loss.

Second, they have been given 15 per cent of the shares in Peugeot-Citroen, which is now the largest motor company in Europe.

COUP

Most spectacular of all, Chrysler have pulled off a coup which has reduced the Labour Government to the laughing stock of international capitalism.

The story began in 1975 when Chrysler threatened to pull out of Britain altogether. Fearing the loss of jobs involved in such

a withdrawal — especially those in Scotland — the Government intervened.

In the end they gave Chrysler all they asked for, and the company has received £81 million in taxpayers' money since.

The one alternative not considered was the nationalisation of Chrysler.

In return for their £81 million Chrysler agreed not to 'take any step or permit any step to be taken which would have the effect that Chrysler Corporation would be the absolute owner of less than 80 per cent...of Chrysler'.

MESS

Needless to say, Chrysler kept the Labour Government in total darkness about their negotiations with the French company until these had been virtually completed.

The Government's entire 'industrial strategy' for the car industry is now in a sorry mess.

It was based on the good old Labour tradition of a 'mixed economy': one section of the industry — Leyland — would be nationalised, although run on capitalist lines, while another, American owned, would be bribed to stay.

The effects of the Peugeot/Chrysler deal doesn't only mean that the bribe given to the Americans has proved money ill-spent.



Avenger cars stockpiled at Ryton during the 1975 crisis.

The creation of the new car giant will put the long term stability of Leyland itself even more at risk because the latter will be severely stretched to keep up with such competition.

FIGHT

Of course the Labour Government could tell Chrysler that it won't sanction the deal. It could say that in return for Chrysler breaking the 1975

agreement the company will be taken over without a further penny being paid to the wheeler-dealers at Chrysler.

It could decide to merge its operations with those of Leyland and ask the workers to draw up a plan for the industry which would safeguard jobs and living standards.

The Labour Government could do that. But it won't. And that's all the more reason why we should fight for it now.

Community project under attack

THE TORIES in charge of Nottinghamshire County Council have taken to heart the Labour Government's policy of axing social spending, reports DAVE ROWLEY.

The Tories have withdrawn £42,000 of urban aid funds from the Nottingham Areas Project (NAP), an organisation which has developed a unique form of community involvement.

The project's policy, staff, and expenditure are controlled by representatives from many of the tenants and community groups which it assists — assistance which includes the provision of a resource centre where leaflets, posters, and a community paper are produced.

What the Tories do not like is that NAP and its 60 or so affiliated groups have undertaken a series of campaigns exposing the neglect of inner city areas.

Tory leader Peter Wright makes no bones about the attack on NAP. 'We think that some voluntary bodies are suspect', he says. 'Rather more politically than community orientated.'

The project is fighting back by mobilising support among the community groups and appealing to the labour movement. Messages and donations to: Save NAP, 118 Mansfield Road, Nottingham.

Striking for more jobs

SEVENTY POLICE did their best to smash a strike of local council workers in Basingstoke on 9 August, reports PETE DRANSFIELD.

The cops started to clear a picket line of the council workers at Wade Road depot to allow dustcarts to pass through it. But as soon as the dustcart

drivers saw what was happening, they stopped their vehicles, got out of them, and joined the strike!

The strike began on 7 August after the local Tory Council had attempted to bring in outside contract building labour to do repairs normally undertaken by the direct labour force.

Building maintenance workers were given no reassurance from the Council that the contract labour would be withdrawn. So they came out on strike, and now 300 manual workers from all departments are out.

'We want to give jobs to people who are now unemployed', says a statement from the strikers. 'More workers are needed and have been needed for years.'

SC Youth Group formed

A Socialist Challenge Youth Group was set up in Manchester on 29 July, GRAHAM HINDLE reports.

Discussions were held on the problems young people face in society and the need for a socialist answer to the crisis. The main aim of the group is to form a united revolutionary youth opposition to the present crisis.

The first step we are taking to do this is to organise a public debate on the strategy for fighting youth unemployment.

At present there exist three bodies: the Right to Work Committee, the Campaign Against Youth Unemployment, and the Youth Campaign against Unemployment.

We believe the only way an effective fight can be launched is by uniting these three groups into a common youth unemployment campaign.

The debate will be at UMIST union at 7.30pm on Wednesday 16 August.

The group can be contacted through the Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre, 14 Piccadilly, Manchester. Tel: 061-236 2352.

If you thought Chrysler was bad...

AT 6am in July 1972 I stood nervously by the exit of a Paris tube station, writes RICHARD KIRKWOOD. With 30 others I was guarding the three comrades handing out Lutte Ouvriere's factory bulletin for Citroen's Paris works.

We were right to be nervous. A hundred yards away the approach to the factory gate was watched by a dozen rather large men. No worker would

take a leaflet there.

More of these characters drove slowly past us every few minutes.

We had other reasons too.

Facts about Peugeot

A RECENT comparison between the top eight nationalised and private companies in France revealed the following information about Peugeot-Citroen.

*Of all those in the survey, Peugeot demands the longest working week — 42½ hours.

It also pays the lowest minimum monthly wage

*Its resistance to unions is such that only 10 per cent of its

workers are unionised.

*Peugeot is the least generous of all the 16 companies surveyed when it comes to sickness payment.

*It has the second worst accident record.

*On opportunity for women — at least in the management field — Peugeot is again at the bottom of the ladder. Only 1.9 per cent of management are women.

Over the weekend a group of immigrant families — some of them Citroen workers — had held a dance in the old workshops where they were squatting.

At 11pm they were invaded by a gang of 50 men armed with pick-axe handles and iron bars. When they were driven off they took with them two young women who were then raped.

Two of the gang were grabbed. They turned out to be a Citroen worker and his foreman. Both were members of the pro-boss CFT (French Confederation of Labour) in Citroen.

Citroen has always been a stronghold of the CFT. In the new Citroen factory at Aulnay-sous-Bois there has never been a normal election for the works council.

Time after time the biggest French union, the CGT, has had the election annulled for CFT malpractices. At the 1977 election the CFT replied by a terror campaign on the re-run and only 30 out of 5,000 even voted.

In most Citroen shops the foremen are CFT members. For the immigrant workers who make up much of the labour force, joining the CFT is the

price they pay for avoiding the sack and the long journey home.

The merger of Citroen with Peugeot joined two firms of basically similar traditions.

Peugeot's factories in Eastern France are also heavily dependent on migrant workers. There too the CFT is strong and the real unions weak.

Now they are joining hands with Chrysler, whose French operation, formerly called Simca, vies with Citroen for the title of most thug-run factory in the Paris area.

The 'Simca independent union', forerunner of the CFT, was founded by a leading member of the Gaullist party's 'heavy squad' with the aid of Italian 'foremen' drawn from ex-members of Mussolini's guard.

Members of legitimate unions have been victimised, attacked and had their car brakes tampered with. Since Chrysler took over the thuggery has been less overt; but it still continues, and Chrysler France remains a CFT stronghold.

These are the people who are getting together to form Europe's biggest car firm. It will also be Europe's biggest scab and thug operation.

Socialist Challenge

THIS article appeared in the *Daily Mirror* (circulation 3.8 million) on Monday 14 August. It is a tremendous tribute to the continuing resistance of the Irish people to British rule.

Will the Communist Party's *Morning Star*, which has always refused to call for withdrawal, now follow suit?

ULSTER: **Mirror Comment** Bring home the troops

NINE years ago today — on August 14, 1969 — thousands of British troops were rushed to Northern Ireland to protect frightened Catholics from Protestant violence.

The troops are still there. Many of them permanently — in their graves.

It wasn't long before the streets turned to bullets and a state of official civil war had existed in Ulster ever since.

Yet when our General Election comes, Northern Ireland will not be an issue.

That is because no major party in Britain has any policy for Ulster other than to carry on without one.

But the *Daily Mirror* believes that there is a policy — and only one — which can be carried through to success.

Time

And that is for Britain to announce its unshakable intention to withdraw altogether from Northern Ireland. To give the people of the province the freedom to decide what their future is to be.

So far as Britain is concerned, the time has come to call it a day. That does not mean withdrawal overnight, which could be dangerous.

But the next British Government should declare that on a date five years from now Ulster will be given its independence and that British forces, finance and administration will depart.

Both Labour and Conservative



Governments — under Wilson, Heath and Callaghan — tried honestly and honourably to solve the Ulster problem.

They failed if inevitable, as every British Government has done for the past 200 years.

Now we must face the fact that we cannot go on as we are. Only the Irish can hope to find a solution. The time has come to give them the chance.

Withdrawal by Britain would be a cowardly act, some say. Do the military, it would be courageous.

It would not mean defeat by the gunmen, but it could lead to defeat of the gunmen. A government of Irishmen is more likely to achieve that than any British one.

The cost to Northern Ireland of the nine years of emergency has been terrible, as the *Mirror's* statistics below show.

And in the absence of a policy

there seems no end to it. Children who would have been British troops in 1969 are among those — on today.

It is not only people who are dying in Northern Ireland. Democracy is nearly dead, too.

The province of Ulster has — as in its own affairs than any British parish council has over its village.

The gunmen rule now, not the politicians.

Many people fear that a decision to quit Ulster would lead to a bloodbath. But what is 1,250 dead and 20,000 injured if not a bloodbath?

There **WOULD** be slaughter if Britain tried to impose unity upon the two parts of Ireland.

Task

But we cannot, liberty — or separation — is for the Irish alone to decide.

Our final task should be to help Northern Ireland create a stable government to succeed us. To that end the troops should be the last to withdraw.

But withdraw they must.

For more than three centuries Britain and Ireland have been united — but united in a history stained with blood, stained with violence and pitted with oppression.

The time has come for a new start. One that would allow the Irish people to rule themselves.

To decide whether to learn to live together — or continue to die together.

WE SHOULD LEAVE IT UP TO THEM.

Last week's issue

THE Socialist Challenge Editorial Board apologises to readers for the delay they suffered in receiving last week's paper. This was caused by legal complications concerning the material we carried on the Leyland slush fund.

We had to wait until the end of 'Barton Ryder letter' trial before we could distribute the paper. Otherwise we could have been liable to prosecution for contempt of court.

DENIED

At the end of Barton's trial Leyland issued a statement denying the existence of 'worldwide bribery' and adding that they had not broken any British law (as opposed to the laws of any other country?).

If Leyland were really so confident about their innocence, they would have no reason to object to the public enquiry which an editorial in the *Guardian* argued for following the Barton verdict.

But it is clear from the attitude they have adopted throughout the affair that

Leyland, the National Enterprise Board and the Government would all vigorously resist any such enquiry.

Although Socialist Challenge and then (following our story) the *Sunday Times* have named those who benefited from 'special commissions', and detailed the sums involved, Leyland and the Government continue to try to sweep everything under what is by now a rather bulging carpet.

Perhaps they still maintain that bribes are necessary. If that is the case, let them note this: at his trial Barton gave evidence of how Leyland had come to an agreement with another motor company to have a joint bribing exercise.

CHRYSLER

The company went unnamed at the trial, but the one Barton was referring to was Chrysler UK.

* If you didn't receive last week's issue send 20p to Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP and we will send it to you by return of post.

OUR FUND DRIVE

IT'S AMAZING how the pennies add up to pounds. A pleasant surprise of £21.66 greeted us when we opened the collection jar kept for Socialist Challenge in The Other Bookshop. This included a £10 cheque.

Unfortunately, however, not enough pounds arrived this week to keep us on schedule for our £2,500 target for this quarter's fund drive.

Apart from one welcome anonymous donation of £100, the rest of our weekly donations only came to £63.16. To reach the target we now need to get in £220 each week until the end of September.

We can't rely on big anonymous donations to do that. It will only come through the efforts of our supporters.

TARGET

One way to meet the target is by getting the paper better known so that new readers help out, not just the 'old faithfuls'. To that end, we hope to work out targets with supporters groups for a sales and subscription drive in the autumn.

Several Socialist Challenge groups — like York and Colchester — are printing regular short news bulletins to get the paper known and to inform militants of the local activities supported by the paper's readers.

A national bulletin to supplement the paper in

exchanging experiences about the efforts of supporters is long overdue. But this also requires resources!

One way readers can help meet the target is by selling tickets for our summer lottery. Books of tickets (for sale at £1 per book) are available and will be sent by return post.

Just make sure you return the sold tickets and money well in advance of the date of the draw, on 18 September.

Another way to help out is by filling out the bankers order form. If every reader of the paper gave only £1 regularly, we can assure you we would have no financial problems at all!

In fact, the time we now spend raising funds could be spent planning how to improve and expand the paper.

Another £17 worth of monthly bankers orders arrived this week. This brings the total from this source to £268 per month. But it's still quite a way to go towards the £450 target we've set.

For the cumulative total of £957.30, our thanks this week to:

Swansea supporter	£10.00
Collection jar	11.66
Harned	10.00
Earnais	4.00
Anonymous	1.00
Hebden Bridge reader	1.00
D. Mahood	10.00
Avery	5.00
Reading supporters	7.50
Anonymous	100.00
Total	£160.16

Take a chance on the Summer Lottery

TO BOOST the Socialist Challenge summer funds, we are raffling something no revolutionary can do without — a top quality transistor radio. The model is a Yacht

Boy (sic) 1100 made by Grundig.

Besides reception on four wave-bands, the radio has a special timer in case you forget to turn it off; a mains unit you can use on the continent; and a combined tuning/battery condition meter.

If you've already got a radio, the winner can decide to choose an optional first prize: a £50

book taken from The Other Bookshop. So order your tickets now at 10p each, six for 50p, or £1 for a book of 12 tickets.

And why not help out the paper by taking some to sell at work, in the pub, or to your neighbours? The draw will be on 18 September in the Socialist Challenge offices. The winning ticket will be announced in the

Summer sub - £2

ON 31 AUGUST, Socialist Challenge returns to 16 pages after our 12-page summer issues. So there is still time to

catch our bargain basement summer subscription offer.

If you live in Britain or Ireland you can obtain your favourite socialist newspaper for three months through the post — for the ridiculously low

price of £2.

If you calculate that this offer won't make us rich, you'd be right (although it helps with our cash flow). The offer ends on 31 August. So rush off the form now!

Domestic: 6 months, £5. 12 months, £10
Abroad: Per annum -- Airmail, £16.50. Surface, £10
Domestic special offer: Three months, £2

Name _____

Address _____

I enclose a donation for the Fighting Fund of _____

Cheques, POs and Money Orders should be made payable to 'Socialist Challenge'.
Complete and return to:
Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.