

New Songs

Easily
C

When I was a little girl I wished I was a boy,
I tagged along behind the gang and wore my corduroys. Everybody said I only
D7 G7
did it to annoy, But I was gonna be an engineer.
C D7 E7 F C
Momma told me, "Can't you be a lady? Your duty is to make me the
Dm G7 C
mother of a pearl. Wait until you're older, dear, and
E7 F7 C G7 C
maybe You'll be glad that you're a girl."

New Times

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Agitprop



PUBLICATIONS

Magazines/Journals

Pamphlets

SCOTTISH WOMENS' JOURNAL: "The journal will form an outlet for discussion on topics within the womens' movement in Scotland, and on issues concerned with women in general." An editorial collective was formed and ideas, comments and articles should be sent to: Cathie Thomson, Women's Centre, 57 Miller St., Glasgow C3.

WHOSE CHOICE? a pamphlet on abortion in Leeds produced by Leeds National Abortion Campaign, available from: 94 Royal Park Road, Leeds 7. Send 15p. + 10p. postage.

RENT ARREARS: a report by Bradford Housing Action Group, which contains 56 case histories showing that the treatment of tenants in arrears in Bradford is so far from that laid down in the Council's policy — itself far from perfect. Copies 55p. inc. postage from: Flat 10, 1 Oak Villas, Bradford 8.

New pamphlet: the true facts behind the anti-squatting stories which have recently appeared in the press. Also describes the Squatting Charter and Criminal Trespass proposals. Copies 10p + 7p. p&p, from Squatters Action Council Pamphlets, 13 Severus Rd., London SW11.

ALTERNATIVE LOCAL PAPER: A belated welcome to the hatching of Aylesbury's Ugly Duckling. Distributed free, it offers "multifarious views of the Vale of Aylesbury" with news, letters, information and events of the area. Contact address: Ugly Duckling, East Cottage, Springhill Farm, Dinton, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. Te.: Brill 507.

SOCIALIST VOICE: the first issue is now out! A journal of news and analysis, it contains articles on Milton Friedman, Weinstock and GEC and on the T & GWU election. Send 15p. to: Workers' League, 12 Edwin Rd., Birmingham B30 2RY.

THE CRISIS IN EDUCATION: a new Big Flame pamphlet discusses the roots of the crisis, the effects of the crisis and socialist education — our goals and strategies. Details: Max Farrar, 80 Harehills Avenue, Leeds 8.

LEEDS: The first of a series of three pamphlets - "The Economic Base of Leeds" jointly sponsored by the Leeds University Extra-Mural Department and the Yorkshire North district of the Workers' Educational Association. Sample copies 50p from WEA, 7, Woodhouse Square, Leeds LS 3

IRELAND: A pamphlet on Ireland called "The Struggle in Ireland" by J. Bayley and K. Boehringer is now on sale in left and latervative bookshops.

COUNTRY WOMEN: Anima is importing American feminist publication. Country Women, Bi-monthly it's expensive at 70p from left/alternative bookshops or £2.80 for a four-issue subscription from Anima Rising c/o 78a, Penny Street, Lancaster.

WORLD REVOLUTION: Ninth issue of International Communist Current in Britain includes articles on Unions and the Labour Party in Britain, the American and Swedish elections, and the 1956 uprising in Hungary. Sample copy 30p from World Revolution, BM Box 869, London WC 1 V 6 XX

HOSTAGES: A pamphlet on political prisoners in Rhodesia published by the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa. Copies cost £1.00 from IDAF, 104, Newgate St, London EC 1.

WALES: Proposed Federation of Welsh Anarchists. First conference early 1977. Interested groups, individuals etc, contact Aberystwyth Anarchists c/o Student Union, Aberystwyth University, Aberystwyth, Wales.

MOTORWAY MONTHLY: a newsletter for anti-motorway people. Twelve issues with details of current road schemes, enquiries, protests, etc., £2.50 Or send a stamp for free sample copy to: Friends of the Earth, 9 Poland St., London W9.

RED NOTES: Latest pamphlet from this group of Marxist activists is called "Workers' struggles and the development of Ford in Britain". Sample copies from left and alternative bookshops.



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COMMUNITY ACTION the magazine for working class tenants & action groups, community projects, trade unionists & activists involved in the struggle. Only 18p (40 pages) or 6 issues for £1.20 (£2 to public bodies, libraries etc.) Back copies available.

INVESTIGATORS HANDBOOK the tenants', action groups' & workers' guide to investigating companies, organisations & individuals. Comprehensive and unique, 56 pages and only 30p inc post.

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Radical Philosophy is the journal of the Radical Philosophy Group. It aims to avoid the academicism of the existing philosophical journals - an academicism which trivializes philosophy and manifests itself in an uncritical attitude to social ideologies. *Radical Philosophy* publishes philosophical work contributing to the development of radical theory, and to the exposure of the social and political assumptions embodied in orthodox philosophy. As well as articles and book reviews, it carries critiques of educational institutions, courses and teaching methods; news items and reports of meetings and activities; humour and satire.

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Kate Soper: On Materialism
'Philosophy From Below' - a special supplement on the realities of philosophy in the academy.

Correspondence and contributions to: Jonathan Ree, Middlesex Polytechnic at Hendon, The Burroughs, Hendon, London NW4 4BT.
Subscriptions and enquiries to: Radical Philosophy, 40 Langdon Park Road, London N6 5AQ.

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Single copies 50p to individuals, by post 57p (Overseas 70p, airmail £3.20). Back numbers 60p to individuals (Overseas 70p), £1.25 to institutions.

the Leveller



LOOK BACK IN ANGER

The Cuban Embassy, the Home Defence College and the Foreign Office have all ordered back numbers of *The Leveller*. We are now offering back issues to our readers at the bargain price of 35p a copy. Buy now while stocks last and before the cultural scavengers - archivists/collectors/dilettantes - move in.

THE LEVELLER IS A MINE OF AMMUNITION

NEWS/THEORY/DEBATE/INTERVIEWS/CULTURE/LETTERS/STRUGGLE/AGITPROP

PILOT ISSUE British Intelligence agents in Angola named by Mark Hosenball and Phil Kelly - the story that caught the eye of Merlyn Rees/ The Polit-cops - Insurgency and the State - by Tony Bunyan/ Comprehensive Guide to Agitprop Theatre/The truth about the workers' co-ops/Interview with Jackie McNamara, then the only Communist Party footballer in British professional football.

ISSUE NUMBER ONE British fascism - its origins, history and organisations/The Wages for Housework Debate/The Hull Prison rising/ Interview with Trevor Griffiths, author of the Bill Brand TV series, on socialist writing for the mass audience.

ISSUE NUMBER TWO The Torturers' Who's Who: the only article naming the men responsible for the torture in Northern Ireland now condemned by the European Court of Human Rights/The Struggle for Southern Africa: the economic stake and the voice of Zimbabwe/Home Defence: the Home Office prepares for Civil War/The Derelicts: Rock 'n Roll and Politics.

ISSUE NUMBER THREE The politics of the Agee and Hosenball deportations: The CIA in Britain, the "Standardisation" of Mark Hosenball, the CIA in the Third World, and Britain's own agencies/ Fashion: ideology and exploitation/Gays in the unions/Latin American murder squads plot to assassinate Leftists.

CONTENTS

This issue has been produced collectively by the Leveller Working Committee and published by the Leveller Magazine Ltd, a registered Co-operative Friendly Society.

Working Committee meetings are held every Tuesday night at our offices. Readers are welcome to attend and assist in the development of the magazine.

We also welcome written contributions, photographs, cartoons and story ideas.

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THE LEVELLER'S Annual Conference. For all Supporting Subscribers. Preliminary Notice. May 14 at St Bride's Institute, Fleet Street, EC 4. Full details in next issue.

4-6 "PERSONS ACCUSED of crimes, however odious, must be given the services of responsible lawyers and must continue to be tried, as they are being tried, calmly and dispassionately; and afforded all the safeguards against miscarriage of justice". Brave words recently from Sir Peter Rawlinson, QC, chairman of the Bar. But just how dispassionate have the trials of the "bombers" been? Already *The Leveller* has cast serious doubt on the trial of the "Birmingham Bombers". In the wake of the Balcombe Street trial, how could the eleven people found guilty of the Woolwich and Guildford bombers still stay in prison? And five years after the first bomb at Aldershot, will Noel Jenkinson's name ever be cleared?

7 David Uren went up the Amazon to report on the guerilla struggle. He ended up doing eight days in a Brazilian jail.

8 IAIN SPROAT: mention his name and a million social security scroungers tremble. But all is not well in his own finances. The Registrar is after him. Plus How Pritchards earned the cash to win that Saudi Arabian street cleaning contract.

10-11 Letters Page, Jamaica, RCG, and lots on the Crisis.

12-13 James Anderson takes Ralph Miliband to task for his arguments in the latest *Socialist Register*. The Socialist Workers Party may

25-30 BRITAIN is going through a publishing boom unseen since the day they invented the printing machine. *Club International*, *Mayfair*, *Playbirds*, *Fiesta*, the list could go on and on. In a special feature, we examine the sex magazines.

be small argues Anderson, but it has the potential to become a major political force. Miliband will fight back in the next issue.

14-15 WITH OUR usual good taste we pay homage to the punk phenomenon with a subtle pictorial analysis of deep social meaning blah blah blah.

18-19 STILL ON the Eastern bloc, a special correspondent examines the role of the press in Poland.

20 WHAT DOES the discussion about the Official Secrets Act add up to? More concealment or open government? Tony Bunyan reports. Plus the latest on the Agee/Hosenball deportation.

21 THE POLITICS of Bread - Charlie Clutterbuck examines the background to the recent bread strike.

22 THE CREATIVE powerhouse of East London. Ian Walker profiles Centerprise, the community publishing project.

24 WHEN GAY Sweatshop hit Dublin the bottom fell out of the City Council's world. Our man in Eire describes what happens when a load of "funny bunnies" descend on the Irish.

31-32 National Agitprop.



16-17 Dave Taylor takes a hard look at Russian Unofficial Art. "Its limitations are to be found in the naive assumptions of some of the artists who accept the dominant Western tradition of elitist art and their contradictory desire to make some statement without getting involved in the messy business of politics."

After The Balcombe Street Trial The Frame-Up Scandal Of Woolwich & Guildford

The "Balcombe Street" trial was a draw for the British state. They got the convictions of four Provisional IRA activists for a series of bombings, at a price: the blowing open of the cruel and wrongful convictions 18 months ago of four people for the Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings. Three of the "Balcombe Street" four, Joe O'Connell, Eddie Butler and Harry Duggan admitted these bombings. With Hugh Doherty they signed a long statement (their only contribution to the proceedings) that was read from the dock by O'Connell. The statement was not fully heard, due to frequent interruptions from Judge Cantley; the jury (who upset the Police by taking seven and a half hours to come to conclusions on charges to which no defence had been offered) came back to ask for a copy of the statement. The Judge condescended to read part of it, muttering the while that it was irrelevant, but did not tell the jury they could add a rider to their verdicts on its implications.

The statement was not printed in the British press, but *The Leveller* has a copy of it (and a record of the unreported *obiter dicta* that O'Connell added to it), and we print the passage relating to the Guildford convictions. And a *Leveller* team documents they way the police set up the victims of the Guildford/Woolwich trial, and the seven Kilburn people arrested in the same operation who were equally unjustly convicted for possessing explosives.

The Guildford bombs happened in October, 1974. Two bombs went off within 45 minutes of each other in two nearby pubs in the city centre. Guildford is in the middle of a large complex of military towns, about 30 miles from London. The two pubs were crowded with soldiers, some on leave from Northern Ireland.

The bombings produced an outcry in the national press. Five people were killed, four of them soldiers. In Northern Ireland that year over two hundred people had been killed by shootings or bombings. The Guildford bombings hit the headlines while the daily violence in Northern Ireland did not.

The investigation into the Guildford bombings - the "biggest crime in Surrey for over a century" - shows the extent to which the authorities in England are prepared to go to gain convictions against Irish people in England as part of the propaganda war against the Irish in Northern Ireland.

A common feature of national police investigations is rivalry between provincial forces and Scotland Yard, who attempt to take over. The result is often a mix up. Early on, Surrey police had liaised with the Bomb Squad under a common chief, Mr. Christopher Rowe. The Surrey force was split within itself between the uniform and the CID sections. Wally Symmonds, head of the CID, resented being accountable to Rowe, a uniformed administration man.

The internal fighting did not help the investigations. By November the Surrey police were thoroughly demoralised. Officers were threatening resignations and the enquiry was no further ahead.

The Birmingham bombings on November 21 produced hysterical reaction against the Irish and enabled Home Secretary Roy Jenkins to introduce the Prevention of Terrorism Act, rushed through Parliament as emergency legislation.

On November 28, the day the Prevention of Terrorism Bill was being read, a young Irishman, Paul Hill, was picked up in Southampton and taken to Guildford. The following day he was interviewed by the Royal Ulster Constabulary and confessed his involvement in the murder of a soldier in Belfast. While arrangements were being made to take him back to Belfast, he made the first of six statements implicating himself and many others in the Guildford and Woolwich bombings.

On the 30th, Gerry Conlon was picked up at his parents' home in Belfast, questioned by the same RUC and Surrey police who'd dealt with Hill, and then taken to Guildford.

In the next four days more than 40 people were picked up under the PTA in a series of raids by Surrey and Metropolitan police all over London.

Eight people were charged with murder in relation to Guildford: six young Irishmen (including Conlon and Hill), a young English girl, Carole Richardson (girlfriend of one of the other accused, Patrick Armstrong) and the 39 year old aunt of Gerry Conlon, Annie Maguire.

Four people were charged with possession, all arrested with Annie Maguire at her home on December 3: her husband, her brother, the father of Gerry Conlon who'd arrived over that day to try and see his son, and Pat O'Neill, a friend of the family who'd dropped by to leave his children to be minded.

These people were the first to be charged under the PTA, which has since been used continually to harass Irish people.

In early 1975 murder charges were dropped against three people. Later on in February the murder charge was also dropped against Annie Maguire although she was not accused of being in possession of explosives. The same day her sons, aged 14 and 16, were also charged with this offence.

So Hill, Conlon, Armstrong and Richardson were charged with the Guildford bombing, and Hill and Conlon were also accused of the Woolwich bombing of November 7.

The trial took place at the Old Bailey in September 1975 before Judge Donaldson, the former Industrial Relations Court President. The evidence consisted almost entirely of confessions, which all the defendants said had been fabricated by the police and which they had been forced to sign. The prosecution produced countless witnesses who said things like "I saw a puff of smoke ... a blinding flash", but no evidence to connect the accused with the bombing.

The prosecution expert Higgs said (of the Woolwich bombing) "the bomb was of a type never before seen in this country". Mr Donald Lidstone said "I have studied the statements and found them consistent with IRA bomb-making tactics." (This from an impartial scientific expert).

Such evidence was for the most part used to mystify and confuse the jury. The main evidence was the confessions. The accused were damned by these. The prosecution explained the many inconsistencies in the conflicting confessions by saying that the the statements should be taken "with a pinch of salt". (Just the parts that don't suit their case, that is). An atmosphere was created in which facts don't particularly matter.

In such a political trial the prosecution, aided by the press had no trouble in gaining convictions. The Surrey police had felt very emotive about the bombings; they interviewed people in rooms covered in coloured photos of those killed and injured in the blast.

The defendants claimed the police had made threats against their families back in Belfast. Gerry Conlon said the police had threatened to throw him to a Protestant crowd, to tell the IRA he was a tout and that they would get his family. Similar allegations were put against the police by all the other defendants. They alleged the detectives had carried guns and put on "wildman" acts like second rate TV cops. The police probably felt quite justified in using such tactics.



DEVASTATION AFTER A GUILDFORD BOMB... THEN CAME THE FRAME-UP

The police also effectively nobbled alibi witnesses. Two who offered alibis for Carole and Paddy had their stories broken down by intensive interrogation. The two, Frank Johnson and Lisa Astin, had been to a dance in South London, and met Carole at a time that would have made her participation in the bombing impossible. But the police managed to confuse them into changing the time to one that would have allowed her to get from Guildford to the Elephant and Castle in time, had she an E Type Jaguar.

The four young people were convicted. Life sentences were passed on them all and the judge took the unusual step of specifying lengths of time to be served: Paul Hill "until age or infirmity decess", Patrick Armstrong, "at least 35 years", Carole Richardson (a juvenile) "to be detained during Her Majesty's pleasure".

The judge, echoing the sentiments of the British establishment, said as he sentenced them. "Your crime was not directed at those you killed, but at the community as a whole - every man, woman and child living in this country."

The British public lapped it up. Dangerous terrorists were locked away and could be forgotten. It was left for some of the hullaboo to die down before Annie Maguire and her family came to trial in January 1976. Annie had been named in one of the confessions as "Aunt Annie, who taught me how to make bombs". This had been splashed all over the papers.

Although some of the defendants had been subject to some of the same extreme interrogation techniques in the first trial, almost nothing was extracted from them. The main evidence was to be forensic. Although the house and surrounding houses were thoroughly searched, no traces of explosive were found. Neither was there evidence that any bomb-making had taken place, no suspicious circumstances, no ancillary equipment like detonators or fuses. The only evidence was forensic reports that traces of nitro glycerine had been found on the swabs taken from under the fingernails or on the hands of six of the defendants and on gloves which Annie Maguire used. The amount of explosive was given as less than a millionth of a cube of sugar, 2-3 microgrammes.

The test used was called thin layer chromatography. Yallop, the main defence witness, was one of the scientists who developed the tests while he was employed by the Home Office. He testified that this method of analysing explosives is only suitable for identifying known explosives when there has been an explosion, NOT, as in this case, for differentiating between a specific explosive and any other of the hundreds of household substances which can give a similar reading - tobacco smoke, nail varnish, polish air freshener. In fact this test can easily confuse many nitrates with nitroglycerine.

The minute traces on Annie's gloves had to be used because there were none under her fingernails. And they were only on one pair of gloves, out of many she had to wear because she has dermatitis.

So although in essence it was a political trial, it was conducted as a series of wranglings between experts. The defendants went along

Continued over page

Statement from the Dock

"We are all four Irish Republicans. We have recognised this court to the extent that we have instructed our lawyers to draw the attention of the court to the fact that four totally innocent people - Carol Richardson, Gerry Conlon, Paul Hill and Paddy Armstrong - are serving massive sentences for three bombings, two in Guildford and one in Woolwich, which three of us and another man now imprisoned have admitted that we did.

"The Director of Public Prosecutions was made aware of these admissions in December 1975, and has chosen to do nothing. We wonder if he will still do nothing when he is made aware of the new and important evidence which has come to light through the cross examination by our counsel of certain prosecution witnesses in this trial."

"The evidence of Higgs and Lidstone (forensic experts) played a vital part in the conviction of innocent people. Higgs admitted in this trial that the Woolwich bomb formed part of a correlated series with other bombings with which we are charged. Yet, when he gave evidence in the earlier Guildford trial he deliberately concealed that the Woolwich bomb was definitely part of a series carried out between October and December 1974 and that the people on trial were in custody at the time of some of these bombings."

with their lawyers' point of view that they should disassociate themselves from any connection with the Guildford trial. This meant that the defence could not examine the original circumstances of the arrests and the false, forced confessions in the Guildford trial.

By not providing a united defence, the lawyers, wary of each others' clients, attempted to make whatever points they could, regardless of the co-defendants. One of O'Neill's main defence submissions was that he could have been cross-contaminated accidentally, but this of course implies that somebody in the house was contaminated.

The lawyers were subdued no doubt by the Uxbridge trial of 1975, when defence lawyers had their fees slashed by half for probing too deeply into police methods (and demonstrating how fingerprints could be transplanted).

At the end of the trial, the jury, after suffering a barrage of experts, were in no position to evaluate the scientific evidence. The defendants had already been tried in the press. The only thing clear in the jury's mind was that 'Aunt Annie' was in the dock. It was enough to convict her. As the forensic evidence was the same on them all, they were all convicted. Annie Maguire and her husband were sentenced to fourteen years each, Patrick Conlon, Sean Smyth and Pat O'Neill got twelve years each, Vincent five years and Patrick (a juvenile) four.

The Judge remarked "You have been convicted and in my opinion quite rightly... Let it never be forgotten that it is not only the man or woman who pulls the trigger or plants the bomb that is the terrorist ... Everyone concerned at any stage shares the guilt of using violence for political ends and of seeking to put the public in fear."

The papers afterwards spoke of "Aunt Annie, the bomb-maker" and Surrey Chief Constable

Auntie Annie the bomb expert

What the Evening Standard said and the rest

Mr. Peter Matthews, said "These are the bastards we have been after." A celebratory dinner was held for the prosecution team in Guildford at police headquarters.

It had obviously been a high-powered political division to convict a whole family, to make the British public aware that there were 'sleepers' like Annie Maguire in their midst - seemingly respectable hard-working Irish people who were the front for more sinister purposes. This, along with appeals for people to keep tabs on their Irish lodgers, was part of the general paranoia induced against the Irish at that time.

The Maguire family had lived in England since 1957. Husband Patrick fought with the British Army in Korea and Cyprus. Three of the family are members of the local Conservative Club, and in their home are Union Jacks pinned up, and a bust of Churchill is in the bedroom. And Annie

herself, who has had two uncles killed in sectarian assassinations in Belfast, is known to loathe Ireland and all things Irish.

Patrick Conlon came to London when he heard his son Gerry had been picked up. He went to sister-in-law Annie's house and then to Harrow Road Police Station to ask where his son was held. He has not been out in the daylight since. He has TB, and was too ill even to appear in the committal hearings.

In December 1975, when most of the defendants were in custody, the Balcombe Street siege happened. Soon after it was broken, the police had the first of several statements con-

fessing involvement in the Guildford and Woolwich bombings. The Guildford four were safely locked away, but the Annie Maguire trial was still to come. The admissions were conveniently forgotten about. The Director of Public Prosecutions told one of the defence lawyers: "We don't think the convictions in regard to Guildford were in any way improper."

Jim Nevill, number two in the bomb squad, asked in the witness box what had been done about the admissions, said: "The matter was fully reported to the DPP."

And Hucklesby, police fingerprints expert, said that, while investigations into Woolwich and Guildford were not yet finished (four people happen to be serving life for them, remember), "to date there is no fingerprint evidence to connect the Balcombe four with Hill, Armstrong, Conlon and Richardson . . . although comparisons are being made."

So in all eleven people were wrongly convicted in connection with Guildford. As long as they were Irish and working class it didn't matter who they were. British Law has a chance to partly redress this injustice: their appeals are expected in April. Will they be set free?

And Five Years After That First Bomb, Clear Jenkinson's Name!

FIVE YEARS ago this month the first of the bombs hit England. On February 22 1972 the officers' mess at the Parachute Regiment barracks in Aldershot was hit by a bomb. Seven civilians died in a disastrous retaliation for the deaths of the thirteen people a month earlier at Bloody Sunday.

The bomb jarred the nation as nothing else in the escalating Irish crisis had done. And it started off the no-holds-barred police approach to Irish suspects that has characterised much of the anti-terrorist activity since.

The man who was convicted of planting that bomb was Noel Jenkinson, a 43 year old Irish republican with a long history of trade union and socialist activism. Jenkinson died of 'natural causes' in Leicester's high security Gartree prison last October. Comment on that death was limited both by the coroner's decision not to take his enquiries any further, and a continuing campaign to have the whole case re-examined by the European Court.

For there is disturbing evidence that Jenkinson was fitted up for the Aldershot bombings. And although the Officials claimed credit for the disaster at the time, they and the Provisionals had been singularly unwilling up until the time of Jenkinson's death to campaign for his innocence to be established.

Among the outstanding contradictions about Jenkinson's conviction and subsequent sentence of 30 years are the following:—

** The main piece of evidence linking Jenkinson to the bombing was a receipt from Halfords in Aldershot, dated the day before the bombing.

Three months later the police withdrew the receipt as inadmissible evidence after Detective Chief Inspector Smith — the man leading the enquiries — acknowledged that the receipt was his. It was for a radiator seal purchased by his own son.

** David Meier, the defence solicitor in the case, was supplied by the police. Meier both advised him to sign a statement saying that he had hired the car apparently used in the bombing, and failed to hire a private investigator to establish his whereabouts on the day of the bombing, despite promising to do so.

** Unusually for a guilty man, Jenkinson returned to England from Ireland after the bombing — to be seized by the police as a likely suspect.

** The prosecution, having failed to make a strong case on the explosives charge, constantly harped on Jenkinson's possession of Marxist and republican literature at his home. The trial took place in the conservative barrack town of Winchester under enormous security: in this environment, the possession of such literature was tantamount to guilt.

** As has become distressingly regular in such cases, the police arrested Jenkinson's wife and told him she would get a ten year sentence if he didn't sign a statement admitting that he'd hired the car. They also threatened to hand him over to the RUC for 'interrogation': to back up their point, they put him in a cell next to a man Seamus O'Kane who was due to be handed over to the RUC. O'Kane was brought all the way from London to share the Aldershot cell.

The whole story of Noel Jenkinson has yet to be told and we wait upon the deliberations of the European Court before we can tell the full tale. But the one man who would benefit from a declaration of his innocence has died a prisoner's death in the sordid surrounding of Leicester prison.

BRAZIL : Suspicion falls after the napalm

DR NELSON of the Brazilian federal police fingered through a paperback on his desk entitled *The Communist Terror of 1935*. "You are not a journalist", he said, "so who sent you to Maraba?" Two soldiers stood at the door pointing sub-machine guns uncomfortably at my chest. I began to answer when Colonel Cid, who wore jeans, an army shirt and sunglasses, interrupted, saying "No-one comes to Maraba without good reason".

Maraba was an Indian trading post lost in the Amazon jungles until the late sixties when it became the centre of military operations against guerillas of the maoist line Brazilian Communist Party who had moved from the cities to live with the peasants where they found ready support. The local population reports the use of napalm by the Brazilian airforce during their campaign and soldiers who were involved say that many hundreds were killed.

The guerillas were wiped out last year. They left the military in Maraba with a deep suspicion of strangers. I was apparently suspect and taken to the army's recently built barracks on the outskirts of town for questioning.

My reason for being in the town was to write about a recent clash between peasants and the military police in which two soldiers were killed and two wounded. I passed the trick questions like the correct English pronunciation for the word "neither" but was condemned by my address book.

Dr Nelson grimly read out the name and telephone number of Dom Helder Camara, the Bishop of Recife who had earned a reputation as an outspoken critic of the Brazilian regime. With evident satisfaction, Colonel Cid told me I was under arrest and would remain in jail until they found out exactly who I was. It took them eight days. A plea that they consult the foreign minister's press secretary, with whom I had spoken in Brasilia, was ill-received. "Subversives on every side", said Dr Nelson. The foreign

ministry is still not forgiven for recognising the MPLA in Angola.

The jail housed 23 peasants accused of killing the two soldiers. The last peasant to be brought in was hysterical. "Calm down, there is nothing to worry about", said a sergeant. "If you get a civilian rather than a military trial, you will only be sentenced to six years and should be free in three." The peasant cried, "I was a thousand metres away. I had nothing to do with it." The sergeant replied that it would all be much easier if he did not lie.

Only twelve of the peasants had taken part in the killing. They knew that government surveyors were coming to mark out their land under a heavy police guard and the word was passed around that all the peasants in the settlement called Perdidos (in English: The Lost) would be evicted. The twelve set up an ambush. "I wasn't going to be kicked out for a pair of old boots!" said one of the prisoners. "You can't read, you can't write, you can't have land. It works like that." Their land was the subject of a long legal wrangle, having been sold twice over to different sets of landlords. The peasants legally had the first option, having worked the land for more than a year, but for the peasant to obtain a title, he needs a voter's card and to get that, he must be literate.

The men of the settlement went into hiding after the ambush but were surrounded by more than a hundred troops. The women pleaded with the local priest, Father Florentino Maboni, to take a message to the men telling them of an escape route guarded only by six soldiers. The priest agreed but was arrested and charged under the draconian National Security Law. After 17 days in solitary confinement, an extraordinary interview with him was published in a Brasilia newspaper in which he accused Brazil's bishops

of giving leftist instruction to priests working in the Amazon region. A copy of the article was pinned on the wall of Dr Nelson's office.

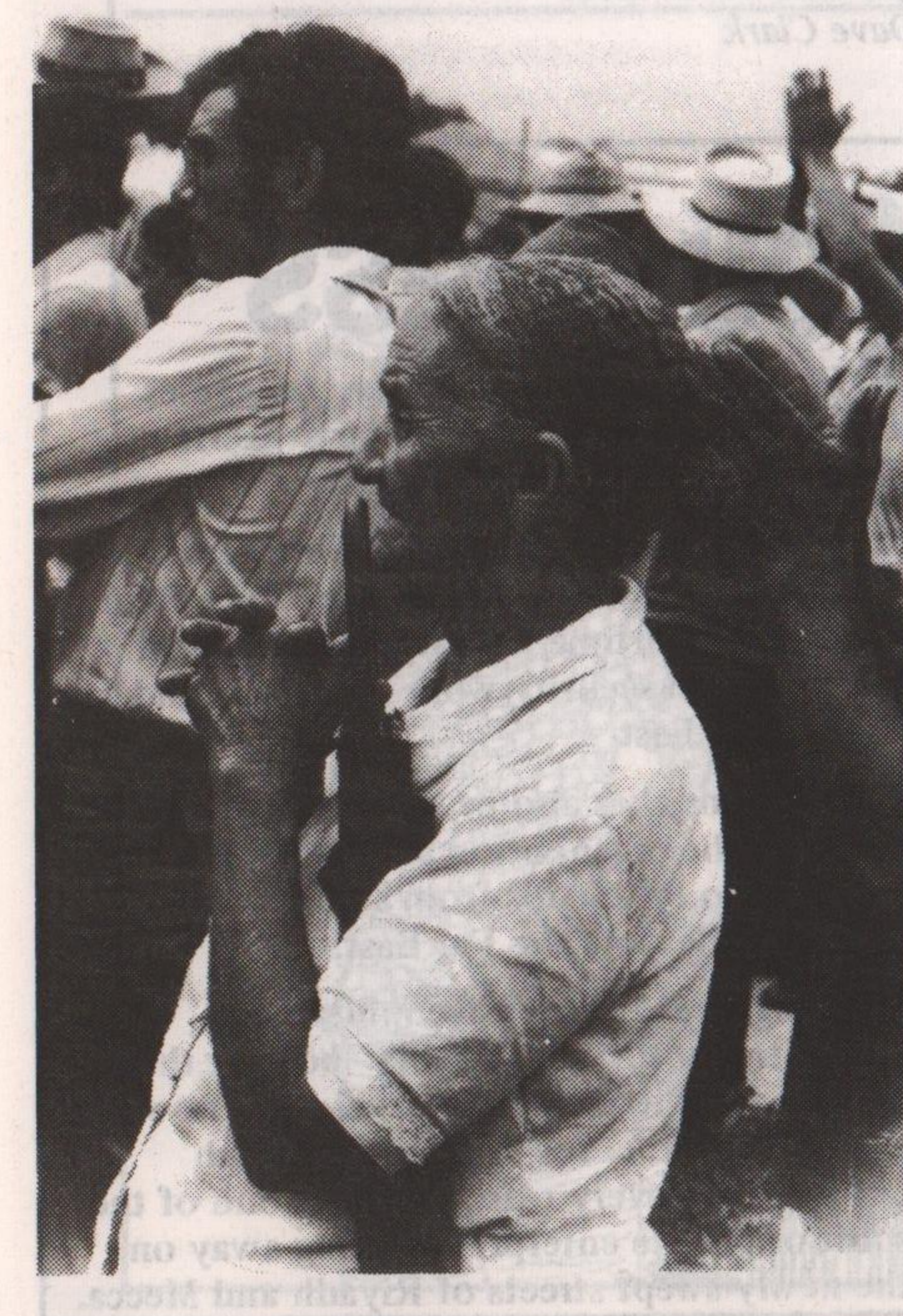
The priest was released after the intervention of the Vatican. The Church's commission dealing with the land problem issued an official note saying that Maboni had been subjected to severe torture (of which there was little evidence in Maraba). The prisoners thought Maboni a "friend of the people who did no harm to anybody", but the government is seriously concerned by recent violent incidents with peasants and sees the Church, which encourages the peasants to stand up for their rights, as responsible. In the Brazilian spectrum, subversion is generally supposed to start with agrarian reform.

The Maraba battalion was upgraded to a brigade while I was in jail. A priest working in the Amazon was deported this week after thirteen hours of questioning and the bishops of Maraba and another Amazon town have been subjected to similar interrogations. The army makes no secret that it would like to see them charged under the National Security Law.

The government is launching an intensive campaign to win over the support of the peasants while rooting out what it sees as the subversive influences. The remaining 817 peasants in Perdidos have received titles to their land.

The prisoners from Maraba have since been transferred to the state capital of Belem where, in all probability, they will be tried by the military. In the cell diagonally opposite were three 15 and 16-year old boys from Perdidos. One of them asked me if my country was a democracy. I replied with unaccustomed assuredness that it was. Another of the boys asked the first what was democracy. He replied that "Democracy is where the government works for the masses".

Subversives on every side, say the police, as the peasants take up the fight.



SCROUNGERS AND LEFTIES BEWARE!

SPROAT



IAIN SPROAT, Conservative MP for Aberdeen South, scourge of the dole queue 'scroungers' and the Labour Party's 'crypto-communists', faces a spot of financial embarrassment himself at the moment. For the Registrar of Companies has told him that one of his many businesses will be closed down unless he files some company returns.

The Registrar wrote to Mr Sproat in September and gave him three months to get the affairs of the company in order. If he didn't, warned the Registrar, then "Under Section 353 of the Companies Act 1948 . . . your company will, unless cause is shown to the contrary, be struck off the register and the company dissolved."

The company concerned is the Syston Estate Company, a property-holding and investment trust. It is just one of eight companies of which Mr Sproat is a director. A search of Companies House shows that not one of the companies has ever filed a return — which must constitute a record even by sloppy Department of Trade standards.

38-year-old Sproat came to Parliament in the 1970 election after a career in journalism and publishing. A product of Winchester public school and Oxford University, he was one of the British Printing Corporation's bright young men and ended up with a column in the *Sunday Telegraph*. A guest lecturer on guerilla warfare at the Defence College, he proudly tells friends that he was in Greece at the time of the coup, Paris during the May 68 upheavals and Czechoslovakia during the Russian occupation.

Feeling the need to play soldiers more realistically, he joined the Fourth Battalion of the Greenjackets, a territorial unit, in 1972. His colonel is the Right Honourable Richard Wood, another right wing Conservative MP. The Greenjackets was the parent regiment for the post-war re-launch of the Special Air Service and links between the two regiments have remained close ever since.

Sproat lurched into Parliamentary prominence in 1972 with a Bill aimed at giving old people free telephones, television licences and subsidised heating. This admirable assistance to the elderly scrounger was blocked by the obduracy of his own Tory front bench. Instead he

made his public mark by passing the 1973 Protection of Wrecks Act to stop divers pirating treasure from old shipwrecks. For his labours, he was rewarded with a junior Ministerial post as PPS to the Secretary of State for Scotland.

But 1973 wasn't just a busy Parliamentary year for Sproat. He set up a whole string of companies in publishing and communications: many of them had a declared interest in security. The companies were the following:

Sproat Communications ; Sproat Electronics; Sproat Trading; Sproat Publishing; Sproat Films; Cyadmarc Sproat; Syston Estates; Syston Publishing.

All the companies were set up during 1973 except for Cyadmarc Sproat which was formed in October 1974 and took Mr Sproat into the film business through what used to be Manor Films.

Sproat Communications had five directors including our old friend Robert Moss — he of the National Association for Freedom.

Sproat had 73 of the shares, his main partner Anthony Fiennes Trotman had 12. Mr Trotman now runs a company called Careers Consultants of Richmond and refuses to comment on his business affairs with Mr Sproat despite being involved in nearly all of his companies.

Typical of the objects of the Sproat companies are these, culled from the Sproat Communications file. Having announced that the company will carry on business as disseminators of information regarding international affairs, business, politics and so on by every media known, they go on to add specifically: "To act as consultants upon all aspects of security by utilising thermographic and electronic techniques"

Mr Sproat and Mr Trotman are also both directors of a body called Authors International. This body is not registered with Companies House at all, nor is it listed in any of the main reference works of the publishing business.

Despite the mess that his business interests are in, Mr Sproat has not stepped back from doing his public duty. He roared into prominence early in 1976 with a spirited attack on devolution, and followed it up with a July offensive on the 'scandal' of the unemployed. According to him, at least half the unemployed who were claiming benefits weren't really unemployed at all. 700,000 people at that time must have been on the fiddle and according to a senior contact in the civil service, one in five of all claims were fraudulent.

In November, he took the attack into the House of Commons when, following a meeting in Chelsea in which he said the Labour Party had ". . . been infiltrated to a terrifying degree" by ". . . crypto-communists and fifth columnists", his colleague Nigel Lawson named the ten MPs Mr Sproat was referring to. The whole business understandably upset the Labour left as did Mr Sproat's fearsome Parliamentary attack on dole queue 'scroungers'.

The attack had a lot of right-wing shibboleths but little substance. In particular he singled out families supposedly using furniture grants to buy colour TVs, unemployed workers getting £100 from the DHSS while they changed jobs, and immigrants queueing up for benefits when they hadn't paid anything. This predictable nonsense was taken up gleefully by some sections of the press — notably the *News of the World* and the *Evening News*.

As a result of these allegations, Mr Sproat produced a dossier of cases for the inspection of the DHSS. Since then the Minister has had a team of researchers looking through the cases and the word around Westminster is that they are so much hot air.

When the researchers have finished looking through Mr Sproat's social security dossier, they might find time to look at his business affairs. There they will find much more of substance to get their teeth into.

Dave Clark

Science Fiction v Politics

FIGHTING in defence of the revolution they had built, the victims of stalinism faced accusations and vilification which not only attempted to undermine their standing in the eyes of the world, but also to destroy their trust in each other. And the campaign had considerable effect. For many people, not only Stalinism, but also revolutionary marxism, had become synonymous with lies, slanders, frame-ups and falsifications.

This destructive tendency is still alive in the Trotskyist movement.

In 1975, Gerry Healy, leader of the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) suddenly accused George Novack and Joe Hansen, both members of the US Socialist Workers' Party (SWP) and close associates of Trotsky in Mexico, of complicity in Trotsky's assassination. Despite point-by-point denials of these accusations, the *Workers' Press* and its successor *News Line*, papers of the WRP, continued to label Hansen and Novack 'accomplices of the GPU' (Stalin's secret police force which carried out Trotsky's murder).

The hundreds upon thousands of words now written on the subject include a 300-page book *How The GPU Murdered Trotsky*, supplemented by *Accomplices Of The GPU*, both published by the WRP; replies from Trotskyists and other revolutionaries all over the world are documented in an SWP bulletin *Healy's Big Lie*.

This type of attack upon political opponents

should have gone out of fashion long ago. While it may serve to whip up the emotions of the initiated, its monotony of style and content and its obsession with obscure detail are enough to try the patience of even the most dedicated sectarian. Yet readers of certain Trotskyist newspapers have for some time been served a regular diet of allegations, replies and counter-allegations.

This war of words reached a climax at a meeting last month in London, called by the Fourth International, to protest against frame-ups by the WRP.

Some people have a taste for such meetings, a football match enthusiasm for "smashing" the opponent. That night, however, most of the 800-strong audience seemed to share the sentiments of the chairperson, Tariq Ali, who regretted that the meeting was necessary.

Maybe Hansen, Novack and the Fourth International, of which they are leading members, have taken the whole affair too seriously. If Healy's allegations are simply "science fiction" (as Ernest Mandel termed them at the meeting) why not regard them as others regard flying-saucer sightings?

Novack, an intimate collaborator of Healy during the 1950's, provided one answer. Re-counting the familiar story of comradeship turned to rabid hostility, he drew a parallel with the Moscow trials. Then, as now, there were people who readily believed slanders, even though they had no basis. Other speakers saw the meeting as a way to end the in-fighting which is bringing disgrace on the Trotskyist movement.

The platform line-up showed that Healy's attacks have generated an unprecedented unity among Trotskyists. Former supporters of Healy and fierce opponents of the Fourth International — Betty Hamilton (Britain), Pierre Lambert (France) and Tim Wohlforth (US)—sat side by side with Tamara Deutscher, George Novack, Tariq Ali and Ernest Mandel.

Between them, the speakers tried to under-

stand Healy's motives. Since written answers have been given to his allegations, we were spared the more esoteric details, such as which of Trotsky's guards reached his murdered corpse first. All agreed that Healy had become worried about the declining membership of his group, both in Britain and abroad; Hansen and Novack and his other targets were scapegoats for his bad politics.

Tim Wohlforth, himself a victim of Healy's pen and tongue, put it quite plainly: "Anyone inside or outside Healy's organisation who criticises him must be a cop".

At some point, Healy slipped unnoticed into a seat at the side of the platform; I wondered later what it must be like to hear yourself denounced five times over in the course of two hours. Inevitably, his supporters demanded that he be allowed to speak, but the audience voted overwhelmingly against hearing him. Perhaps they felt that more than enough time had been spent answering his case, and that this was neither the time nor the place to begin a tribunal.

Besides, Ernest Mandel, who had just spoken, had turned the attention of the audience in a more fruitful direction. Pointing out that Healy was in effect doing more damage to Trotskyism than to Stalinism, he reminded us that though Healy's methods were similar to those of Stalin, by comparison they are insignificant. The legacy of Stalinism within world Communist Parties makes it possible for Trotsky's assassin to remain a respected member of the Spanish Communist Party, only recently honoured by Moscow for his services.

Mandel called for a common political campaign to be waged against world Communist Parties to rehabilitate the victims of Stalinism. "That would be a fight worthy of Trotskyism, the Fourth International and world Marxism."

Will Gerry Healy allow that to be the last word?

Karen Margolis

Cleaning up in the security business

Readers of the London Evening Standard were informed with a rare sense of national pride recently that a cleaning company called Pritchards has been allocated a contract worth £44m for sweeping the streets in Saudi Arabia.

What the readers weren't informed about were a few other interesting things about Pritchards.

Pritchards is not only the largest cleaning company in Britain with over 19,000 employees - most of them non-unionised - and profits to match. It is also one of the most ruthless.

One of its many subsidiaries - Acme Cleaners - has the contract to clean the terminals at Heathrow Airport. To do this job they employ Asian women at the most appalling rates of pay.

Three years ago the TGWU and GMWU collaborated in fixing these women the measly sum

of 38p an hour.

For a six day week they might earn £15.50, for seven days £19.40. The work is long and hard and means setting off from Southall in buses at 5.30 in the morning. At that time women on cleaning work for Ealing local authority were earning 62p an hour.

But Pritchards aren't just the leading exploiters in the cleaning business. They have got themselves firmly established in the security business.

Pritchard Security Services is probably the fastest growing small private army in Britain with 15 branches set up nationally since

1973. It also operates security companies in those freedom-loving democracies, Iran, South Africa and Thailand.

It recently announced the appointment as Company Operations Manager of John Reid. Reid was a wartime military policeman who later took on security work in Europe and the Middle East

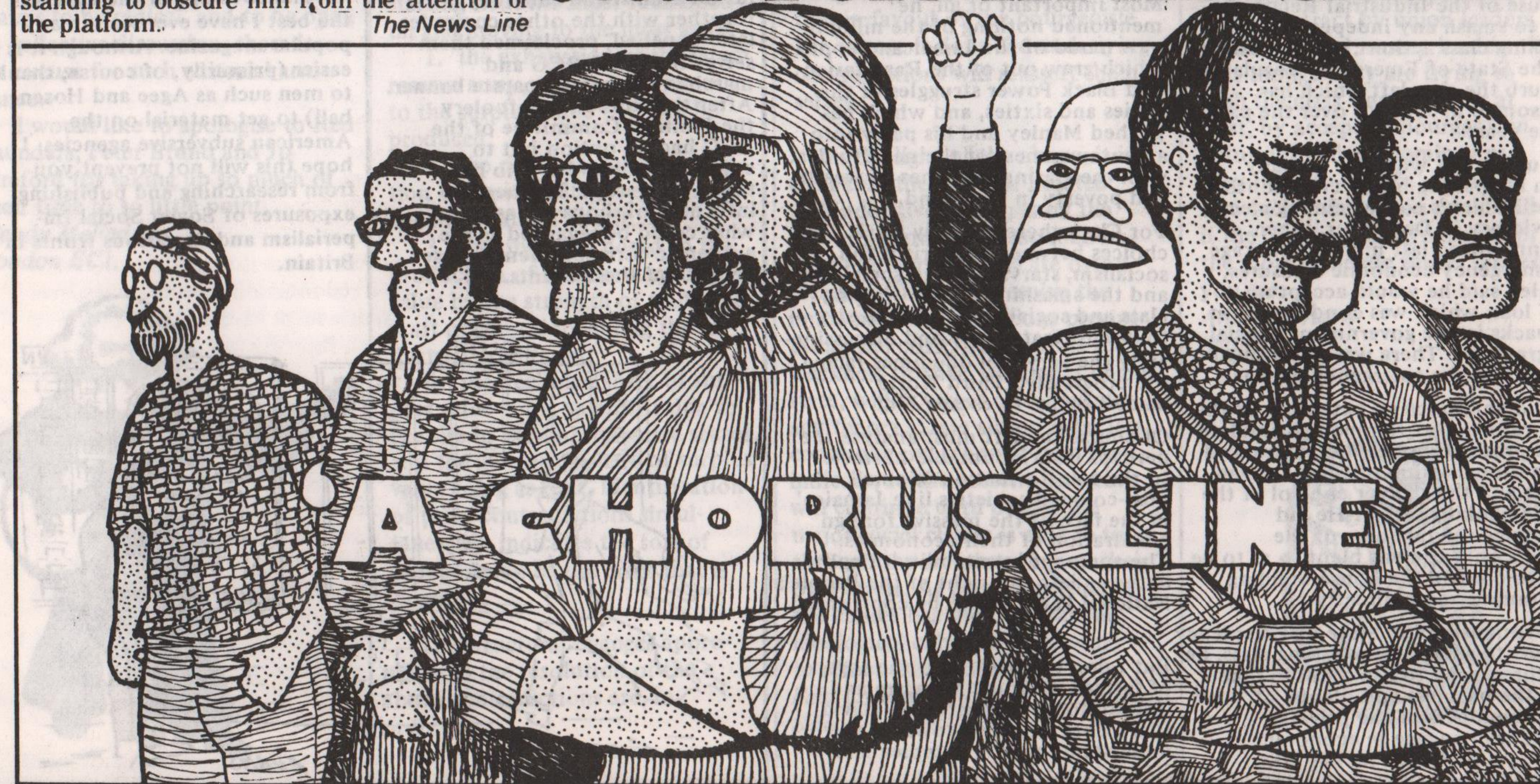
Charlie Jones has also been promoted: he now heads up the organisation and back-up team. He came to Pritchards from security work in East Africa and the Far East.

With the already extensive military commitment to Saudi Arabia - both at the official and the mercenary level - and now the new contract for Pritchards, British patriots have every reason to be proud of the spirit of private enterprise beating away on the newly-swept streets of Riyadh and Mecca.

Uproar at the Dreary Line Theatre! Performer kept from star role in hit show

Healy rose at the conclusion of Professor Ernest Mandel's speech seeking time to reply. A phalanx of 'International Marxist Group' heavies trooped in front of where he was standing to obscure him from the attention of the platform.

The News Line



Letters

WRITE TO US : Send Letters to 155a, Dæummond Street, London NW 1.



JAMAICA - No simple answer

DAVID CLARK'S article on Jamaica in last month's issue typified for me the sort of ill-defined leftist thinking that has been evident in too much of The Leveller's material. It was neither one thing nor the other - neither a dispassionate Marxist analysis of the obstacles faced by the government of a small underdeveloped country trying slowly and hesitantly to move left, nor a principled political attack on Michael Manley for being a liberal reformer with illusions of social change.

Instead he resorted to that sort of crude determinism which assumes that any left social democratic government in an underdeveloped country is inevitably going to "... systematically smash the emerging independent working class movement" because of its helpless impotence in the face of international capital.

It is an assumption that has some solid base in the theory of imperialism, but apparently Clark doesn't even think it worthwhile even briefly explaining the premises on which his whole article is based. For him it is quite simple: the government has two options - either to deliver immediate power "... into the hands of the working class and small farmers" or to deliver the Jamaican people "... firmly into the hands of the multinationals".

He sees the latter option being put into practice "... almost immediately" in the form of cutbacks in public spending on welfare programmes; the use of the Industrial Relations Act to smash any independent working class action; and the use of the State of Emergency regulations to curb the new left which has blossomed in Jamaica over the past three years.

Let us look at what has actually been happening in the two months since Manley's overwhelming election victory in December. When he announced last month's package of emergency economic measures, Manley said he would accept no IMF loan which was conditional on cutbacks in the government's social programmes. There was not a single cutback in the emergency package.

He did announce an extension of the land reform programme to stimulate food production. He did announce the nationalisation of three foreign banks and the stricter control of the whole banking sector. He did announce the takeover of the island's only cement plant so as to be able to control the house-building programme more directly.

Far from using the State of Emergency powers to smash the working class, he has threatened to use them to take over the business and plants of those members of the private sector who engage in economic sabotage. Although he has asked

the organised working class to accept a six month wage freeze because of the current economic crisis, he has also drastically increased the tax' burden of the upper income brackets and has promised an income ceiling in the near future.

He has revealed that Jamaica will be expanding its trade relations with the communist bloc and opening diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in an attempt, say local commentators, to lessen Jamaica's dependence on the United States.

He has included the three best-known left-wingers in the People's National Party - Duncan, Bertram and Small - in his government.

Are these the actions of a man who is about to deliver the Jamaican "... people firmly into the hands of the multinationals while gaily singing the songs of democratic socialism"?

Clark also made no mention of a number of other important developments. He said nothing of Manley's attempts to build up a popular militia (Home Guard) directly responsible to the Prime Minister's office. He said nothing of Manley's belief that he can do for Jamaica what Nyerere did for Tanzania by building up strength at home through popular mobilisation around his reform programme, and guaranteeing Jamaican independence abroad by common Third World stands and playing off the big powers against each other.

Most important of all, he mentioned nothing of the militant new mood of the Jamaican people which grew out of the Rastafarian and Black Power struggles of the fifties and sixties, and which has pushed Manley and his party into a new awareness of the need to deal with the glaring extremes of wealth and poverty in the island.

For Clark there are only stark choices between barbarism and socialism, starvation and socialism, and the smashing of the working class and socialism. The necessity to discuss fraternally and dispassionately the very real dilemmas facing the progressive Third World leaders seems to escape him.

Of course the left must analyse the perhaps insurmountable obstacles to the transformation of small, post-colonial societies like Jamaica' in the face of the massive foreign penetration of their economies. The apparent inevitability of splits between left and right of the People's National Party has to be confronted.

But I don't believe that the sort of farrago of crude Marxism and instant doom presented by David Clark does anything towards the understanding of a complex situation. In fact at least one of his statements, his belief in the "... very real possibility of a civil war or coup d'etat" finds its echo in what the right wing press in Jamaica and the United States was writing during last year's election campaign, in the apparent hope that such provocative speculation would lead to the collapse of business confidence, the drying-up of tourist revenues and the resultant defeat of the Manley government.

In the event, the Jamaican people confounded all the foreign pundits and voted en masse for Manley's programme of democratic socialism. Surely this is the moment to be giving support (albeit critical support) to that programme, while trying critically and fraternally to analyse the options open to what is, after all, one of only two left-moving governments in the Western hemisphere?

Andrew Pollack
London

LETTER FROM THE RCG

Your article "RCG Expulsions - the Splitters Split" confuses two issues. The first concerned the political differences within the organisation and our attitude to them. The second concerned the expulsion of members of our organisation for breaking fundamentally with our constitution.

The political differences which had arisen in our organisation at the time of the expulsions did not merit a split in the Revolutionary Communist Group. A clear indication of this is that the expelled comrades still insist that they stand by 'Our Tasks and Methods', the founding document of the RCG. Those who call for a split when different tendencies first emerge - tendencies which in no way reflect movements within the working class - indicate only their isolation from the working class.

Although the comrades were expelled, it is in fact more correct to say that they simply walked out of the RCG and thereby avoided a political fight within the organisation.

On the November 17 demonstration against the cuts they, together with the other comrades later expelled, proclaimed themselves the 'true' RCG and marched behind a separate banner. After this kind of tomfoolery the Political Committee of the RCG had no option but to expel any comrades who had taken such steps. The need to inform bookshops etc as to what could be regarded as the authentic correspondence arose because of these events.

The issue which brought events to a head stemmed from a tactical dispute about our intervention at the Anti Apartheid Labour Movement Conference. This was an issue that could have been discussed and finally resolved in our organisation. It was precisely the behaviour of the expelled PC members in preventing this discussion which made their expulsions necessary.

One final point which shows how little interested the expelled comrades were in discussing their differences within the RCG is the fact that none of the comrades has appealed against the expulsions to the democratically elected Control Commission of our organisation - a Commission which has no PC members on it, and which is answerable to a conference of the whole organisation.

David Yaffe
RCG, London.

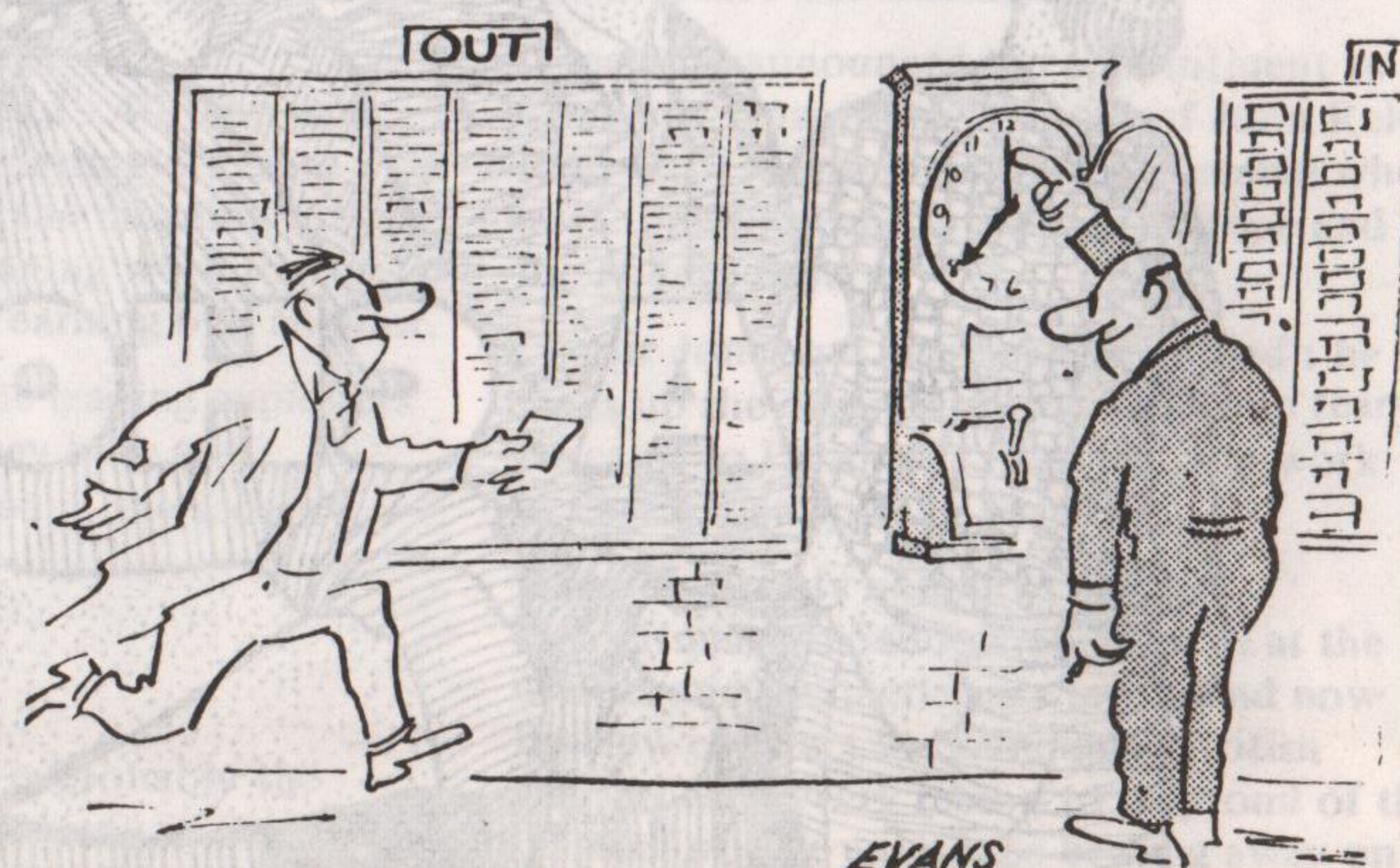
TEAR-JERKERS AND THE KGB

IT is quite wrong to describe Thomas Hood's *Song of the Shirt* (last issue's fashion theme) as a "naive tear-jerker in the worst Victorian literary tradition". Surely, the worst literary traditions are the same in all ages, Victorian or not, i.e. service to reaction, and opposition to and contempt for the 'common people'.

Hood may in this poem have employed sentimentality (a look at the whole poem which you didn't publish will confirm that he did!) but because it was to expose the evil of the worker's position and to call for an end to it, clearly it is in the best literary tradition, and is remembered today because of that - in spite of the 'critical establishment' who would not consider the whole of Hood's work to be worth one line of the reactionary fossil Wordsworth, say, or the fascist hack versifier Ezra Pound.

Incidentally, the phenomenon of a literary work 'jerking tears' is one which medical researchers inform me has never actually been observed, even after near fatal overdoses of Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

The coverage of the CIA was the best I have ever seen in any popular magazine. Although it is easier (primarily, of course, thanks to men such as Agee and Hosenball) to get material on the American subversive agencies, I hope this will not prevent you from researching and publishing exposures of Soviet Social Imperialism and its various fronts in Britain.



After all, it is that force which many people in the Third World, particularly in China, see as being most dangerous to the world's peoples, and the success of their policy of 'occupying the empty seats' can be seen nearer home than Africa!

I see that you are under attack (Letters - Issue 2) from some quarters for not submitting your paper to the particular brand of social democracy known as trotskyism. On this matter, you must be quite firm, and say to these people, "If you want a paper such as ours to toe your line, then you have only one course of action - Start your own!"
Richard Turner
Reading

ROCK AGAINST RACISM

I WANT to dissociate myself from the presentation of the feature on Rock Against Racism in the last issue (No. 3). My original idea had been to talk to members of Cartoon Klowns who have been working on producing the KK Band record, and who are involved with Rock Against Racism. Not only was all reference to the production of the record cut out, but there were factual inaccuracies in what was finally printed - when I had particularly stressed on the copy I put in to you that the timing of events should be checked.

The decimated result comes over as a confused 'personality' interview with Red Saunders who, as I told you at the time, did not want to be cast in a starring role; credit for RAR's development is due to a greater collective effort than your emphasis on Red's name in the article suggests.

And on the subject of collective effort: whilst I can understand copy being cut for lack of space, or even ideological reasons, I feel very angry that I was given no opportunity to discuss the way in which the piece was to be subbed. When people give their time and effort - for free - towards producing articles for a magazine that claims to be radical, and to be open to collective discussion, there is no excuse for such editorial arrogance.

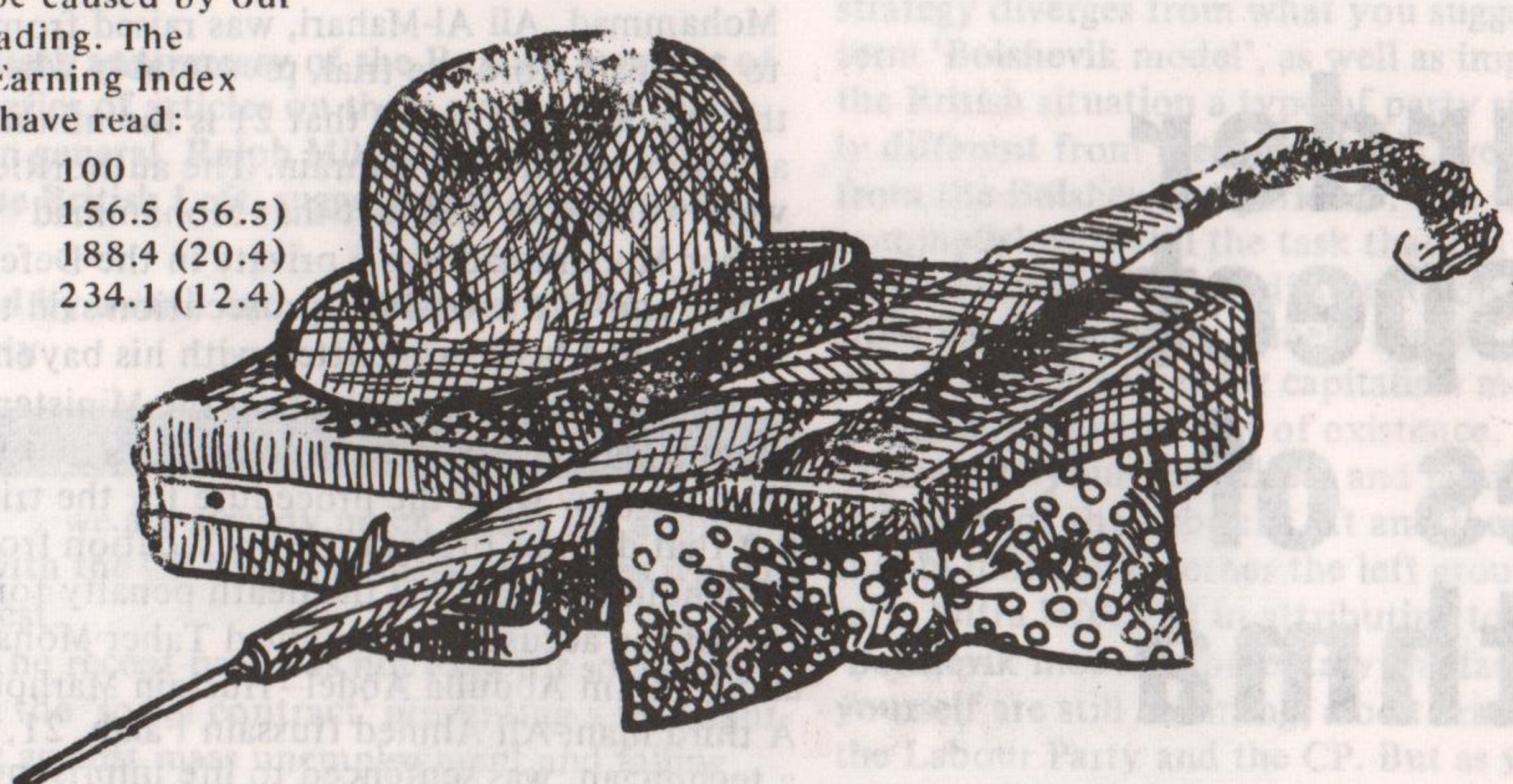
I would like to apologise to Red Saunders, Peter Bruno and Jo Wreford for taking up so much of their time to so little point.
Wendy McFadden
London EC1.



Understanding the Crisis

Apology: part of the statistical confusion could be caused by our crummy proof reading. The Average Weekly Earning Index (page 25) should have read:

June 1970	100
March 1974	156.5 (56.5)
November 1974	188.4 (20.4)
January 1976	234.1 (12.4)



THE ARTICLE by Fine and Harris in issue No. 2 ('Understanding the Crisis') deals with important issues but needed a higher standard of numeracy and greater theoretical clarity.

They claim that only in the period March to November '74 did take home pay rise faster than prices. The table that they produce to prove this does nothing of the sort. On the contrary, if one corrects the errors of addition which make it an absurdity as published, it shows that from June '70 to March '74, weekly earnings rose 56.6 percent, whilst the retail price index rose by 53.6 percent. Anyway, what should have been shown was not average weekly earnings, but net real earnings after deductions. For the average male worker, these went up from £15.85 to £17.91 from 1970 to '73 measured in terms of 1963 prices (see Bacon and Eltis, table 6.1).

If one abstracts from the invariant contradictions of every and any capitalist society one can identify the following contradictions of accumulation in Britain, starting with the most fundamental and moving to the most acute:

1. the exhaustion of the latent reserve army, setting a maximum to the surplus value that can be produced;
2. the rising organic composition of capital with its ensuing declining rate of profit;
3. the obstacles posed to the production of relative surplus value by the strength of trade and craft organisation among the industrial proletariat;
4. the declining share of surplus value going as profits due to the rise in the unproductive sector, and the increasing share of surplus value going as rent. Identification of these contradictions simultaneously indicates the sort of recuperation of the crisis that is possible.

The structural changes appropriate to the resolution of the above contradictions are, in order:

1. the tapping of external latent reserve armies through immigration, or the creation of an internal reserve by drawing a higher proportion of women into work producing surplus value;
2. the increasing displacement of private by state capital, whose investments being subject more to political than immediate financial criteria are less susceptible to influence by the declining rate of profit;
3. the introduction of some spectrum of workers control or participation; replacement of craft based trade unions by industrial unions;
4. a reduction in the mass of unproductive labour, nationalisation of land.

In addition to these progressive (in the historical sense) possibilities that lead towards resolution of the contradictions, and at the same time open up new areas of class struggle, there is the reactionary option to which the bourgeoisie always tries to resort: i.e. increased exploitation by reducing real wages and intensifying labour. This resolves nothing, merely mitigating temporarily the situation in favour of the bourgeoisie. If no more is done the underlying contradictions will reassert themselves.

In the light of the above, it is clear that the few half hearted and indecisive measures by the labour government described in the Fine/Harris article are by no means sufficient to resolve the immediate contradictions precipitating the crisis. This reveals the weakness of their treatment of the state, which verges on a conspiracy theory. State action is far less conscious and planned than they indicate, so the present dithering will continue until one of the major social classes is able to force through the restructuring on their own terms. At present neither of the classes has the political and ideological coherence necessary to effect this resolution.
Paul Cockshott
Sale

CHESHIRE CAT SYNDROME

DURING the last two years of social contract we have seen substantial cuts in working class living standards. These economic attacks through the IMF, banks, City of London financiers etc, have provided the basis for an ideological war on working class organisations.

We have seen what happens when union leaders participate in government and management decisions; it is that much easier for government and management to get their decisions implemented, under the guise of 'responsible leadership'. In this way the social contract has been a means of helping capitalism survive, not a means of overcoming it.

Individuals have effectively been seduced by the appeal to practice, of getting somewhere at last. Now they are even arguing with bourgeois economics, as though exchange rates and inflation were separate from the activities of the working class. Much of what David Purdy (*The Leveller* No. 3) says has already been said as a rationale for acceptance of the social contract by union leaders, politicians and money lenders. It is as though they are trying to wish the class war away. Or at least, by accepting bourgeois institutions and economic aims, they hope to 'co-opt' workers into such a view. You could call it the Cheshire cat syndrome, or the more someone smiles the less you see.

Andy Harrison
Salford



BAHRAIN murder suspect dies of asthma

To the outside world and the Western Press the Arabian Gulf is an area of golden peace and prosperity. Since the quelling of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO) last year the apparent stability of the lower Gulf has been a source of considerable satisfaction in Washington and London. Whatever the price of oil, it's even more important the stuff keeps flowing.

But towards the end of last year the small island state of Bahrain was all agog at a mysterious trial, which quickly took on political overtones. Five men were accused of the murder of a publisher, Abdulla al Madani, 38. Madani's paper was the right wing weekly *Al-Mawakes* (Viewpoint). A murder trial in Bahrain is rare enough—the last murder was nearly three years ago and that was still unsolved. What excited curiosity in this case, however, was that the Government alleged the accused were members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Arabian Gulf (PFLOAG), a shadowy organisation known to have links with the struggling PFLO.

PFLOAG is not a formal body and association with it in Bahrain is not illegal. Indeed, the Front has two members in the Bahrain National Assembly, in which Madani had been leader of a conservative moslem group, before the Amir had decided to dispense with the services of legislature in 1975. That did not prevent police enquiries from being thoroughly routine, however sources on the island claim that originally six men were arrested, a claim the Government tacitly admits by saying that one died in hospital of asthma. One of the European nurses at the Government Hospital commented: "I can't tell you what he died from but it wasn't asthma."

Another of the accused appeared in courts

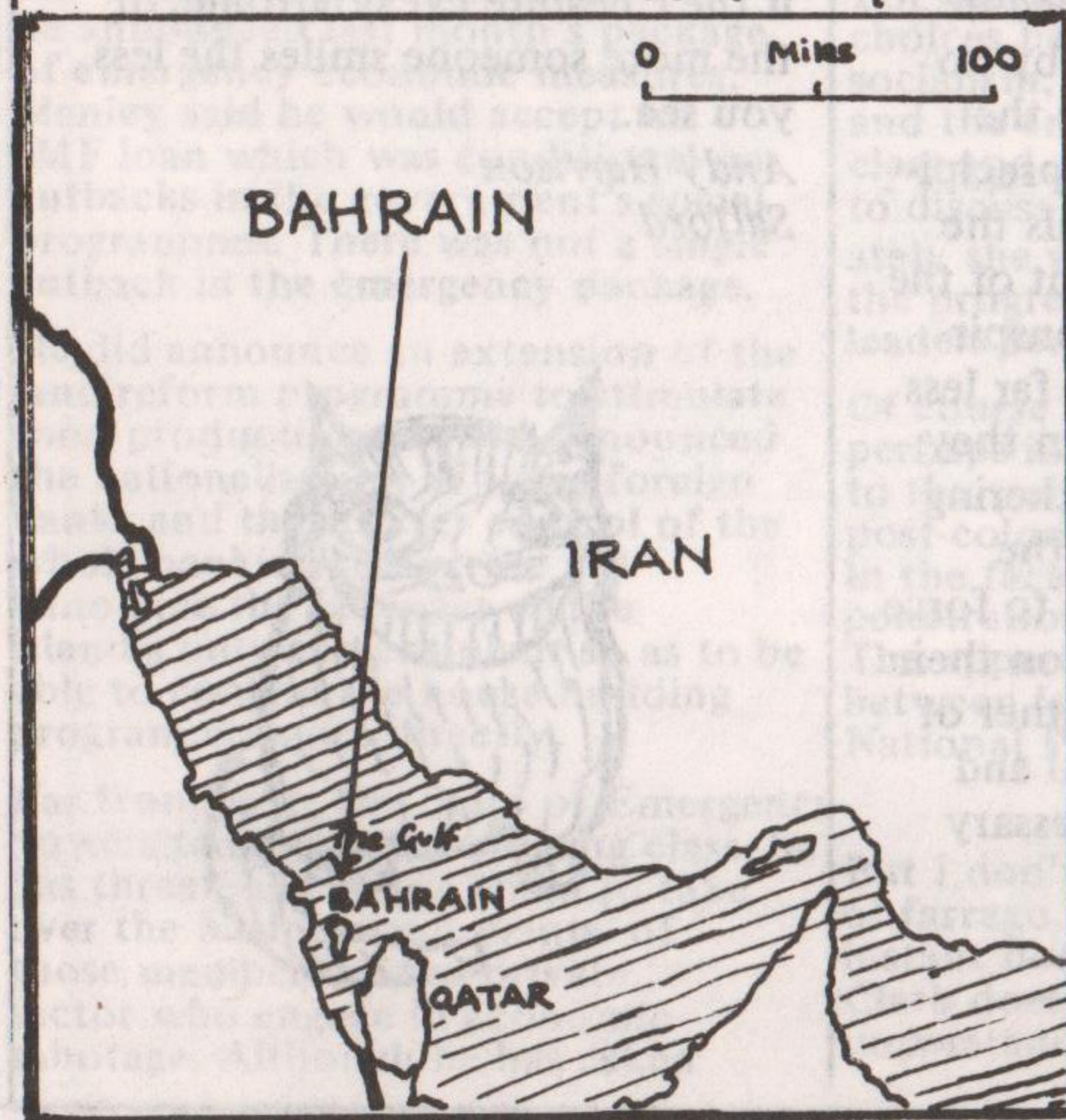
in Manama, Bahrain's capital, with a broken leg police averred had been caused by jumping from a window in 'a fit of repentance'. The age of alleged leader of the gang, Mohammad Taher Mohammad Ali Al-Mahari, was raised from 19 to 21 just before the trial, presumably when the police remembered that 21 is the minimum age for execution in Bahrain. The authorities were worried by the fact that Mohammad Taher Mohammad was a private in the Defence Force and at the trial the prosecution said the murder had been committed with his bayonet.

Immediately before the trial the Minister of Information admitted to journalists that he did not know what the procedure for the trial was. But that did not prevent the prosecution from demanding and getting the death penalty for two of the accused, Mohammad Taher Mohammad and Ibrahim Abdulla Abdel-Hussain Marhoun, 25. A third man, Ali Ahmed Hussain Falah, 21, a technician, was sentenced to life imprisonment. Two others, who had pleaded not guilty to conspiracy in the murder, were acquitted: Ahmad Maki Ebrahim, 27, a clerk, and Abdul Amir Mansour Hussain, 24, a teacher. Both the prosecution and the defence are believed to be appealing against the verdicts.

The orthodox methods of the police were further demonstrated by the way in which the arrests were made. A neighbour of Madani said some men in a red Datsun had called at his house to ask Madani's address. The police promptly hauled in every owner of a red Datsun on the island. It was a salutary example of how close to the surface legal repression is in the Gulf, even in a relatively advanced place like Bahrain.



Although the defence at the trial argued as a mitigating factor that the accused had been under the influence of drink it is still significant that they should have picked on Madani. The following in Bahrain of the PFLOAG is certainly larger than the Government would admit, and apart from obvious links with PFLO there is evidence of other links with the United Arab Emirates, Palestinians in Kuwait, and anti-Shah elements across the Gulf in Iran. Because of quietly but efficient repression, politics in Bahrain is mysterious to the outsider. Yet the occasional public appearances of bodies like the PFLOAG and events such as the murder of a political enemy point to more restlessness beneath the surface than the bland exterior might lead the observer to suppose. It cannot be a welcome thought in London and Washington.



OPEN

Dear Professor Miliband,

I WAS very interested in your article on the need for a genuine socialist party in Britain and I liked your analysis of the Labour Left, 'entrism' and the Communist Party. The other articles on 1956 and Hungary confirm why the CP is not the answer, and the petty sectarianism of another contribution was revealing of at least one leading propagandist of the Labour Left. But you don't say where the much needed party is going to come from, or how it will be formed, and I thought your treatment of what you term the 'ultra left' was much too cursory, particularly as it is to the left of the CP that the new party will be formed.

As you say, the myth of transforming the Labour Party into a socialist party is the most crippling of all illusions on the British left. The time is ripe for shattering it. The problem, however, is how.

I agree that 'entrism' has never amounted to serious left-wing politics and that socialists who have tried transforming the Labour Party are usually themselves transformed by its rituals and routine betrayals. In fact these are counterproductive strategies which keep the myth alive. Demanding that Labour implement socialist policies seems about as sensible as demanding that pigs should fly. But do it often enough and people might even come to believe that pigs can be made to fly!

The CP does indeed foster the transformability myth by its total failure and inability to challenge the Labour Party and by its support for the Labour Left, which it imagines it can use as a bridge to the Labour rank and file. But, as you say, this bridge is in fact controlled by the Labour leadership, and the Labour Left provides a link not for the CP but for the Merlyn Reeses and the Jim Callaghans, not to mention the 'has-been lefts' like Michael Foot and Anthony Wedgwood Benn.

You also rule out the CP because its internal regime means it is dominated by "hacks, old and young". This fits in with John Saville's interesting account of how he and E. P. Thompson started *The Reasoner* to try and get internal discussion in the Party after Khrushchev's 1956 speech about Stalin being a mass-murderer (before Khrushchev's own invasion of Hungary showed that Stalinism still lived, and persuaded Saville and Thompson to leave the party).

Internal democracy is crucially important. However, I think it can be over-emphasised in a one-sided way, and sometimes is by ex-Party members from this era — perhaps understandably considering their feelings of guilt at what they had previously supported. But it is misleading if internal democracy is considered in isolation from general Party politics. Then the lack of internal democracy rather than wrong 'external' politics (eg. 'Socialism in One Country') can appear to be the overriding problem. I think Malcolm MacEwen in his article on the CP in 1956 falls into this trap and he comes close to repudiating democratic centralism as such because of its distortion by Stalinism.

My main criticism of your own article is that by simply lumping together all organisations to the left of the CP you cover up differences between them, differences which your own analysis of the Labour Left and 'entrism' would indicate to be of crucial importance when it comes to building a genuine socialist party. In particular, you miss the fact that alone amongst the organisations of any size on the left, the International Socialists (now the Socialist Workers Party) have not 'entered' or oriented on the Labour Party.

LETTER TO RALPH MILIBAND

THE SOCIALIST REGISTER 1976 marked the twentieth anniversary of the Russian invasion of Hungary and Khrushchev's speech about Stalin with a series of articles on these events and their impact on the British Communist Party and the Left in general. Ralph Miliband rounded off the series with a discussion of the present limitations of the British Left, suggesting it should now "move on" to form a new socialist party.

This open letter was written in reply to Ralph Miliband by a rank and file member of the International Socialists, now the Socialist Workers Party.

Building the new party

IS has been consistently opposed to the various left-wing tactics which, whatever the intention, have the effect of keeping alive the myth that the Labour Party is transformable. It has stood out against the rightward drift in Britain over the last two years — most noticeably in its vigorous campaign against racism since last June, but also in its resisting the general rightward drift of the left, which has resulted in the other groups snuggling closer to the Labour Party and furthering the myth of its transformability. By standing firm through a difficult period IS (SWP) is now growing quite quickly as the clearly differentiated socialist alternative which must be available if disillusioned Labour members are actually to leave the Labour Party and be politically active.

The new party must, as you say, be able to attract disillusioned Labour lefts. Is it perhaps because IS has seriously begun to do this that Ken Coates, a propagator of the transformability myth and Wedgwood Bennism through the Institute of Workers Control, should decide to use a review of David Widgery's *The Left in Britain 1956-68* to attack IS generally and Tony Cliff personally, and in tones much nastier than he used against IS some years ago?

It's true all organisations to the left of the CP are still small, but IS (the SWP) is at least three times bigger than any of the others. As a rank and file member I would dispute the inclusion of IS (and some of the other groups for that matter) in your blanket criticisms of doctrinal sectarianism, a belief in the imminent final crisis of capitalism, and internal rigidity. These are certainly characteristics of some groups, most notably the Workers Revolutionary Party, but IS (SWP) most emphatically does not believe that capitalism is about to go into a final collapse. As for organisational rigidity, experimentation and flexibility are nearer the mark, and IS (SWP) relates first and foremost to the present rather than fetishising the words of Trotsky from the Thirties.

Overestimating the present strength of IS (SWP) would be more dangerous than underestimating it, but you make the latter mistake, and I think we do have a good chance of reaching your figure of 10,000 members in the next few years, though only time (and a lot of work) will tell. In terms of active membership and in-

fluence we are already much closer to catching up with the CP than membership figures would suggest.

The recent past was not easy for socialists with the 'social contract' preventing a real fight-back against mass unemployment and falling living standards. But whereas the CP-dominated Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions simply hasn't been seen during this period, the Right to Work Campaign, in which IS is the crucial force, mounted two major protest marches against unemployment, the one to the Brighton TUC the largest ever held in Britain. Two weeks ago it held a Delegate Conference against the 'cuts' with over 700 trade union delegates and representatives present from all the main disputes in Britain, and that was despite quite widespread and sometimes quite ludicrous sectarian opposition from sections of the CP, though many CP members do actively support the Campaign, and the Conference called for joint action with the Liaison Committee, which is apparently being revived. IS (SWP) is still small but it can no longer be described as "...without any grip on the political life of the Labour movement", which as you rightly say is what really matters.

You suggest that the left groups are small and doomed to isolation because they adopt the 'Bolshevik model of October 1917'. This 'model', you say, has virtually no appeal in the British working class movement. However, I would argue that workers are not in fact presented with, nor do they perceive, the sort of 'blueprint' you imply, and the present smallness of all organisations to the left of Labour, including the CP, results primarily from half a century of what you describe as Labour's "...crushingly dominant position" in working class electoral politics.

As we have seen there is reason to think this dominance is waning. To the extent that IS (SWP) could be said to have adopted a 'Bolshevik model' it is because revolutionary socialists have to differentiate themselves from the CP's 'parliamentary road to socialism' which has been proved (most tragically in Chile) not to work.

It is also a fact that until recently, IS (SWP) did not stand in elections. But that was for strictly practical reasons and not because of some 'principle' embodied in a 'Bolshevik model' (indeed the Bolsheviks did stand in elections when legally permitted). In the past, given our resources and Labour's dominance, standing in elections was not a serious option; now it has become one precisely because of the recent growth of disillusionment with Labour.

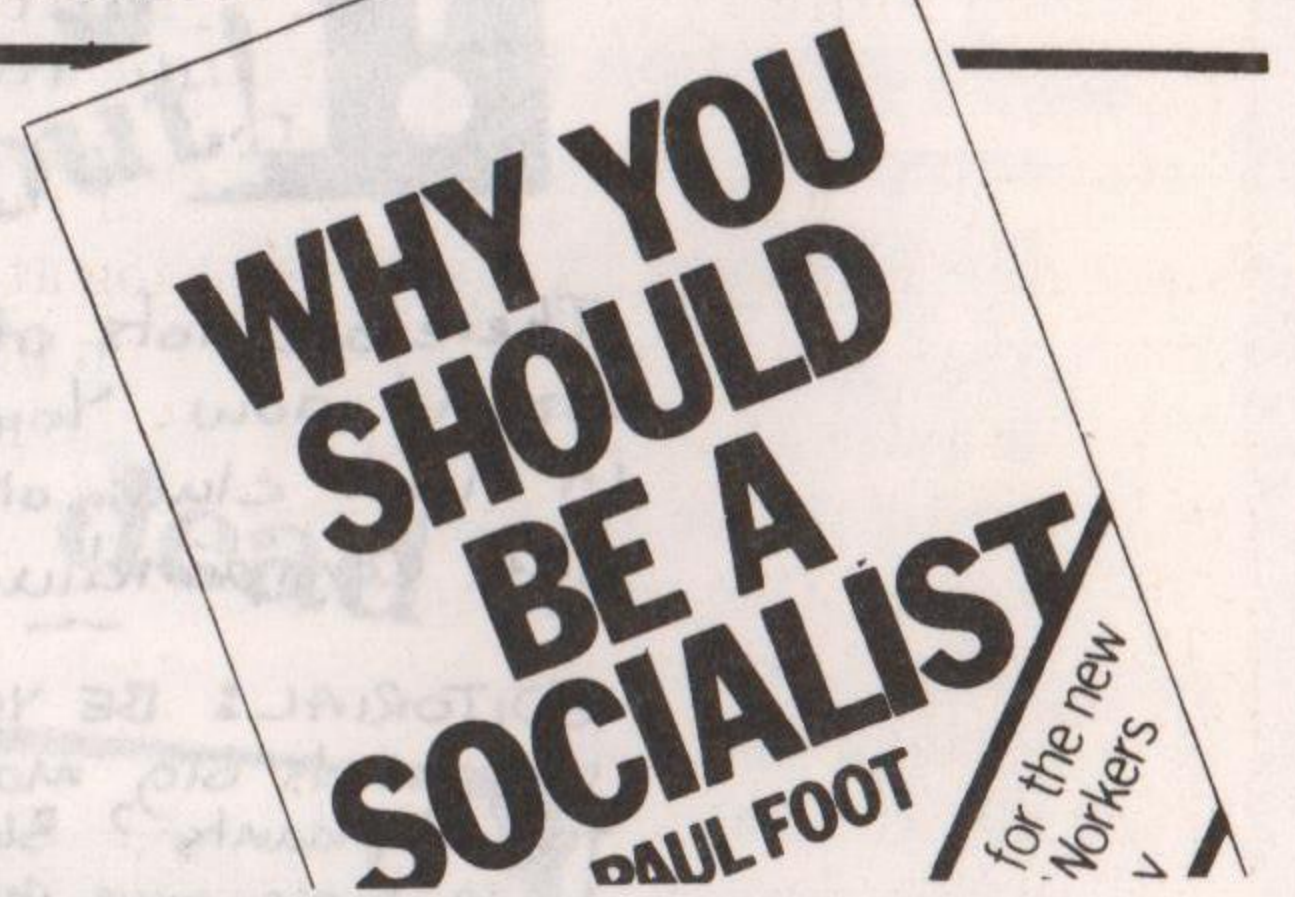
It is not clear what you mean by "...a real measure of electoral legitimation", but IS now intends to intervene consistently in elections to the limit of our resources, with at least fifty Socialist Worker candidates at the next General Election. This 'electoral legitimation' is an important element in building the Socialist Workers Party, not least because in Britain 'politics' is very much identified in the popular mind with Parliamentary elections.

While this electoral element in IS (SWP)

strategy diverges from what you suggest by the term 'Bolshevik model', as well as implying in the British situation a type of party significantly different from the Bolshevik's, we can learn from the Bolshevik experience. The task they accomplished is still the task that has to be accomplished, albeit in different conditions from Russia in 1917, namely forcing the bourgeoisie out of power for capitalism most assuredly will not be voted out of existence.

Despite your very direct and fundamental criticisms of the Labour Left and the CP, I feel that in lumping together the left groups in the term 'ultra left', and in attributing to them a 'Bolshevik model', you betray the fact that you yourself are still orienting, albeit critically, on the Labour Party and the CP. But as you yourself say, the time has come for 'moving on'. On the central point of your article, the need for socialists to explore seriously the formation of a genuine socialist party, there is no disagreement. I would simply add that you give no indication how this party will be formed, and I am sure you will agree it is not an academic question. is — now the Socialist Workers Party — has already begun to explore in practice the building of a new party, with modest but exciting beginnings.

Yours fraternally,
James Anderson



We socialists are not fanatics or timeservers. We are socialists because we see the prospect which life holds out for all working people.

We want the commitment of workers who laugh and live and want to end the wretchedness and despair which shuts love and laughter out of so many lives.

We do not have to spend the rest of our lives, and leave our children to spend the rest of their lives, wrestling in struggle against a mean and despotic ruling class.

Society can be changed, but only if masses of working people abandon the rotten shipwreck of the 'leave it to us' reformers, and commit themselves to change from below.

This is our case. Will you read it?

Please send me copies of WHY YOU SHOULD BE

Please send me copies of WHY YOU SHOULD BE A SOCIALIST at

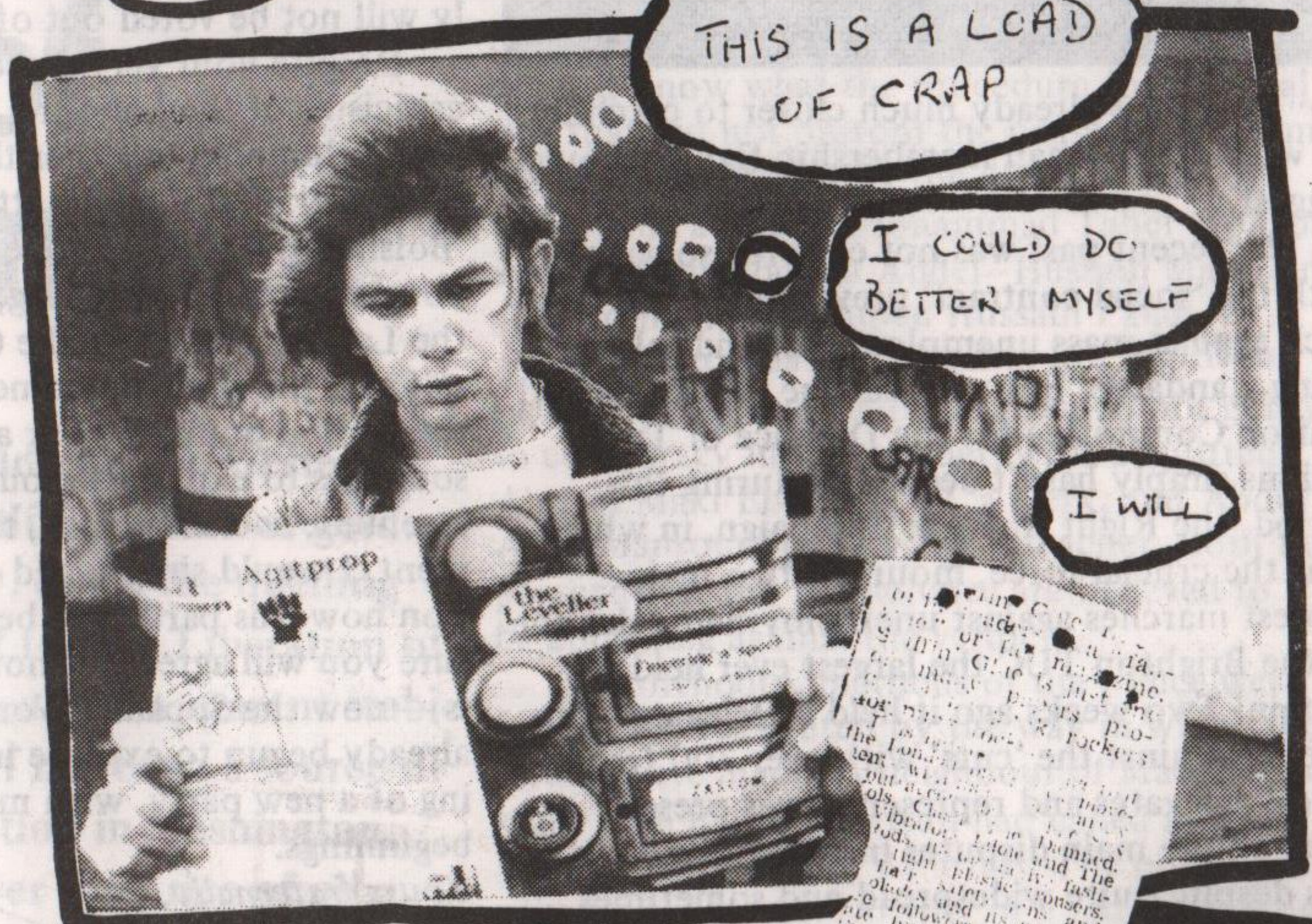
- One copy for 50p
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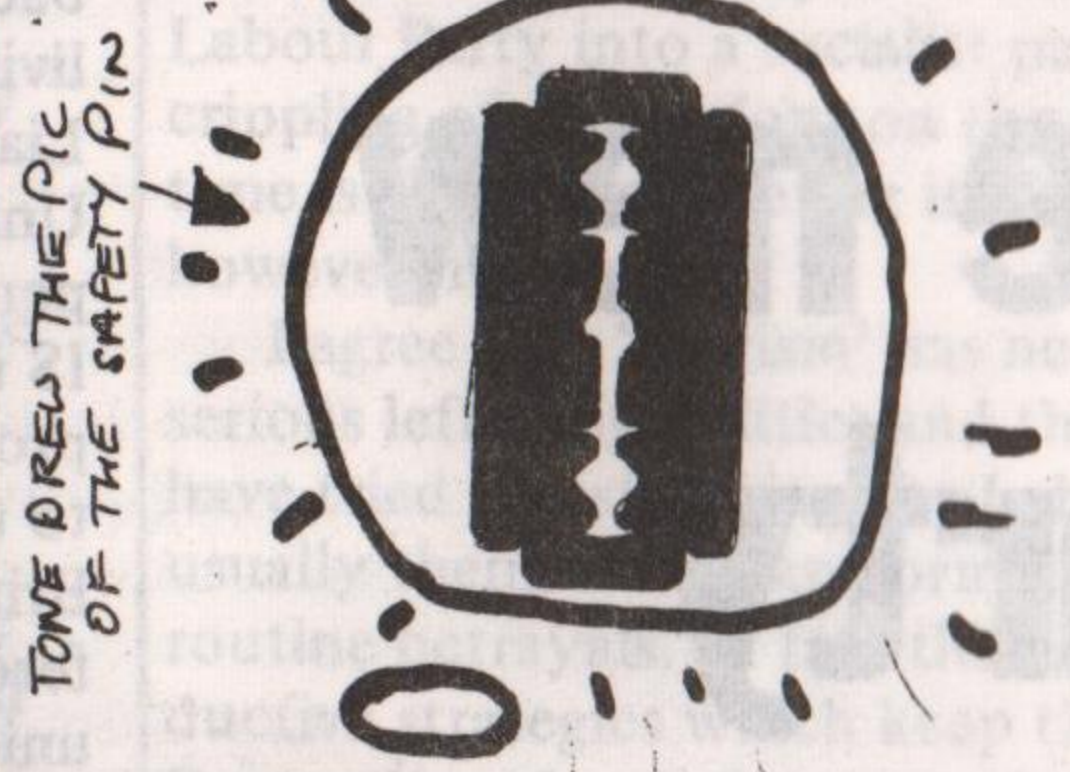


THIS IS A LOAD OF CRAP

I COULD DO BETTER MYSELF

I WILL

Barclays Bank will pay up to £50,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person responsible.



TONY DRES THE PIC OF THE SAFETY PIN

FIRST FOLLOW THE HACKERS FOR EDS STORY

There are lots of fanzines around now. You can buy them in Punk clubs or some bookshops like Compendium.

EDITORIAL: BE YOUR OWN PRESS BARRON who needs big machines and 600 rolls for elephants? Bloody hell. Anyone can have their own paper. Just go down a club and get a bit steamed. Come home pissed and go through the Kitchen cupboard. Scissors with bacon grease and Yesterdays headlines for tomorrow's news and GLUE. Write down what you think, cut out your favourite pix and stick it all down. Then bang-away to your nearest photocopier and there you are down at the scene selling off copies at 10p a throw. Rupert Murdoch of Dean street!

These journalists and experts and artists are nothing special. They're just trying to get their STICKY FINGERS on the money. What do they know? They don't speak for anyone but themselves and their bosses.

Kick these shits into their own machines. Do it yourself. All you need is GLUE!!

This mag was got together by Tony. N. + Nigel Tee. Russell put his opinion in and Rob did the stupid drawing - we are seeing to him. Carol made a lovely stew. Also thank to Ian + Jerry.



Jobless worst since war

RELIVE IT

2

IF YOU DONT LIKE THIS YOU DONT HAVE TO READ IT DO YOU

OXFAM ASSISTANT ORGANISER

THIS WHOLE WAS PUT TOGETHER ETC. ETC. with the help of a box of safety pins. All the photos are ripped out of other mags. Sorry it's all hand-written but I haven't got a typewriter. Anyway, anybody who uses a typewriter is a GIRL. I don't like fanzines anyway, they're boring and unconstructive, but it's better than reading THE SUN...

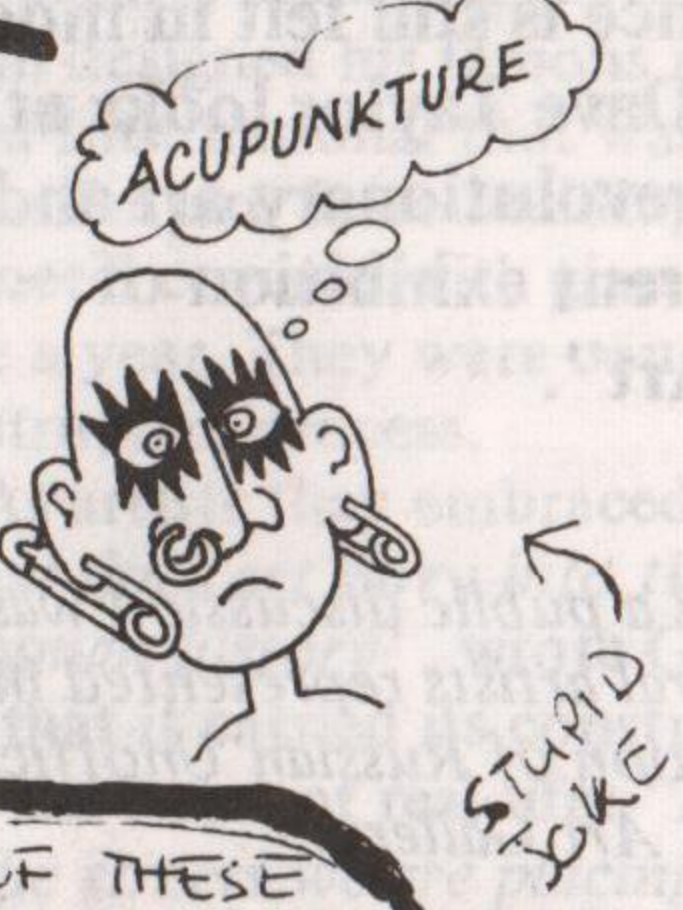
EDITORIAL FROM THE FANZINE BONDAGE NO: 1 (GLENVIEW)

... AND SELLS IT

SHOCK SUPERHATE

COMPANIES

Granada's giant £18.1M profit



I SAY ARE YOU ONE OF THESE PUNK PEOPLE. I FIND THIS A MOST INTERESTING PHENOMENON. I AM OF COURSE SOMETHING OF A REBEL MYSELF - A MEMBER OF THE COLLEGE MARX READING GROUP. I COULD HELP YOU HARNESS YOUR SPONTANEOUS WORKING CLASS REVOLT TO A RIGOROUS THEORY OF SOCIETY. HOW ABOUT IT?

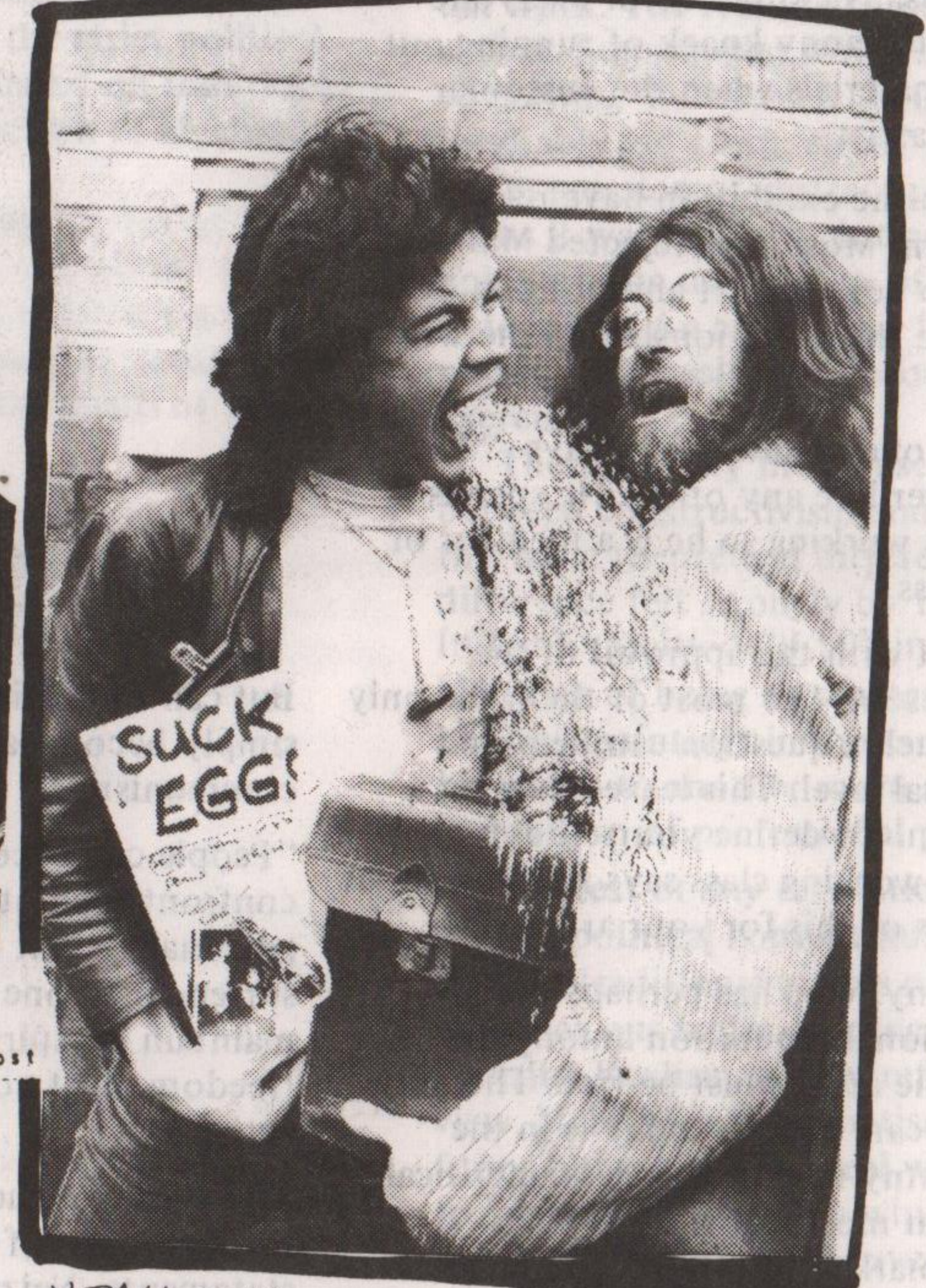
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SLAUGHTER!

the living dig out their dead

4



YEAH THIS IS THE END!!!

Ruthless torture in Iran.

A SICK JOKE

NEXT WEEK: How I landed in jail with a junkie



DOES YOUR CONSTIPATION GIVE YOU HEADACHE?

EMPTY SPACE

Jobs at risk

THE LAW MUST BE THE LAW IT IS agreed that Post

YOUR POUND'S WORTH MORE!!

Recent exhibitions of the work of Naum Gabo and Kasimir Malevich at the Tate Gallery have afforded the opportunity to see the work of two artists intimately linked with the Russian Revolution and whose influence is still felt in modern Western art. Dave Taylor looks at the problems of revolutionary art and reviews the current exhibition of "Unofficial Art".

On January 18 a public discussion was held with several artists represented in the current exhibition of Russian Unofficial Art at the ICA Art Gallery.

IT IS not only personal intimidation that faces "unofficial" artists in Russia. In 1974 an exhibition of unofficial art in Moscow was swiftly brought to an end by the intervention of the state machine in the form of a bulldozer. Public outcry led to a second authorised exhibition a fortnight later which was so successful that the organiser, Alexander Glezer, was given the choice of emigration to the West or a labour camp in Siberia. He now runs the Russian Museum In Exile near Paris.

That any unofficial art has developed at all is quite an achievement on the part of the artists. There are two types of art shop in Russia. One is for accredited artists with an official permit and has good stocks of high-quality materials. The other is for everyone else and has an uncanny knack of running out of the desired materials when the customer is an unofficial artist.

All the artists in the exhibition have rejected Socialist Realism. Most have rejected Marxism and any relationship between art and politics. So how do they see their relationship to the working class?

Victor Kulbak, one of the artists, says: "The artists is a worker like any other. He spends 90% of his time working so he is a member of the working class."

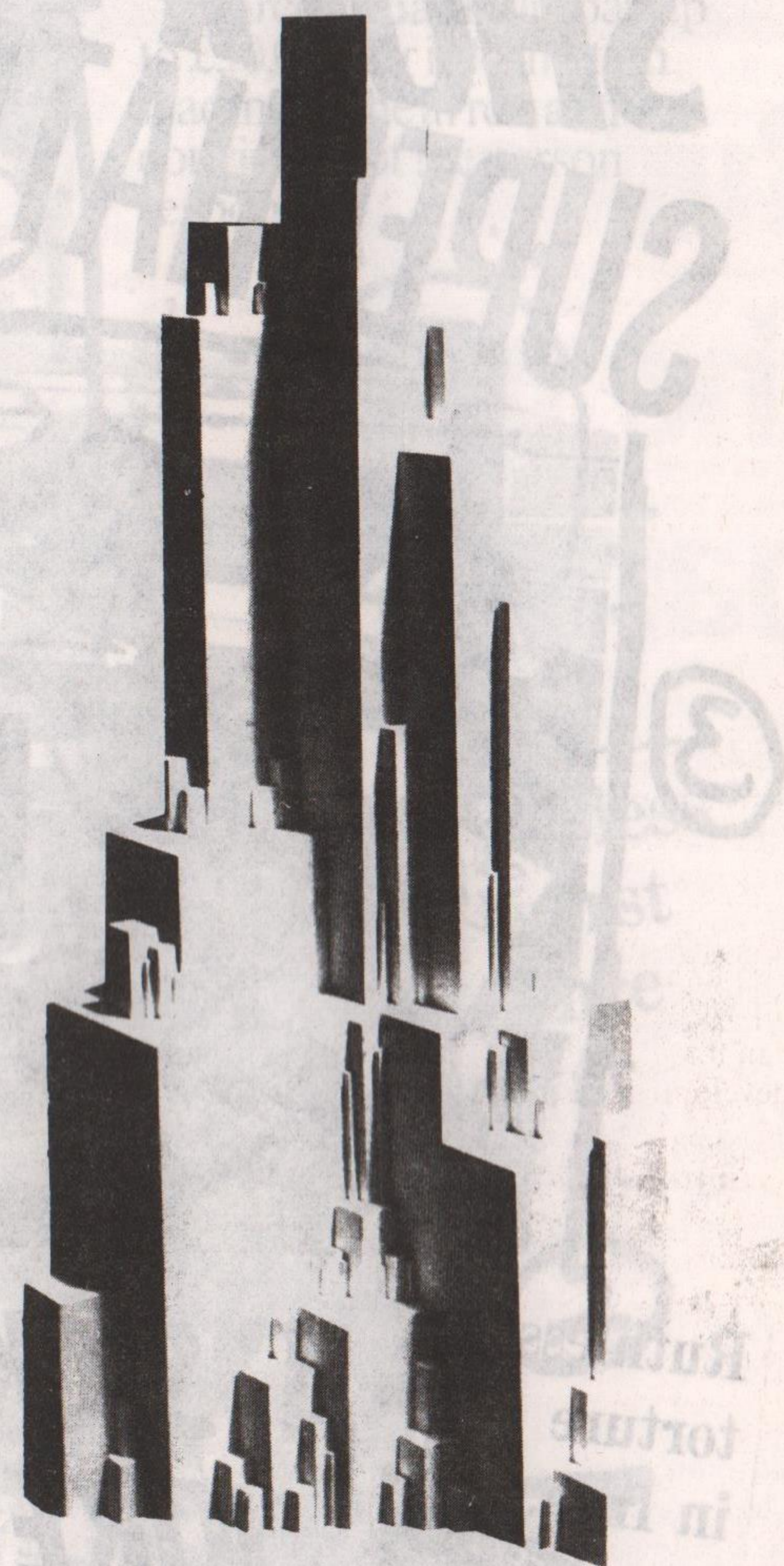
The remark met with the approval of the other artists present. For most of them the only way in which such a question can be posed is at this personal level. This leaves them in a political vacuum. To define yourself as a member of the working class says nothing about the implications of this for your art.

Ernst Neizvestny, who has perhaps the widest international reputation among the artists says, "The artist must be free. The only place the artist can be free today is in the West." Neizvestny is, however, less uncritical of the West than most of the others. He qualifies his remark:

"What is freedom, what is unfreedom. I had a six hour conversation with Sartre in Moscow. He said to me: "Freedom is an absolute concept". I said, freedom is relative. The Party official has more freedom than the worker, the Officer has more freedom than the Private; the West more freedom than Russia. Sartre is concerned for his ego. Since I was weaned my whole life has been to protect my ego".

SOVIET ART revolution or dissent?

Kasimir Malevich,
Architectonia, 1924-6.
Suprematist Sculpture



But can't unofficial artists living in the West simply become a tool of capitalism against communism?

"People can become tools when two systems confront each other. For the artist it is his personality that must ensure he does not surrender to one system or another. He must maintain his spiritual freedom, but spiritual freedom must not be confused with political activity."

This is one of the main themes that runs through most of the artists' work and statements. Neizvestny defines Socialist Realism as a "total lack of personalism - any personalisation is regarded with hostility".

The turn away from politics leads most artists to religion. Mikhail Shemyakin and Vladimir Ivanov say in their manifesto of Metaphysical synthetism, "Art means the paths of beauty leading towards God. The artist must always aspire to God." Kulbak says, "The idea of an anti-religious art is as irrational as dry water".

Like Solzhenitsyn, the rejection of Marxism and the embracing of religion leads some of these artists to defend the West as the 'free world'. Alexander Glezer says: "Only one system threatens the whole world and that is communism." Echoes of Solzhenitsyn.

The main influences on the work of artists have come from the West. Surrealism, the anti-fascist art of the 1930s in Italy, and modern Pop Art all figure with different intensities in different works. The influence of Surrealism can be seen particularly in the work of Edward Zelenin. The treatment of the individual, so important in almost all the artists' work, is in his case isolated, divorced from social relations. As he says, "many present artists have an urge towards metaphysics. Art is not metaphysics but it urges towards metaphysics. This is a good system for the conveyance of human existence."

Metaphysics, religion, abstract personality. These are the most common themes to be

found in the work, yet some of the artists take their inspiration from Russian artists of the 'revolutionary period'.

Prominent among these is Lev Nussberg. In the sixties he led a group known as the 'movement' which drew its inspiration directly from Tatlin, Malevich, Gabo and Pevsner. His art has a more practical application than, for example, the religious nostalgia of Kalinin. Futuristic designs for industrial landscapes and towns were produced, but a cool reaction from the public as well as Party officials led these artists to include other elements such as dance and improvisation in their work in attempt at a popularisation.

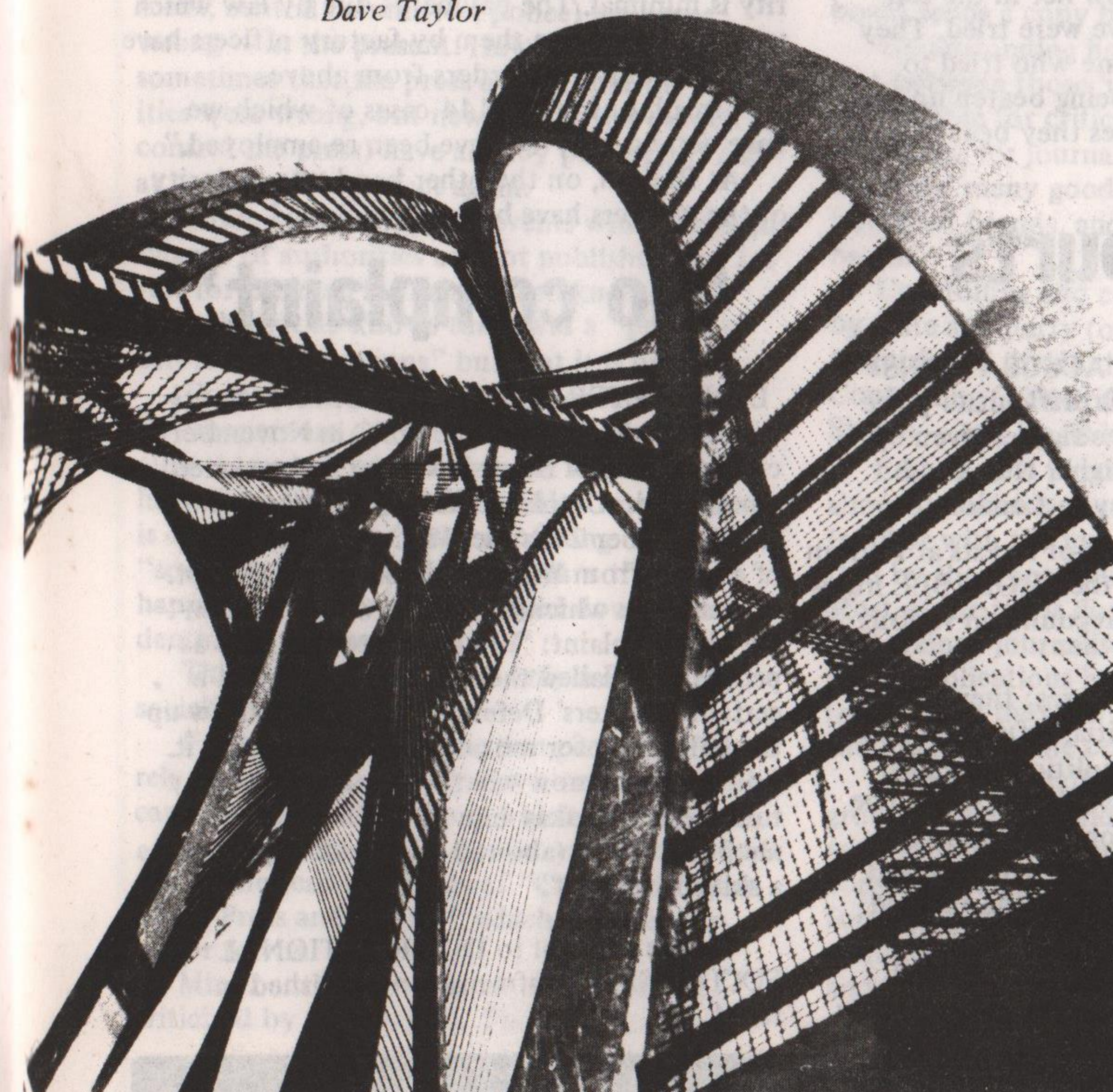
Relentless of their criticism of Official Art, none of these artists appear to possess any coherent political philosophy. Freedom and personality are things the artist is supposed to attain in his aesthetic enclave. In the West today this means usually the freedom to become irrelevant to the lives of the majority of the people. Neutrality breeds elitism.

This is not the intention of most of the artists but the non-interventionist nature of their art confines it to the walls of galleries and the notebooks of critics. Some, like the kinetic and constructivist artists, attempt to locate their work in the realm of the real world, but even these artists tend to produce structures beyond the bounds of realisation. Artists such as Neizvestny do have a grasp of the political problems of producing art in the Western intellectualized artistic environment, but their most stringent criticisms are still directed towards the Official Line.

There has been a tendency in the West to either embrace the current unofficial art for its anti-communism or else to neglect it as an underdeveloped copy of Western art. Neither reaction gets us nearer to an understanding of it. Its supposed underdevelopment is not surprising given that most Russian artists are totally deprived of any contact with anything other than official art, and most of the work does have a powerful emotional force.

Its limitations, however, are to be found in the naive political assumptions of some of the artists who accept the dominant Western tradition of elitist art and their contradictory desire to make some statement without getting involved in the messy business of politics.

Dave Taylor



Naum Gabo, view from below a piece of sculpture, Rotterdam Construction.

Art in the state vice

WHEN life ceases to be inspiring so does art. Soviet Socialist Realism is an uninspiring art. It is about people: workers in factories, on the collective farms or Party officials. It is about the living yet it is a dead art.

The art of the revolutionary period in Russia rarely took the human form as its subject-matter but it is a vital art, alive with the force of the revolution. Over fifty years ago, Malevich proclaimed, "the suprematists have renounced the human face (and natural objects in general) and have found new symbols with which to render direct feelings".

Malevich's suprematism was the forerunner of some of the most important developments in twentieth century abstract art. For 25 years, from 1932 until the brief Khrushchev 'thaw', the works of the most original artists of the revolution were kept under lock and key in the vaults of museums away from the Russian public and artists.

When the thaw froze over, the locks turned again. The so-called 'formalists' and 'decadents' such as Malevich are seen as a threat to the official theory of Socialist Realism. The answer is to be found not simply in the fact that they didn't paint happy workers but in their approach towards the role of art in creating a new society.

The 1934 Congress of Soviet Writers laid down the basis of the socialist realism: "We demand of the artist a truthful, historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development. Moreover he must contribute to the ideological transformation and education of the workers in the spirit of socialism." There is a scientific method which he must adopt. His work must contain three elements; partynost (partyness), klassovost (classness) and narodnost (peopleness). The result is the strict political determination of content based on traditional realism and the crude reflection of idealised reality.

The work of Gabo, Malevich, Tatlin, Lissitsky and others stands in stark contrast to this. "Space and time are the only forms on which life is built and hence art must be constructed", wrote Gabo in his Realist Manifesto of 1920.

Gabo and Tatlin, the leading constructivists, pushed this view to its limits. Gabo designed architectural structures more advanced than ever before, including the layout of an airport. Tatlin designed his famous monument to The Third International that was to be twice as high as the Empire State building, would be made of metal covered with glass and would revolve once a year. They were concerned with art as a constructive process.

As artists they embraced the Revolution. "What does art carry into this unfolding epoch of human history", wrote Gabo. The answer was that it carried its constructive process right into the heart of real life: "In the squares and on the streets we are placing our work convinced that art must not remain a sanctuary for the idle, a consolation for the weary and a justification for the lazy. Art should attend us everywhere that life flows and acts... at the bench, at the table, at work, at rest, at play; on working days and holidays... at home and on the road... in order that the flame to live should not extinguish in mankind."

Malevich was equally as committed to the Revolution as the constructivists but his exploration of form took him in the opposite direction. For Malevich art was about the exploration of pure form. This took him out of the streets and the factories and into purely artistic creation.

"Only when they are free from the encumbrance of practical utility (that is when they are placed in museums) will their truly artistic, absolute value be recognised", he wrote of works of art in his book, *The Non-Objective World* in 1927.

In his work he seeks to abolish the distinction between form and content. The geometrical plane is the only pictorial element in his suprematist work. The real-life force of the Revolution is absent. Suprematist forms are 'constructed out of nothing' he claimed. This idealist philosophy inevitably led to an 'elitist' art concerned with the expression of abstract principles. In artistic terms it was truly revolutionary but its actual link with the new reality of Russia was extremely tenuous. An art of pure form in no way impinges upon reality, it becomes an intellectual exercise.

The similarity in the use of abstract forms between constructivism and suprematism hides this basic theoretical difference. And it was a difference felt strongly by the artists concerned. In the exhibition "0.10" in 1915 Tatlin accused Malevich of being an amateur and refused to hang his paintings in the same room. He moved his works to another room and erected a notice, 'exhibition of professional painters'.

The test of any revolutionary art is not its overtly political content but how far it revolutionises traditional modes of expression and increases our understanding of the world. Socialist Realism merely reflects the official view. Malevich's suprematism explores new forms but ignores the real world. It is difficult to imagine his white on white canvas as impinging on the reality of the average factory worker.

Abstract forms cannot be rejected, however, as subjective and irrelevant. The constructivists and futurists by taking their work onto the streets and into the cafes forced people to consider the social role of art. When artists like Gabo use new forms to question the way in which art is constructed they provide new ways of questioning the way the whole social structure is constructed. The constructivists posed questions. The revolutionary implications of this can be judged by the ruthlessness of their suppression.

POLAND

POLAND

POLAND

Report from Radom

THE LEVELLER has received documents from the Warsaw-based Workers' defence Committee (WDC) detailing the repressive measures of the Polish state after the riots of 1976 and the resistance to the repression.

The documents tell a sorry story of brutality and stupidity - but also of the bravery and organisational capacity of workers in the face of the bureaucracy.

The Stettin shipyard strikes of 1970-71 were followed by efforts to buy off the workers, with the state gambling on the international boom of 1971-3 to mortgage Poland's future. When the boom collapsed, the state tried to make the workers pay for its mismanagement by cutting wages through sharp price increases, particularly for food.

Last June prices were raised by as much as 100 per cent for some items. There was a spontaneous revolt. At Radom, a major industrial town near Warsaw, workers burnt down the party headquarters and at the Ursus tractor plant they tore up the railway lines. The price increases were withdrawn within 24 hours. But the state's reaction was brutal, as the following extracts show.

"AT AROUND 10.00am we started out for the meat factory. We formed a procession in Zeromski Street. We took lorries full of meat out of the factory to show there was plenty, but nobody took any; the lorries were taken back full to the factory. Around 11 o'clock the demonstration went down Zeromski Street singing the Internationale and the national anthem. People were shouting 'Down with increases!' Most of the demonstrators were young. It was very disciplined, everything was calm and ordered. In front of the council offices everyone hissed and whistled but we didn't break any windows. Then we went to the Party offices. The building was occupied by workers. Three people, including a girl, pulled down the red flag and cleaned their shoes with it. In its place we pulled up the national flag. At that point people started singing the national anthem. All that time negotiations were going on: the demonstrators demanded a meeting with the Central Committee and cancellation of the price increases. We hoped for a reply within two hours. Around two o'clock a second group joined the demonstrators. They were bringing people in by car and tractor trailers. Between two and three o'clock the workers blocked the traffic around the Party offices with barricades of cars and buses. When no one turned up to talk to the demonstrators, we started to smash everything: the windows were knocked out, desks, carpets, TV sets were thrown out of them. In the canteen we found a large amount of tinned food, sausage, pork fillet. People were yelling 'Just look at what they've got, the bastards!' It's at that point that people started wrecking the shops in the neighbourhood. We got some petrol and set fire to the Party building. About 5 o'clock the militia arrived with water cannon and tear gas. They came in closed ranks from Slowacki Street. The demonstrators set fire to the cars barricading the street and dispersed to attack the militia from behind. When the demonstration in front of the Party building was disrupted, people regrouped in front of the council building. Around 5 o'clock they brought the bodies of two men who had been killed down Zeromski and Strug Streets, covered in blood. People clenched their fists and didn't move."

Police brutality

"DURING THE SEARCHES in Zeromski Street I raised my arms. They took me away.

Riots and repression

On the way towards the main police station they kicked me a lot and spat at me. One of the militia hit me with his helmet and twisted my nose. In front of the police station other militiamen were clubbing people as they were taken inside and in the corridor others were beating and kicking them. In room 105 they stretched me out on the ground and shaved my head with a penknife. Afterwards they took us to prison. All the warders were drunk and armed with clubs and helmets. They undressed us and left us in our slips and we spent the night like that in a cell with a concrete floor. We were very cold. The warders forbade us to talk. As soon as they heard a voice they came in and grabbed the first person they saw. They beat her in the corridor, we could hear the screams, then they threw her in the cell like a sack. The next day we were tried. They stopped us speaking. Anyone who tried to complain in public about being beaten up was silenced. After the sentences they beat them up again.

The courts

INFORMATION ABOUT ACCUSATIONS judgements and sentences is difficult to piece together. In all instances the figures given by the WDC are many times higher than those given by the Polish Embassy in London. For example, the official number of arrests at Radom was 239; the WDC affirms the PROBABLE number—based on eye-witness accounts in various prisons—as 2,000.

"At Ursus we know of 126 cases: they were accused of fighting the militia, refusing to disperse, pillage of shops, demolition of trains. The accusations were almost always false. The witnesses for the prosecution (militiamen) were not even present and their evidence was given in writing. The majority of the accused were found guilty and given fines of 1500-3000 zlotys (2-4 weeks wages for a skilled worker), or compulsory work for several dozen

hours, or suspended jail sentences. Most of the arrested were out of prison after 48 hours."

"Between July 4 and 6 the workers sentenced to fines were brought into the Ursus police station again, including those who had already paid their fines. They were arrested; the central command of the Warsaw militia had demanded a revision of the verdicts, as they found them too lenient. After the revision, most of the sentences were three months jail. The condemned were taken to Bialoleka prison. Their appeals and declarations of maltreatment were not listened to."

"On the 16th and 17th July, 7 workers from Ursus were tried in Warsaw for derailing a locomotive. They were sentenced to 5 years, 4½ years, 4 years, and 3 years in jail. We have recently heard from Warsaw that these sentences have been commuted to one year suspended."

Unemployment

THE URSUS WORKERS who were released went back to work on June 28. After a few days all the workers who had been arrested and released were sacked without notice under article 52 (1) of the Penal Code. This paragraph has since been reinforced by Ministerial directives, e.g. this circular from the Minister of Heavy Industry: Unjustified stoppages of work, refusal to work and all disruption of order in the factory is sufficient cause for cancellation of the work contract without notice, which amounts to immediate sacking.

"No one knows the total of sackings at Ursus. Figures vary from 250 to 1500. We imagine the second is closer to the truth."

"The workers who have been sacked have met with a systematic refusal of re-employment in all State enterprises. The director of the employment agency has been ordered to refuse them. Certain private employers (who are few) have been threatened with the withdrawal of their licence to employ if they employ any worker sacked after June 25. These workers are convinced that they will only get work after the three months is up. Thus they lose all the advantages of continuous employment. They and their families have lost the right to free medical treatment. Aid from the factory and social security is minimal. The payments due by law which were initially given them by factory officers have been withdrawn on orders from above.

"In all, out of the 144 cases of which we have details, only 14 have been re-employed."

At Radom, on the other hand, the majority of the workers have been re-employed.

'No complaint'

LONG AFTER JUNE the use of force continued. A bulletin from the WDC in November cited the case of Stanislaw Wijata who signed a petition in October detailing maltreatment. On November 24th the WDC received a copy of a letter from Wijata addressed to the Dept. of Justice in which he said he was withdrawing his complaint: 'What I wrote was false as people who called themselves members of a certain 'Workers' Defence Committee' drew up the complaint for me and asked me to sign it. I didn't even know what I was signing as they told me it was okay like that. Then they gave me 2000 zlotys (about 2-3 weeks wages for a skilled worker)'

We are grateful to INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM for information published in IS 94.

POLAND

POLAND

POLAND

On one-party publishing

THE PRESS is one of the most important means of carrying news and ideas: a means to organise, communicate with and influence people. We, readers and writers of The Leveller utilise this means obviously for our own purposes. It is only human if some of us tend to assume that the use and meaning of the word "press" is the same for everybody. But it is not. Let us, then, examine the press in a socialist country, e.g. in Poland, and compare it to the British press.

THERE are no privately owned newspapers in Poland. All are published by political and civic organisations. By far the largest and most important publisher is the Workers' Publishing Co-operative (RSW Prasa) which operates under the direct guidance of Polish United Workers Party — Communist Party (PZPR).

There are other participants of the Polish political scene which are identified with, and directed by the PZPR- (unfortunately, but this is what it is called) National Front. These have their own publishing organisations, such as the United Peasant Party Press, Epoka, Publishers of the Democratic Party, or PAX Publishers of PAX Catholic Association. And papers are published by Youth Organisations, Women Organisations, Trade Unions etc. etc.

The Common feature of the whole Polish press is that it does not depend on advertising and does not have to make a profit in order to survive. Social and political factors are much more important than financial in making decisions to close down old or start new titles.

Advertising plays, then, a very minor role. The market in Poland is mainly a 'sellers' market; competition between manufacturers is rare and anyway what is the point of advertising goods which are not readily available at shops because they are sold out soon after delivery?

In the eye of the Polish press, authorities (more specifically central authorities like government, central committee, police) are never wrong — at the present. However, it happens sometimes that the press admits that the authorities were wrong, but new authorities (which now control the press) have already put it right and at present all is perfect again.

Discussions, struggles, events which brought change of authorities are not published and are not for the man in the street to know. It is enough that he knows there was a "period of errors and distortions" but that it is over.

Consequently, on political aspects Polish newspapers are often dull to read, and it is almost impossible to figure out what is really happening in Polish politics. Also foreign news is censored and doctored according to the "socialist principles" which means that what happens can be omitted, played down or tentatively represented.

This is, by the way, not only a Polish or socialist press sin.

For additional information people in Poland rely on mouth to mouth news, on foreign broadcasts and the foreign press which is, with some effort, available on the newsstands of big hotels and in the reading rooms of "Clubs of International Press and Books", which are found in bigger towns.

Minor authorities can be, and often are, criticised by newspapers. There is even a law

THE DETAILS of life in the countries of the Warsaw Pact are always fascinating — and in short supply. They either come from westerners looking in, or from exiles and dissidents. This article, by a working Polish journalist, describes the publishing system in Poland, gives the names and circulations of the major titles and explains why they are for and which section's opinion they represent. He also describes a system of self-censorship and control which is state dominated but which, like our own, works far more through the nod and the wink and the unstated awareness of what is acceptable than through the iron control of a censor. All the same, remember, the author does not feel able to sign his name to what he has written here...

Iron curtain journalism

which obliges the criticised to answer this criticism to the editorial board. To assure that criticism reaches the proper places, the editorial board sends a copy by post.

Understanding how high the actual dividing line between those 'untouchables' and those who are suitable for criticism is the most important grounding for journalists and calls for constant alertness, many good, influential and well-informed friends, and last but not least — good health.

Controlling and censoring the whole press by state and party (often it is difficult to distinguish and divide them) is done by the Main Controlling Office of Press, Publications and Shows — and by its branches.

Editors, and particularly editors in chief, are almost invariably members of the Party and familiar with the real limits. Therefore intervention by the Controlling Office is rarely necessary. Most of the job is done by the self-control of well-trained journalists. In fact, some of the party publications have their staff so well-trained that they are exempted from submitting their proofs to the censors.

Attempts at self-publishing and an underground press are hindered by strict control, registration and licensing of all printing and copying equipment. Import without licence is forbidden. Distribution of printing is centrally planned, both because of controlling reasons and because of constant shortage.

Poland has 87 dailies (UK 109) with a total

circulation of 283 copies per 1,000 inhabitants (UK 582). They appear both in the country's capital and in other towns. Some of them with nation-wide circulation reach total daily circulation of one million copies (*Daily Mirror* has about four million) which amounts to 79 copies per 1,000 inhabitants. This record biggest selling figure is however almost reached in Poland by women's weekly 'Friend' *Przyjaciolka* with 75 copies per 1,000 inhabitants.

The main political newspaper with a nation-wide circulation is 'Peoples' Tribune' *Trybuna Ludu*, the organ of the Central Committee of the Party (PZR). The oldest morning paper is 'Life of Warsaw' *Zycie Warszawy*, founded in 1944, which claims that it is not affiliated to any party or organisation.

However, both of them are published by the same RSW Prasa concern, both have members of the Party as editors in chief and, moreover, sometimes *Zycie Warszawy* and not *Trybuna Ludu* is used to publish in form of editorial article some important political declaration expressing unofficially the Polish view on some international issue as an opinion of the whole nation rather than only of the Party which has less than two million members compared to a population of nearly 33 million.

Of course, these opinions are inspired and carefully controlled by Central Committee and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Besides morning papers, there are twelve evening papers, the most popular being 'Evening Express', *Express Wieczorny*, published in Warsaw.

There are no Sunday papers as there are in England. Most of the dailies appear on Sundays and are published six days a week, missing one day sometime during the week. Some, like *Trybuna Ludu* appear every day. Sunday editions have expanded sections on various aspects of cultural life.

Another group of periodicals which are sought after by all, irrespective of sex and age, are the illustrated weekly reviews. They contain news and devote much space to miscellaneous entertainment. They are richly illustrated, though the paper they are printed on is not always of the highest quality. These include 'Profile', *Przekroj*, 'Around the World', *Dookola swiata*, *Panorama Perspectives*, *Perspektywy*, 'Etc', *Ita*, — a student weekly. The cinema and television are represented by 'Film' and 'Screen', *Ikran*.

'Pins' *Szpilki*, founded 30 years ago in Warsaw and 'The Carousel' *Karuzela*, published in Lodz are both satirical weeklies.

A special place is occupied by socio-cultural weeklies, with fewer illustrations and more stress on the printed word. They carry news, comments and discussions on different events in Poland and abroad, print literary works, reviews, essays, interviews etc. They are addressed mainly to the intelligentsia and they reflect and mould the opinion of those who take the lead in cultural life. Among others, one should mention 'The Culture', *Kultura*, 'The Literature', *Literatura*, 'The Cultural Weekly', *Tygodnik Kulturalny*, and 'The Politics', *Polityka*, a weekly especially popular among the technical intelligentsia, which deals with numerous economic and social problems. 'Forum' is a hard to get weekly, — a Polish digest of the foreign press.

Sunblest Wonder Mothers' Pride

Not enough dough?—let them eat bread

The bread industry has one overriding problem. It cannot expand. We cannot eat enough bread to feed the voracious appetite of capital accumulation. When the industry consisted of a multitude of small companies, expansion could be accommodated by take overs. Now there is nowhere to go for the three major companies—Rank Hovis Mc Dougall, Spillers French and Allied Bakeries (a subsidiary of Associated British Foods). They account for over three quarters of all the bread produced in the UK, increasing their share by about 1% per year. The remaining 24% is produced by about 45 plant bakers and about 5000 'master' bakers who have one shop and bake on the premises. Gains in the market are very difficult, although some small bakers are growing in size.

Attempts to increase a particular share of the market have not been very successful. Remember the half-baked idea of the 'partly-baked' loaf? Then there was the Nimble footwork of RHM which captured 5% of the total bread market with what they called 'slimming' bread—despite the fact that ounce for ounce it has more calories than either white or wholemeal bread. Allied, in 1976, introduced in-store baking (Bakers Oven) in 190 of their bakery shops. The latest ploy to get you to pay more for the same thing is the intended Sunblest Long Loaf. It will be sold on the basis of having 5 extra slices, despite being exactly the same weight.

As a result of a voluntary agreement to keep costs down between main producers and government in 1975, there has been no national media advertising on the standard branded loaves. The industry doubts whether this ban has had any serious effect, as money has been diverted to advertising other products to keep the brand name in peoples' mind. Also, it is reckoned that Allied would spend £250,000 on regional air-time advertising alone for the new Sunblest Long Loaf.

Another obvious way of making a profit is to reduce the amount of bread flour extracted from wheat, so that there is more left over to flog on other markets. Much of that removed (the bran and germ) goes into animal feeds—hence the domination of Spillers on the pet food trade, and to specialist markets—cereals, health foods and 'Bemax'.

In the period of government control during and after the war, the extraction rate (proportion of husk, flour and germ used for bread-making, lower extraction rate means less germ

and husk) was held at 85% for several years. After decontrol in 1953, there was a National bread at 80% with the commercial white falling below 80%, and thus in need of 'restoration' with legally-defined additives. By the 60's, 72% extraction had become the norm—'in accordance with public demand'.

As it is difficult to develop these techniques further, the obvious trend is to rationalise on production and distribution. As profits in the milling sector of milling/baking/retailing operation have regularly turned in 16–17% returns, it is obvious that it is the retailing sector that is in need of 'rationalisation'. "Scope for further rationalisation is limited by the number of bakeries that can be closed before distribution problems come into play. Bread cannot successfully be transported long distances at the moment. On the retail side, there is potential for a higher concentration of sales through grocers and supermarkets while the number of retail roundsmen will decrease." (Retail Business 1972)

What was 'needed' for the industry was an imperishable loaf that could sit on a supermarket shelf for six weeks until grannie could hobble along, dust it off and take it home.

O.K. The bread may be rubbish, but at least it's cheap. This myth permeates most of the labour movement who still see our 'cheap food policy' as some sort of victory. 'Cheap food' was a response to our position as an imperialist nation, and was pushed by industrialists to keep down the social wage in the 1920's. But our Imperialism ain't what it used to be; all we are left with is an efficient way of making money for the three monopolies. *Between 1960–75 the price of bread rose faster than for other food-stuffs and faster than retail prices in general.*

(1). The retail price index in 1975 (based on 100 in 1963) was 290 for bread, 275 for food in general, and 250 for all manufactured goods. Between Dec 1971 and Jan 1977 the price of a standard loaf increased from 9½p to 21p. It may be cheap to make, but it isn't cheap to eat. The industry always try to say that our bread is cheaper than elsewhere. They don't mention that RHM turned in pre-tax profits late last year of £39.85 mil—up £12.75 mil from £27.1 mil the year before.

The worry for the bread industry is that due to all the latest publicity people are beginning to realise the exorbitant price they are paying for this staple commodity, and hence are beginning to cut back on consumption. This is unusual. Through the 60s consumption decreased gradually as the standard of living rose. However, since 1973, there has been a slight rise in consumption reflecting the growing crisis. So the bread industry has been confident of withstanding the crisis better than most, and of 'increasing selling price in the context of dearer food generally'.

(2). In the last few years it has justified price increases on the increase of wheat prices due to 'bad harvests'. Not that there have been any fail-



The recent delivery drivers' strike drew attention to the political and economic tensions in the industry which provides our most basic food. CHARLIE CLUTTERBUCK, who is researching the politics of the food business, and bread in particular, with the Agricapital Group, describes the workings of the bread business

ures; the US held 60 million acres out of production.

But with people beginning to react to the prices, the bread industry will be forced to rationalise still further.

The recent bread strike in late Dec/early Jan, although not so dramatic as the 'bread riots' of the early 19th century, did emphasise the political importance of foods, in the struggle ahead. It is something the 'left' is going to have to understand and not see as fit only for eco-freaks.

The issue of the strike was whether the price of bread should remain fixed, or whether it could be sold at less than the 22½% retail margin previously allowed. Such a reduction would obviously benefit the supermarkets, and especially Associated British Foods, whose tightly integrated operations control both Allied Bakeries and Fine Fare. The delivery unions considered that short term price reductions would squeeze out such outlets as corner shops, thereby squeezing the unions out of a job, but also reducing the service provided and enabling the monopolies, to gain greater control and share of the market. The 'Big Three' would then be in a strong position to manipulate prices.

In general, the revolutionary left has shied away from the strike. Was it a reactionary strike, being anti-working class in that it directly affected the price of their staple food? Or was it merely petty bourgeois in that it appealed to the small shopkeepers? Or was it a progressive strike in that it challenged structural unemployment before the event—rather than having to fight the usual rear guard reaction?

The reluctance to support the strike is easy to understand, in that it flew in the face of traditional left theory, and that it was seen to be run by a reactionary union. Yet it is difficult to see just how we draw the line. Most strikes are economic, and most inevitably result in an attack on some other section of the working class (e.g. the present Frauds Fiasco strike). Nevertheless we usually muscle in and try to explain the broader political issues in an attempt to politicise some of the members and to raise more far reaching demands. In this case two demands, although not particularly revolutionary, which could have been raised, were to nationalise the industry and the right to work on a socially-digestible product.

We can be sure that in the future there are going to be more strikes in the food sector and if we don't realise that food production under capitalism is produced for profit not for people, then we are going to find ourselves in some very confusing positions.

- 1) TACC Report. 1974. Intermediate Pub.
- 2) Investment Report 1971 Hoare & Co. The Milling and Baking Industry.

OFFICIAL SECRETS

Shielding our spooks

Britain has one of the most secretive administrations in the world. The fact that a Watergate could never be exposed here is something that we have almost complacently come to live with. A few reforms are being bandied around Whitehall at the moment. Tony Bunyan examines what they mean.

In November last year Merlyn Rees, the Home Secretary, made a statement on the Labour Government's intention to replace Section Two of the Official Secrets Act 1911 with a new Official Information Act. In his unfortunate turn of phrase, it was his intention to replace a "blunderbuss with an Armalite rifle".

The decision to replace Section Two follows the recommendations of the Franks Committee Report of 1972 (which was set up by the Tories after the unsuccessful prosecution of the *Sunday Telegraph* over its Biafran revelations). This section of the Act covers the disclosure of classified information to those outside the state service.

Agee - Hosenball

THE UNION between CIA and British Intelligence is being exposed by its latest offspring: the deportations of Agee and Hosenball. Not only has the work that Mark and Phil and their comrades have been doing attracted wide publicity, but the state has had to admit a lot more than it would have like to.

For a start, the three redundant bureaucrats on the "independent" panel that heard the "representations" showed, in Agee's five-day hearing, more interest in Jamaica than anything else. Now why should Agee's naming of CIA covert agents responsible for the attempt to destabilise the Manley government upset Whitehall so much? There are only two possibilities: either American rage was faithfully transmitted through the intelligence channels; or the destabilisation was a British job, onto which Agee had unwittingly stepped.

The second looks the most likely: sources in the State Department in Washington have been reported as saying as much, and a source in the Foreign and Commonwealth office has said: "Agee has given us a lot of trouble over Jamaica", and "We have been trying to get the Americans more interested in Jamaica for a long time".

British Ministers have also been freely peddling smears against Agee that originated with the

Successive governments - Tory and Labour have announced their intention to act: always next year, not this. This reluctance is based on the stubborn opposition of key Ministries - Foreign Office, Home Office and the Ministry of Defence - to any change in the practice of the last hundred years. Although the Official intention of the Official Secrets Acts (of 1911, 1920 and 1939) was to combat foreign espionage, the use of the Acts has been largely to ensure that civil servants do not divulge any information to those outside state service (like to the press and the British people).

The Franks Committee Report proposed that the new Act should only cover information on: defence and internal security; foreign relations; currency and reserves; Cabinet proceedings; the maintenance of law and order; information given by the citizen; and official information used for gain.

Moreover, in the first three categories only matters covered by the classifications SECRET and DEFENCE-CONFIDENTIAL would lead to prosecution (and these classifications themselves would be reviewed at the time to see if they were still relevant). In the field of law and order, the Committee proposed that information held by the police and other agencies should only be protected if given by the citizen, or if required by law. They explicitly excluded information 'acquired' by the state 'in the course of its work' (for example - political records).

When the Report was published in 1973 Robert Carr (then Tory Home Secretary) said that all information held in the areas of defence, security and law and order should be protected, regardless of classification. Rees' statement three years later largely reiterated the same points, although there were some significant differences. He said, firstly, that information in certain fields - defence, security and intelligence, and foreign affairs - was still to be highly protected: "information relating to security and intelligence matters is deserving of the highest protection, whether or not it is classified."

In other words, in these areas there would be absolutely no change, and there is even a hint that the ambit of the existing Acts would be extended. Similarly, information relating to 'law and order' held by the police is to be protected. (The distinction made by Franks on the source of the information was not raised.) Information on the economic and domestic fields, together with Cabinet proceedings (surprise, surprise after the publication of the Crossman Diaries) are not to be included.

Rees said nothing about how classifications were to be made, and was silent on Franks' view that classifications should be reviewed prior to a prosecution. Lastly, by implication Rees, while 'freeing' certain areas from classification, hinted that the Act should allow prosecution to be made easier in the areas defined above.

Civil servants would still be subject to internal disciplinary procedures (like dismissal or failure to gain promotion) in all areas and Ministries. This fact alone gives Britain one of the most tight-lipped state administrations in the world. And the new law (if and when time is found to pass it) will not lead to more 'open' government. All it will do is tidy up an unusable law.

Deportations

Some of the ring were arrested and imprisoned by the Poles. Others were said to have been got out in time; others disappeared. But the smear that Agee has been responsible for the "death of two of our men" has come from the mouths of Home Secretary, Merlyn Rees, talking to (and without too much trouble convincing) Liberal leader David Steel; and from the Prime Minister, more recently at a private gathering, at which, incidentally, Callaghan also said that Mark had merely "been silly" - another pointer to the "one in, one out" deal long suspected by Agee/Hosenball supporters.

New confirmation that American Intelligence works closely with the British SIGINT network (communications intelligence) has come from a former Royal Army Intelligence Corps soldier, John Berry, who was discharged from the Army for his political attitudes in 1970.

In a statement in support of Agee and Hosenball Berry says that the National Security Agency (the CIA's "big brother") is responsible for the overall direction of GCHQ, the Defence Ministry department overseeing SIGINT. The location and function of GCHQ establishments was the subject of Mark Hosenball and Duncan Campbell's famous *Time Out* article, generally considered to have been the main reason for the deportation threat against Mark.



CENTERPRISE: THE RIGHT

Ron Barnes, cab driver, in the introduction to his newly-published *Coronation Cups and Jam Jars* - a personal record of the struggle for life through three Hackney generations - describes a main thrust of the Centerprise publishing project. His first book, *Licence to Live*, sold 3,500 copies through Centerprise and local newsagents. Ron Barnes outsells *Jaws* in Hackney.

"It doesn't take some special gift of genius to write an autobiography, a story or a poem. And of that I am living proof. The writing is not too difficult. The difficult part is getting what you write published."

Dave Barnes (no relation) is a truck driver. A married man with two kids. He is also a poet. "I get more satisfaction from writing six lines than I do from a year of punching lorries around."

RON and Dave are both members of the Hackney Writers Workshop based on Centerprise, a bright-green shop front on Hackney's Kingsland High Street which is at once community centre, bookshop, cafe, meeting place for local writers and activists. Set up six years ago by disillusioned youth workers, Centerprise provides liveable space. Not so easy in this city for schoolkids and pensioners to find somewhere to sit and talk, drink tea, play chess and draughts, read the papers.

Apart from the workshop (only six months old) there is the People's Autobiography of Hackney, which in its sixth year has produced both volumes of *Working Lives*, and a young black writers group recently published in *Talking Blues*.

Those ideological lines drawn between writers and readers, cultural producers and consumers, are erased when workers become writers. Worker-writer. The apparent contradiction expresses this movement where a class can begin to be transformed from passive consumers to cultural activists, protagonists. Poets, novelists, biographers, researchers, theoreticians — on the front line of the ideological struggle.

And the significance of Centerprise resides as much in this, its form, as in the content of the writing, although the act of writing necessarily involves an exploration: "Poetry is political, the process whereby feelings are clarified through reflection. Through writing you are made to understand the forces operating on you: the home, family, work, the economy. You start to understand them, thus helping other people to think and act." Ken Worpole, Centerprise worker.

For local working people, Centerprise provides a real point of contact between books and life. They come into the shop and see a name on a book which is a name of a friend.

As a matter of principle, Centerprise keeps all its books in print. "Books are permanent objects, handed down through families, living, and we are trying to build a working-class culture."

One Wednesday night I attended a meeting of the Writers Workshop which has about a dozen active members, including a cab-driver, lorry-driver, paste-up artist, teacher, claimants, pensioners and school students. In a friendly atmosphere there are readings — poems, short stories, extracts from autobiographies — followed by animated discussion.



The week before a worker-writer group from Scotland Road, in Liverpool's dockland, had come down to Hackney. *Culture For The Workers*, an aggressively proletarian poem from the Liverpool group, is re-read and sparks off a lively exchange on the relationships between politics and writing, between Marx and the 'personal'.

Then Howard reads *Visitors*, a poem on mental illness. He has recently returned from mental hospital and demands that the group confront the obscenity which is the Mental Health Act and the mental hospital. Therapy, he says, is a joke: "There is a fully equipped kitchen unit so that women can learn how to be good housewives. Housework is, of course, what put them in there in the first place, but the authorities thought they just couldn't quite manage it — couldn't cope — they were faulty housewives." And there is the smell which still lingers when you come out. "Even my brother thinks I'm crazy."

After a reading from *On School*, an unfinished autobiography by the paste-up artist, and a series of surrealist poems from Dave Barnes, a woman whose young baby has been playing silently on the floor nervously admits that after a long break from writing she has something to read tonight. It is called *Afterbirth*: "I know you but I do not know your face/You bear the marks of an unfamiliar country/And the promise of new pain."

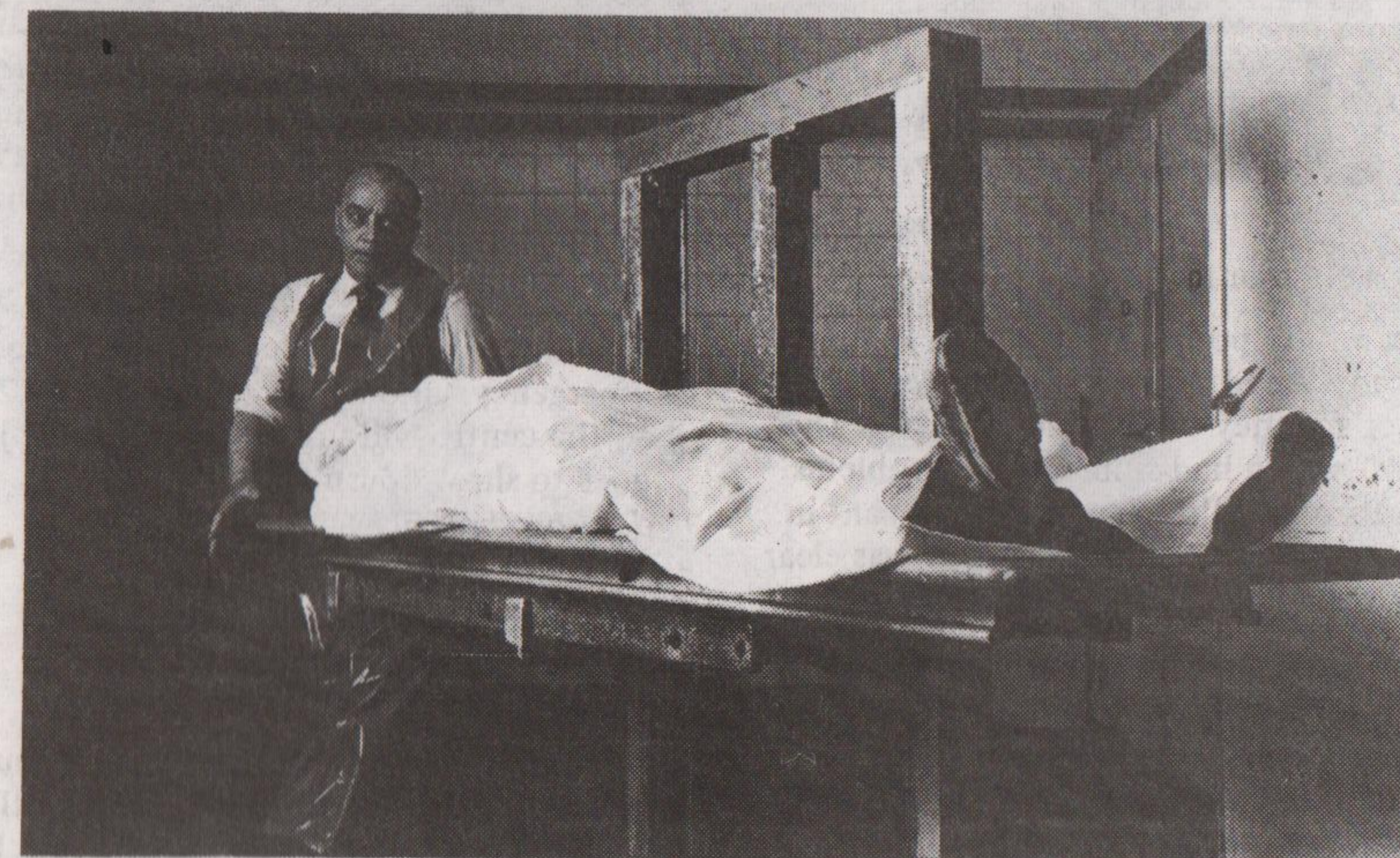
All the poems that night, apart from *Culture For The Workers*, depicted victims: the worker, the mental patient, the schoolboy, the mother. I raised this question with Les Skeats, 27-year-old claimant and member of the group, when I spoke to him a few days later. "The writers' group is still at a raw stage of development. We have not yet evolved out of a personalised, oppressed sort of poetry."

Les spent seven years in the Army medical corps (after joining up at fifteen) before buying himself out. On a posting in Cyprus he met the Royal Irish Rangers, Catholics from southern Eire who were mostly sympathetic to republicanism: "After talking to them for six months I had no option but to leave."

He started writing poetry after getting busted for dope in West Germany and spending four months in Stanheim prison where, at that time, the Red Army Fraction was held. "I ended up in a cell with one Turk, a Yugoslav, Greek and German. I couldn't talk to anybody and started to write."

Writing intensified a nascent political commitment, led to some serious reading, and he is now an articulate spokesman for the Centerprise worker-writer group: "It is a springboard for people who have written secretly, but who have never met other people who do. An amazing number of working class people do write, but they are too lacking in confidence to talk about it. . . poetry is written by cissies. . . they go away and hide."

TO WRITE



Photos from forthcoming *Working Lives* (Vol II)

Like Dave, the lorry driver who changes jobs every few months to keep a 'secret' identity, Les has experienced real problems of isolation at work. "It's really difficult. When you say, 'I'm interested in poetry, I do a lot of writing', they go blank, turn off".

One of his poems expresses a condition of this blankness, the subjection of the worker to the god-like instruments of production. "Working on the track/there is no sitting down/Everybody stands/church-goers singing hymns."

This is poetry with an avowed intent: "To demonstrate the basic injustices perpetrated against the working class. To explode the myth of The Writer as external to social forces. Shelley was right when he says that the writer is the catalyst that brings on the revolution. . . Art should not be a form of escape but a means of shoring what is possible."

THE PEOPLE'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF HACKNEY, based on a WEA evening class, has a more specific task: to rewrite history, restore working class pride in its origins and struggles. And this is subjective history — none of the posturing 'objectivity' of the bourgeois historians — written by the working class for the working class. It is what differentiates the Centerprise group from the Ruskin College approach to oral history, which reaches its logical conclusion in 12 guinea hardbacks.

The technical process developed by People's Autobiography — used in both volumes of *Working Lives* and on their present project *The Island* — begins by encouraging people to talk into microphones. The tape recordings are then transcribed and duplicated, returned to the author for editing, which version becomes a section of the book. The speaker/writer exercises final editorial control, but Centerprise staff reserve the right to write the introduction, arguing that this helps to set the works in 'context'. But doesn't this raise in another form the political-editor/amateur-writer relationship?

Three years ago a decision was made by the group to publish *Working Lives*, an account of work in Hackney from 1905-45 (Vol. I) to 1945-76 (Vol. II). Some of the accounts were written straight by members of the group, like Jack Welch, demolition man in Vol. I, and others went through the taping process. Unnecessary to advertise for contributors — two to three hundred people a day use the community centre and the books themselves generate the interest.

There were other problems though. One

worker in the group — I was told that he and his trade must remain anonymous — made a long tape recording for Vol. II and took the transcript back to his union convenor who flipped his lid. "You can't publish this, it gives the whole game away." Centerprise deferred to the union's wishes, disappointed that the skiving and sabotage could not be recorded in their book, but absolutely sympathetic to the union's desire to pre-empt ideological flack from those who always get out their inverted commas for 'workers'.

But then the issue was put to a mass meeting. Centerprise provided forty transcripts for everyone in the union branch and a decision was taken to go ahead with certain cuts to be made by the union convenor.

The autobiographies have been known to set the cat among the Hackney pigeons in another way — working class history can produce red faces for those seeking to hide, and betray, their class origins. One of Ron Barnes' relatives wrote an indignant letter to the *Hackney Gazette*: "We don't want to be reminded of our past. I'm a successful businessman now."

Working Lives is a fascinating chunk of working class history where East End resilience and humour are in constant battle (and contradiction) with the reality of proletarian life. "You spent a lot of time and money writing off or walking round after jobs, but you just got nowhere. In the finish you just thought: 'Well, why kick against the pricks? The bleedin' sun's shinin'. Let's go out and enjoy meself.'" (*A Real Industrial Nightmare*, Phil Anderson.) Difficult though in working class autobiography to resist the slide into romanticism and sentimentality, where the community in hardship of the world we have lost provides a nice fit with the bourgeois dichotomy between the satanic mills of yesteryear and the bright new landscape of advanced capitalism. And for the large immigrant communities in Hackney the books must remain irrelevant historical curiosities.

Partially as an attempt to combat this problem *Working Lives* (Vol. II) was regarded as essential and a significant political departure. The group also felt that the pictorial record was as important a documentary form as writing, so whereas Vol. I had portrait pics, Vol. II is illustrated with photographs of people actually at work.

What is really impressive about the People's Autobiography is the diligence with which massive research jobs have been undertaken. A fly-on-the-wall at one of their fortnightly meetings I learned something of a strange community called *The Island* (1872-1971), a small

Story: IAN WALKER

Pictures: CENTERPRISE

piece of Hackney with five streets and one entrance which somehow became cut off from the rest of the world — self-sufficient with its own farm, blacksmith, pub and shops. Pianos were out on the street, the police were kept out and street gambling was 'rife', as they say.

The group has been working on *The Island* project for eighteen months. Which time has been spent talking to people, convening public meetings, holding exhibitions of their superb *Island* photograph collection and doing their own library work. They plan to publish three volumes spanning three generations.

The Island poses real problems of sentimentalism — all the more so since it was a closed, immensely chauvinist community — and the group is here a victim of its chosen subject.

Centerprise workers argue that political weaknesses in the writers' groups are in part a reflection of Hackney itself and the absence of any large factories with a militant, unionised workforce. Hackney has been decimated by the rag trade: workers scattered through innumerable sweat shops, homeworking, child labour and — when work is short — scraping a living through petty crime. This lack of a powerful labour movement rendered a proposed project on the General Strike unworkable.

But, to reverse the argument, Centerprise itself does not 'reflect' the community: there are no black members in either the Writers Workshop or the People's Autobiography and I spoke to Les Skeats about this problem.

"Blacks are gradually starting to come in. We are slowly breaking down the barriers but it is a long process. When Centerprise is seen by blacks as not purely a white man's thing then they will come along in greater numbers."

These barriers have already withered away for young blacks who arrive after school, sit around playing chess and draughts in the cafe. The young black writers' group doubles up as a youth club with table tennis and discos.

Talking Blues, their anthology, is a spare expression of the young black struggling into consciousness, putting up resistance to the monotonous oppression of their everyday lives — in the family, school, the careers office, the dole queue — with a defiant affirmation of their own identity. An identity which becomes possible in some of those places in the city — pubs, reggae and soul clubs — and which is reinforced through the act of writing.

There is, too, the bitter contrast between the remembered Caribbean childhood and Hackney's urban mess: "An unwilling exile in this country to which you are subjected./The place which they say is better than your island". (Hugh Boatman, *Exile*). But the memory is not just nostalgia, it fuels determination, provides the confidence to say, in another of Hugh Boatman's poems,

I Remember:

"Yes, I remember
When I was young,
I was not angry then,
I did not understand."

Besides publishing working-class literature, Centerprise is engaged in an endeavour to help those members of that class who cannot read. The adult literacy project is a vital component of the overall strategy: "Here adults are learning to read political, human books, not *Janet And John*".

The big red bus which is Centerprise does not, like the punk-rock graphic, have "nowhere" on its destination boards.

Gay Sweatshop Eire aghast at 'funny-bunny' theatre

ALL IS NOT WELL in the cultural life of Baile Atha Cliath - that means Dublin, the city once wittily described by Sebastian Dangerfield as the "Athens of Modern Europe".

Its solid theatres like the Abbey, are well-established and certainly stolid - with the main injection of artistic vitality in recent times being provided by a plucky much-loved little place called the Project Arts Centre.

This centre puts on music, exhibitions, plays, films, you name it. But it had the audacity last October to host for two weeks a couple of productions by the London-based Gay Sweatshop. These playlets were concerned with aggressive statements of male and female homosexuality, and the citizenry of Dublin were alerted to the danger within their midst by a 'crusading' *Irish Independent* journalist whose flamboyant denigratory article caused quite a stir where otherwise the Britishers may have come and gone largely unnoticed.

The controversy might have remained rather silly, only the Project had been promised a £6,000 grant from the Dublin City Council towards necessary structural repair work, and had spent this money in anticipation.

It had however to be ratified by a Council meeting held on January 17. But to the horror of the Project's cooperative committee the grant was rejected by 17 votes to 10, and suddenly the future looked bleak.

The City Council debate had featured stirring "freedom of artistic expression" type speeches and had involved a misleading argument that the money could not be granted as the Project

had but a six month lease.

It was carefully pointed out that the Council had already voted £100,000 worth of ratepayer's money to another theatre - The Olympia - which had similar lease problems. Cutting through all the smokescreen cant in the councillors' words that night, it was clear that the issue was the Gay Sweatshop.

Fianna Fail councillors (of de Valera's party which is now in the unusual position of being in opposition) voted en bloc responding to a whip against the grant, oblivious to the arguments, and clearly with an eye on running a "save the ratepayer's money" and "clean up the city" ticket in the coming elections.

One amongst their ranks, a Ned Brennan, donated the Irish saying of the week when, grumbling about the Sweatshop production - which of course he has not seen - he stated that it was not even mounted by Irish people but by "four Funny-Bunnies from across the water".

Anyway, the storm was immediate, with the fate of the small Centre becoming a national issue. Indeed, perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the whole affair was how many people and groups came publicly to the defence of the Project, including such types as the vehement chairman of the Irish Arts Council.

The Sweatshop themselves - already involved in their own problems in London at the Royal Court Theatre - came over in January to give two performances of the plays everyone in Dublin was talking about but few had seen, with the proceeds going to the Project's fighting fund.

An astounding number turned up with at least

200 being turned away. Those inside discovered that the Sweatshop playlets, perhaps inevitably, were not really all that good. Though it certainly contained some naughty words and its actors did some naughty things on stage.

The Irish Gay Rights Movement quickly joined in the fray, pleased at least that the subject of homosexuality - rarely discussed in Ireland, witness the still bitter controversy over Roger Casement with many Irish people firmly believing that his homosexuality was entirely an evil character-blacking fabrication of the British - has come so suddenly and so prominently out in the open.

The arguments continue and the Project's emergency fund has already topped £2,000, so the centre will probably survive. It just goes to show doesn't it?

daitho o breasil

And...

Spare Rib has been banned in the Republic of Ireland for being "usually or frequently indecent or obscene". The Censorship Board bases this decision on four issues which included information on abortion, masturbation and self-examination for breast cancer.

DIRTY HARRY

HARRY'S GAME: Gerald Seymour. Fontana. 70p.

I USUALLY buy a novel like this to read on the train. I bought *Harry's Game* because it's about Ireland and since I was planning to do some work there shortly, I thought I'd get it now but save it to read on the boat.

Harry Brown is dragged out of obscurity in the British Army on the Rhine, trained up by a mysterious unit on the direct orders of the Prime Minister and put into Belfast to waste a Provo assassin who's murdered a Cabinet Minister. He eventually gets his man, but a British squaddy in an observation post thinks he's a terrorist and gets him.

Both men are buried with military honours, their wives' lives are ruined, the civil servants and military men who set it up and messed it up move up or down the career structure and the Prime Minister thinks a good job was done all round. Belfast goes on as before.

It's a compulsive read and is mostly credible, most of the time. Seymour is an ITN reporter and gives us a hard story written like a TV script - all action, suspense and colour with a reporter's eye for detail and lack of feel for the people on the ground.

Harry is a pro and he's good: so is his opposition, Billy Downs. What screws them both is not just that they are operated by incompetents, but also that professionals have weak spots too and the right conjuncture of events - the child who runs in front of her policeman father just as Billy has him in the sights of his Armalite, the landlady who notices Harry's accent isn't quite Belfast - will destroy the best-laid plans.

Of course, the politics are awful: but so are those of Belfast. The book won't advance our political understanding one iota, but it does tell the armchair traveller what it tastes like to live in Northern Ireland. It's simply a sharp, fast and exciting read in an area which has generated surprisingly little fiction.

And that's good enough for a novel that makes no claims to greater things. I think I'll read Sherlock Holmes on the boat.

David Clark



PARADISE SEX GARDEN

MAGAZINES ALL TASTES CATERED FOR FILMS SEX



Pictures: TONY NICHOLLS

THE SEX MAGS

RUNNING DOWN THE SEVENTIES' FASHIONABLE PORN: Since the well-publicised obscenity trials that followed the prosecution of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, the law has been more cautious about interfering in the porn business. The sex mags, (on sale at every newsagent in the country,) have taken most advantage of the new mood and become a £30 million-plus business. Here, three articles look at sex mags as business; the effect of the "liberalisation" of the law; and the politics of "hard-core". A series of articles on human sexuality are being worked on for future issues.

Fantasies as a growth industry

THERE IS a rude story about John Ruskin, Victorian England's leading art critic and major domo of aesthetic taste. It's a honeymoon story and it goes like this : Ruskin married and on his wedding night he went to bed with his wife. It was his first time. When she took her clothes off he saw that she had hair growing between her legs.

Now Ruskin was a great expert on naked women, having spent much time examining Greek and Roman statues, and he knew what a naked woman ought to look like. But these ancient works of art were like the Page Three Girls in the Sun, they didn't show pubic hair. And so Ruskin, thinking his wife deformed, refused to consummate the marriage. It's a case history of too much reliance on theory.

If he'd spent his time examining *Playbirds* instead of Praxiteles he'd have been under no such illusion. He'd have had a gynaecological knowledge of the appearance of the female genitals since it's a magazine that specialises in "open crotch" shots.

Because of magazines like *Playbirds*, *Men Only*, *Mayfair*, *Private*, *Libertine*, *Knave*, *Peaches* and so on, the adolescent male of the seventies is extremely unlikely to grow up with that sort of problem. He may, however, get landed with the hoary old illusion that a woman ejaculates when she comes.

Sex mags and curious young men will be drawn together with the inevitability of gravity, but there's no way that can account for the number and circulation of the mags. The business being what it is, accurate figures are about as hard to come by as a pusher's profit margin, but a good £30m a year is spent on openly - sold sex mags. And the figure would be even greater if you could arrive at any useful guess of the amount of mail-order business where the unit cost - between one and five pounds - is much higher. This large industry comes in many forms, but it has only one product : masturbation.

So the first thing that's certain is that the mags are not produced for a bunch of deviants whose only possible source of sexual enjoyment is with the left hand while the right hand turns the pages. The seven sex mags which have an ABC figure (Audit Bureau of Circulation - independent body whose figures are accepted by advertisers and are therefore at the top end of the market) have a combined monthly sale of close on two million. That is probably just over half of the total copies sold.

The figures show that it must be Bob Average who is voting for this sort of pornography, and Along with the science fiction houses (remember the "half price back" shops where the two exist together ?) the publishers must be the only entrepreneurs of print who can look you in the eye and say with Graham

Baker : "We don't have an age group, we don't have a social class". Graham Baker publishes, among others, *Private*, *Whitehouse*, *Playgirls*, *National News* and *Climax*, each one of which has a circulation somewhere between the *Financial Times* and *The Guardian*. As far as he's concerned the magazines exist to titillate. They are aids to masturbation. Also, he thinks : "it is a good thing to have these aids available for the male population. The alternatives are frustration, tension and possible results going as far as rape or other violent acts. Men don't get violent after a wank you know." Like many others in the business, he firmly believes that the relaxation of laws against pornography on the continent have led to a decline in sex-related crimes. Equally, the moral reformers, and some others as well, believe the reverse is true. Whoever is right, pornography still exists on the very margins of legality. Despite all the historical evidence that nobody has yet managed to frame a law which defines obscenity or pornography without lumping in all descriptions of sexuality, the state still tries. In Britain, the Obscene Publications Act makes it a criminal offence to "publish, sell or possess for gain any article that may deprave or corrupt a significant minority of those into whose hands it may fall those into whose hands it is likely to fall."

Continued Over Page



Sex mags



...books you read with one hand

Graham Baker is to be prosecuted under Section Two of this Act. It was three months after he was busted and some of his magazines seized that it was decided to prosecute: on one edition only. "I have looked through this particular edition and quite honestly I can see no significant distinction between this magazine and any of the others," he says. He seems a genuinely bewildered man.

He has got good reason. As a publisher he wants to print the "strongest", most explicit material he can, without being busted. But nobody knows where the boundary is. A few weeks ago the *Daily Mirror* published a picture of nude actors and actresses which "accidentally" showed pubic hair. A giant step for Fleet Street, but old hat elsewhere.

It was Bob Guccione's *Penthouse* which stepped across that particular frontier in daylight some years back. And after that it was a war of nerves between him and the Paul Raymond organisation (*Men Only*) to see who would be the first to "go pink" - that is to show the flesh of the lips of the vagina. They've both taken the step now, although they haven't yet taken to the "held-open vagina" and the tastefully named "flap shots" of other magazines. There's obviously plenty of room for escalation in the *Sun/Mirror* circulation war.

In England the openly published pornography is surprisingly reticent. "I feel obliged to censor some of the pictures, unfortunately. I don't like doing it, I think putting little stars on pictures is an utter nonsense. But at the moment we still feel that we need stars on some pictures for legal reasons. Usually it is where there is actual physical, direct contact with sexual parts of the body like the genitals or the mouth.

"And there are certain subjects which I won't touch in my magazines such as the use of animals in sex, violence, minors, taboo subjects. In fact anything that is illegal I won't touch. I won't even put incest in."

So Graham Baker ends up looking two ways. He defends his publications fervently - he's just given a talk to the local Rotary Club on

"Britain as the Adolescent of the EEC" on the grounds that their material is natural, healthy, unrepressed, an aid to a fulfilling sexuality and what the public want.

But what the public seem to really want is "stronger" "hotter" and, most desirable of all, "hard core". In fact, truly hard-core pornography is very difficult to obtain in Britain, although you wouldn't believe it from the advertising.

Lovebirds, which changed its name from a *Ladybirds* after a no doubt mutually distressing infringement of the copyright of title of the *Ladybird* books, now offers the "strongest hard-core you are ever likely to see published in the UK." In this context Danish and Swedish are magic words. Here's a polemical blurb advertising the issue of *Whitehouse* which features the "most explicit pictures of oral sex ever to be seen in a non-Scandinavian magazine."

".....it's by far the strongest monthly on open sale, constantly pushing into new fields of permissiveness, constantly challenging the authorities and all opposition with its shameless and censor-free approach to sexual enlightenment. And the publishers of *Whitehouse* pledge that as long as they remain on the bookstalls, so it will keep on pushing. Pushing censorship aside. "Pushing its luck.

"*Whitehouse* policy has always been to reward the purchaser by giving him the explicit pictures he really wants. As you have heard people say: "How on earth do they get away with it?" *Whitehouse* will not answer that question. The fact remains that *Whitehouse* CAN and WILL continue to "get away with it". And keep on pushing. "And pushing".

It's a wild fantasy, a sexual frontiers myth which feeds on a constant dissatisfaction. The readers are encouraged to visualise themselves as the wild men of sexual exploration, connoisseurs of the art, game for anything and equipped for everything.

This pornotopia inhabited by Doreen and Marjery and Britt and the one-handed reader is essentially private. The situation is essentially ludicrous so the rules are that you mustn't take the piss out of it. It's all wrong to assume

that the fantasies which people buy are expressions of what they would really like to be doing. No more than the man at the filing cabinet dreaming of conquering Everest with Bonnington really wants to be sitting on the ice flow calculating the glacier speed from how long it takes the body of a previous expedition's casualty to reach the bottom.

It makes for a very supportive tone. Nobody laughs at your dreams. Inside the specialist sex shops with their reddish dusty light and lurid shelves there is a hushed but not reverential atmosphere. More like *Aspreys* than a church. Everybody is frank, straightforward, unshockable and there is plenty of manly eye contact. Walk in and ask for a fuck book featuring Rosa Luxembourg and Bukharin, nobody would blink.

"I'm afraid we don't have that exactly, but there's some new material over here, very interesting and explicit."

"No, I've had a look at some of those before. It's all rubbish. No good at all."

"We have some Scandinavian photo books, very powerful...."

"How much are those over there?"

"I'll just ask my colleague. He knows more about the film side of it."

Regular customers are welcomed as such, provided they've made the first move: otherwise they are left alone. We can't tell you how you want to play your fantasy, but if you let us know we'll tag along. And since the material is much the same really, we'll all support the fiction of the discriminating customer.

Because the fantasies are pretty silly, they look even worse when brought into the open context of the rest of us fantasists' life. But you'd expect this secret existence to both affect and reflect people's sensuality with other people too.

This is where the sex mags get caught in the flack from the other side. Almost everybody masturbates, and why not. But the moral critics like to pretend that they don't, or at least if they do, that they shouldn't, and anyway they only do it because they've been corrupted and at least they should do it in private because it's dirty. Really the moral critics are not so far removed from the things they are attacking. They're prurient, but just as interested. *Whitehouse* is a brilliant name for a wank book.

But there's a far more serious criticism and that's what the nature of the turn-on industry does to human relations in society. Their sex is object centred. The women, randy but wanting only to please, are not real, they are things.

So the magazines perpetuate and reinforce the male-dominated view of sexuality which prevents women and men from relating to each other sexually on equal terms. And this, in a back-and-forth process of mutual encouragement, conditions the way men treat women in all their social relations and that, by return, determines the nature of the sexual secret life of men.

The process is mirrored inside the fantasy factory itself. Mary Millington is star performer in the pages of the magazines both in pictures and in words. She does first-person stories about her insatiable sexual adventures while her sister, Doreen, edits some of the magazines and, by all accounts, does the lay-out and

paste-up and checks the small ads as well. Both are real people.

"One of the first things I did was a centre spread for *Knave* ... it didn't really have any effect on me personally, but I was surprised at the reaction of friends and neighbours, saying 'How disgusting and how could I and aren't I ashamed of myself'. That's when I realised that everyone doesn't think like me, because I really believe there's nothing wrong with a body. I hadn't realised people were such hypocrites - everyone's respectable until they take their clothes off.

"The kind of reaction I was getting made me want to do more, and of course those people were even more horrified when I started doing the kind of work I do now, open crutch shots and things ... I'm very broad-minded, and I've never been asked to do anything I wouldn't do.

"At first I wanted to stick to the modelling, but I got more interested in the legal side of it. I found all my friends were going to prison for pornography and I thought, well, I'll do a blue movie just to see what it does to people - to me and to the people I showed it to. I didn't do it for money or because I fancied

the man. The only reason I could do it was because I was motivated to research it.

"I didn't speak to the man who was my partner except to say hello and goodbye, although I did act it up a bit because I knew he'd be useless if he thought I resented him.

"The sex itself ... doing it on film ... it's acting, nothing more and nothing less. I've just made a film where I have to do a lesbian scene. I'm bisexual and I did fancy the other girl but she isn't: so that time it was her acting and I was on the other side.

"Even my husband got upset about the film, but that was mostly because I hadn't told him about it. He is very easy-going, but I didn't tell him because I thought that he'd be hurt by me making love with a strange man on film. He was, too.

"In fact I've been married for thirteen years. I'm a proper old housewife really. But I don't usually say so because I get about 1,000 fan letters a week and it would upset the people who write them. Like I never lie myself about my age - which is 32 - but



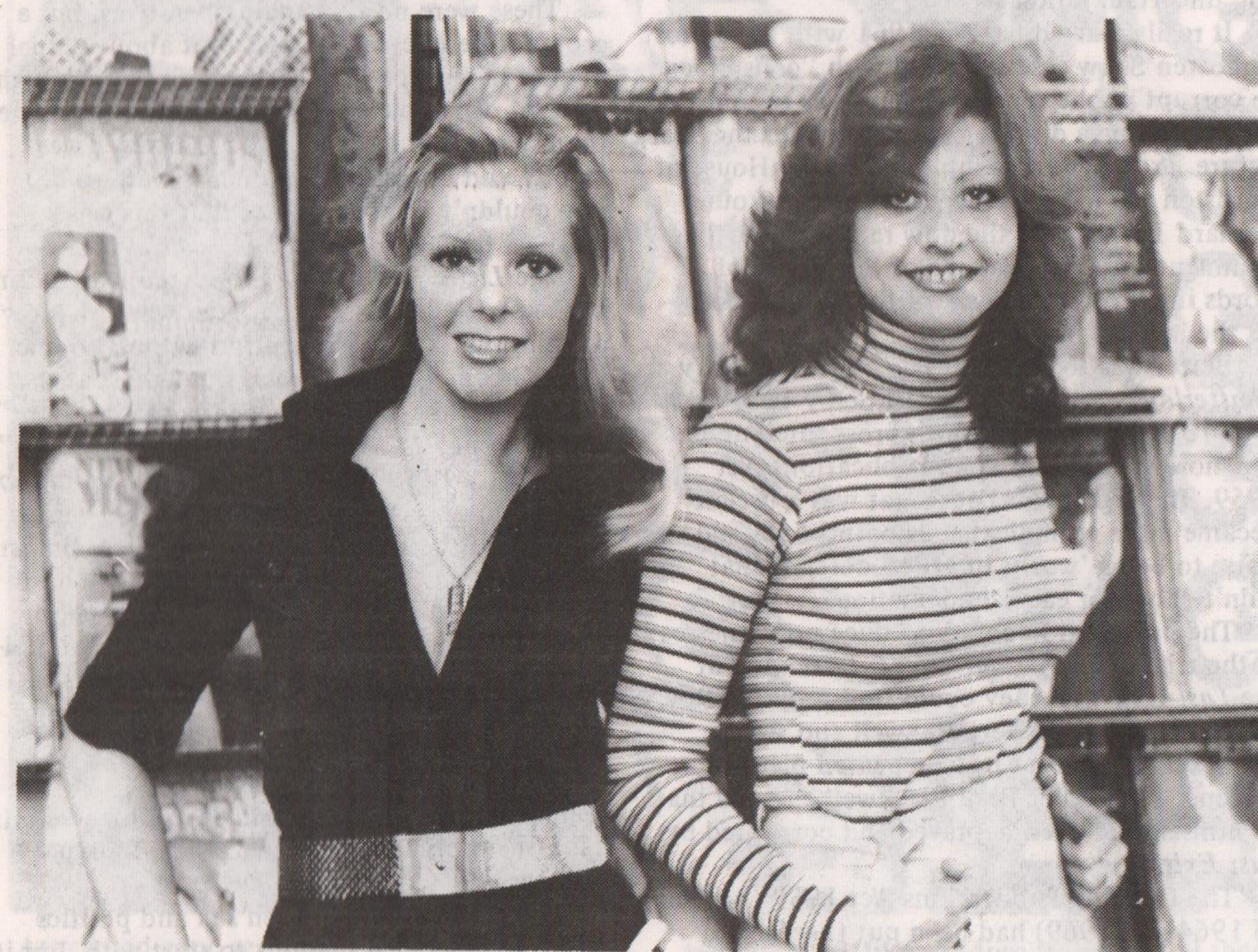
every time I've been interviewed - always by men - they say, 'oh we can't put that, how about 23'?"

"I edit a magazine too, *Whitehouse*; I write all those stories about the people I sleep with, but I don't actually sleep with anyone in the world except my husband. No other men, that is. So what I write is mostly what I can remember from thirteen years ago when I was at art school and going on ban-the-bomb marches and things and I was very promiscuous.

"The girls I think a lot of them get conned, told that it's the route to international stardom - which it's not. The other half do it for money, but in fact the money is very, very poor. When I made that film three years ago they were earning £25 a film which took maybe a day to make. I think it's a bit more now.

"As far as I'm concerned, I figure that I'm being paid X amount of pounds and if I'm happy with that then anything anyone else makes over and above that is not my concern. I'd like a part of it but as long as I've been paid I can't grumble. I'd love to direct films, which has always been done by men. And I'd like to publish magazines as well. There's lots of things I'd like to do, but as I haven't got the money I'm restricted.

"I have got my own shop, a sex shop. I called it *Whitehouse* after the magazine. I set that up with the money I got from the modelling; a lot of girls earn a lot modelling and have got nothing to show for it, they've blown it all. Though I have the constant worry



The Millington sisters -- Mary, left, and Doreen, make an all-round sex mags team.





...inside the fantabiz

of being bankrupted every time the police decide to raid it.

"I still do the pictures. I'm very shy and quiet normally, I never go anywhere like parties. But deep down I think I must be an exhibitionist to do it. Sometimes I've got sexual pleasure out of it, if the photographer is very good and he makes me feel good and gives me a bit of confidence.

And if I'm demonstrating how to use vibrators, that turns me on I think I must have the biggest collection of vibrators anyone has ever had. The sessions themselves would turn me on more if I could comprehend that the reader will be turned on by me. But I'm usually only thinking about how awful I look.

"If I wanted change in the industry I suppose I'd like more women running things. I think I'd be good at it, because I can think like men and know what they want. I don't know if it would change what appeared, maybe a bit more women like more of oral sex ... but in the photos women want to look at nice figures and compare themselves don't they?"

The women who do the modelling are in it mainly for the money. The rates are higher than "straight" nude modelling now. They expect to get paid on the basis of the more they do or show, the more they get. Men on the other hand get paid very little. Perhaps even as they work at producing the raw material of the fantasies, they fall victim to it themselves. They are, however, hard to come by. Women have been more effectively conditioned to the idea of selling their body-thing to some stranger so that he can fit it into a one-shot playlet of his own.

The idea however that people make things out of others and buy and sell objects for their private anti-social pleasure is built into our society all through. The fantasy world of pornotopia is no different. It is exactly as exploitative as the hausfrau fantasy of *Woman's Own*, *Brides* and the others. The fantasy is an exploitative one, but how many men can face the one among the thousands of stories and pictures available that particularly suits their secret life and say, hand on hard-on, that it doesn't turn them on.

The sex mags are just a symptom of the underlying attitudes in society, and they can neither be understood nor changed in isolation. As Graham Baker said: "It seems very strange to me that in a capitalist society it is perfectly acceptable to make a living out of all peoples' needs with the exception of sex. People in our field are just ordinary men and women carrying on a business." Exactly.

Nigel Thomas
Carol Sarler

Strange bedfellows:

"Circle Line—A play in which two young men (one aged 14) were shown naked in bed together. Pot was smoked and sadistic and perverted suggestions were made: 'for kicks sleep with your sister' ... 'bash up an old woman'."

ALL I can do is fall about laughing as I re-read this part of a "watching brief" on "obscenity" kept by the highly vocal, and now largely forgotten dinosaur, the Festival of Light. It was part of the battle over what was pompously dubbed "public morality."

In truth, it was a series of skirmishes in which one side proudly admitted they didn't know what cunnilingus was and didn't think anyone else ought to and the other side seemed to flout every sanctified tenet of bourgeois morality. In between was the machinery of the courts, reactionary judges, "expert witnesses" and uncertain juries.

It really started back in 1961 with the almost forgotten Shaw case. Charged with "conspiracy to corrupt public morals", Shaw was responsible for publishing a directory of prostitutes the year before. Prosecuted, he appealed to the House of Lords on the morals charge and lost. A young Bernard Levin made the now rather unstartling comment that it was a case of the House of Lords imposing their view of the public good on the law.

Better was to come. D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and Hubert Selby Inc's *Last Exit To Brooklyn* were both prosecuted under the more specific Obscene Publications Act 1959. The arguments over what was 'obscene' became more complicated as both books laid claim to being 'works of art': a defence that didn't allow for easy condemnation.

The prosecution could produce no witnesses at the trial of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and at the *Last Exit* trial they could find only the Rev. David Shepperd, Robert Maxwell and Basil Blackwell. In a never to be repeated piece of evidence bookseller Basil Blackwell claimed that he himself had been depraved and corrupted by *Last Exit*.

The Obscene Publications Act 1959 (Amended 1964 and 1969) had been put together to help protect serious literary work: sponsored inside parliament by Roy Jenkins and outside by the Society of Authors.

A publication could only escape prosecution if it could claim that it was in "the public good on the grounds that it is in the interests of science, literature, art or learning, or other objects of general concern". Things were obscene "if they tended to deprave or corrupt". Great believers in British common sense and justice could point to how all 'works of art'—including *Fanny Hill*—were acquitted by the Act.

So the shit didn't really hit the fan until the early 1970's. Officers of Scotland Yard's Obscenity Squad seized copies of *The Little Red Schoolbook*—an anti-authoritarian manual on sex, drugs and school.

Shocked, Jasper Jansen, its Danish author, rushed to its defence:—"To prosecute the book for obscenity considering the books I've seen on sale in London seems to be ridiculous. It contains nothing but facts and information."

Even before the case came to court, police seized Andy Warhol's film *Flesh* showing at the

The law abandons its dirty business

dingy London theatre club—The Open Space. And tales appeared of HM Customs holding up films they considered obscene. It was becoming more difficult to sort 'works of art' from 'obscenity.'

It was back in this period that the now well-known 'sexologist' Dr Martin Cole came on the scene with his sex education film *Growing Up*; which showed a naked female teacher masturbating. She was later sacked but not before the *Daily Mirror* and *The Sun* had had a field day.

Then came the big one—The *Oz* Trial. It wasn't art, it wasn't educational and was it in the public good? Well, almost all three were going to be claimed at the trial but what was at stake was something completely different.

These were no skin trade operatives, but a group of people who talked a lot about sexual liberation and ran a magazine which was bought by a lot of people who certainly didn't consider themselves in the public good. However weak, woolly and liberal the arguments were to be, you couldn't escape the fact that this was a political trial.

The *Little Red Schoolbook* Trial which came in the period before the *Oz* Trial was a shadow of things to come. Prosecution witness, Dame Mary Green, a headmistress, was aghast at the suggestion that she might use the words "cunt" and "fucking": "My friends certainly did not."

On July 1, 1971, *The Little Red Schoolbook* was found obscene and several passages were blacked out before it could go on sale again. In the heat of the moment, its publisher Richard Handyside issued a statement: "Young people freed from the older generation's fearful inhibitions about sex are going to be less willing to accept any arbitrary dictates from our ruling elite.

For me it remains one of the more useful comments from a period which was littered with a lot of rubbish about 'free love' and 'sexual liberation.'

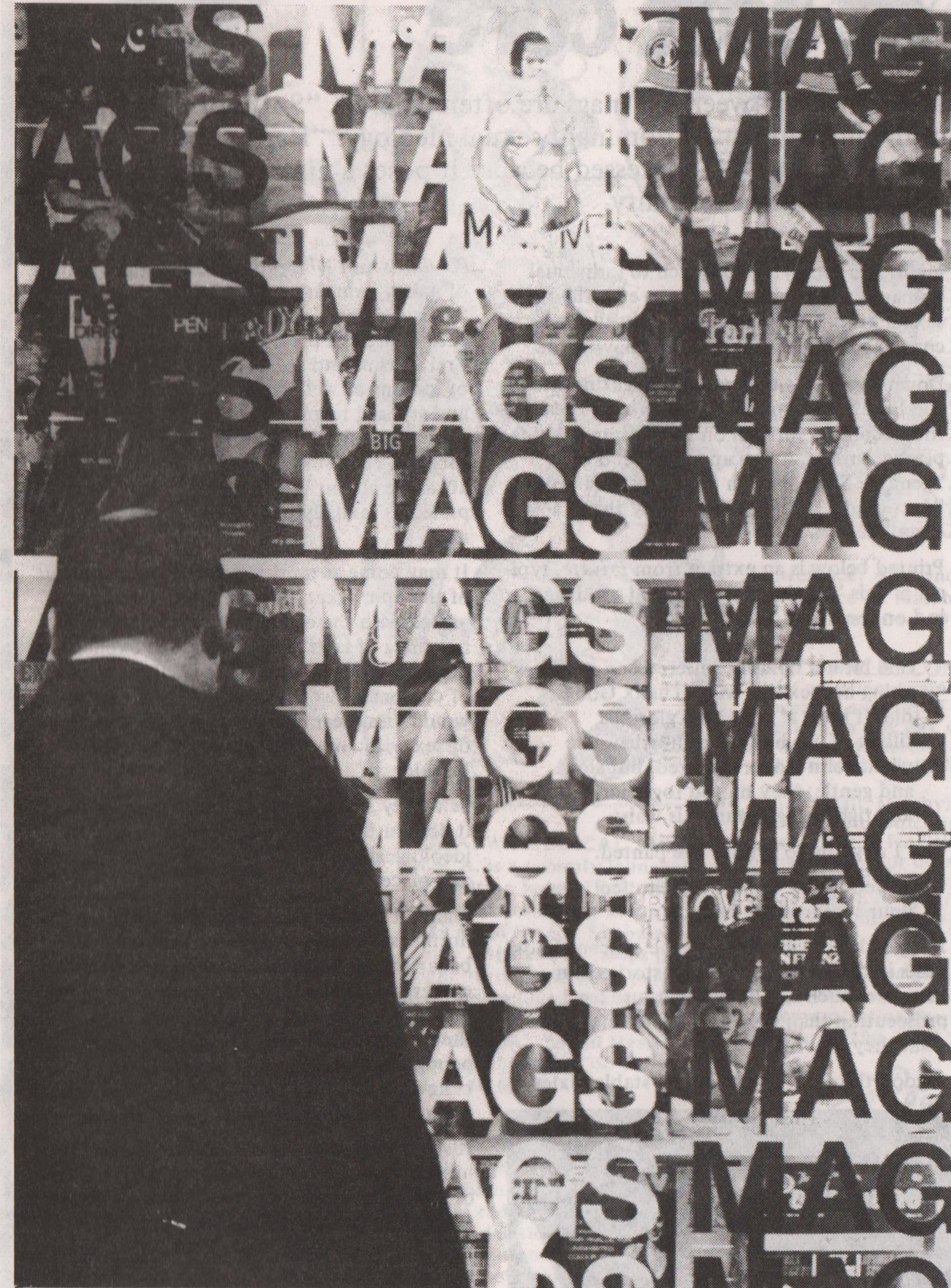
The connection between sex and politics might have seemed tenuous to start with, but it was being reinforced with every day that passed. A July raid on Agitprop bookshop in London carried away amongst the usual heap of address lists, copies of *The Little Red Schoolbook*. Compendium was done for having copies of Dutch sex magazine *Suck* No. 3 and copies of *Suck* No. 4 were intercepted in the post.

On August 5, arch-reactionary Judge Argyll gave heavy prompting to a jury that found *Schoolkids Oz* 'obscene'. A small battle with the police took place outside the courts and the nine arrests included a 13-year old schoolboy. Guilty and jailed, the three defendants were given haircuts. The trial had cost a mammoth £100,000.

A barrage of liberal outrage vied fairly successfully with reactionary glee. But when the fuss died down, an unseen consensus emerged. The lads had done wrong but the sentences were too harsh. Also, with storm clouds on the horizon for the Heath Government over its industrial policy, no one wanted a generation war on their hands.

On appeal, Lord Widgery decided that Judge

porn and liberation



Argyll had gone seriously off the rails in his advice to the jury and changed the sentences.

The counter-offensive came the following year. On the day after the publication of the Longford Report, copies of Paul Raymond's *Club International* and *Men Only* were seized, including 400,000 copies of *Men Only's* October issue not even put on sale.

Lord Longford, later to become a fun-figure Lord-Porn, was not the most charismatic campaigner but his authority as an ex-Labour minister had its effect on the police.

Police raided newsagents all over the country; most memorably in Manchester, where they seized publications they had blacklisted. Even the normally quiescent Federation of Retail Newsagents said that the police raids 'smacked of the Gestapo'. Strong words and not helpful for a police force used to a more Dixon of Dock Green image of itself.

The last of the "underground" trials ended with the acquittal of *IT* spin-off cartoon book, *Nasty Tales*. One of the defendants, Mick Farren, came close to understanding why: "The Jury decided not to be pushed around. The Judge was

treating them like children trying to tell them that they were to protect the public who couldn't look after themselves . . . they weren't going to have anybody telling them what they were going to read."

Developed capitalism offered new opportunities for leisure, consumption and education in so doing was able to grant a limited sexual liberation, including partial emancipation to women and young people.

It was a partial victory for the opponents of censorship. Prosecutions were now almost exclusively against the publishers of near 'hard core' pore, and there were fewer although customs still restricts the importing of much that is available in the rest of Europe, and through self-censorship, the sex-publishers in Britain have chosen not to publish similar material openly.

This relation of social attitudes, as expressed through the practice of law, was undoubtedly led by the consumption orientated economic boom, in which a developed capitalism began to pay off the class it exploited with increased leisure and purchasing power.

The patriarchal family and the stern morality of economic necessity were undermined by the pleasure-ethic and the seduction of gratification through purchase.

But there are still plenty who argue that an open attitude to sexual pleasure leads to social decay, and there is always the chance that as the materialistic good life recedes from the majority, their voices will again be listened to.

The supreme irony in the process was the publication of the report of The President's Commission on Obscenity and Pornography. Originally designed to root out connections between sex crimes, porn and the Mafia, it came to the fairly sound conclusion that none existed; "the belief that erotica causes moral breakdown is most commonly held by those with little or no experience of erotic material."

The report produced a real gem of the new "objective" psychiatric wisdom: "Researchers affiliated to the University of Chicago recently surveyed 3,423 American psychiatrists and clinical psychologists. 80 percent of these . . . reported that they had never encountered a case in which pornography appeared to be a factor in producing anti-social behaviour" The psychologists sanctify and the law legitimates our desires.

In its heyday, the Festival of Light could rally 35,000 people. But despite welcoming telegrams from Prince Charles and minor Tory MPs, it received no major political support. Few of its spokespersons—Cliff Richard, Mary Whitehouse, Lord Longford—are still with us but their incursions are increasingly regarded as a good laugh, like Mary Whitehouse's complaints over Stanley Baxter's Christmas show. Male, mainly working class juries now fairly consistently acquit sex magazines.

The debate over where to draw the line is irrelevant to any discussion of sexual politics. Sex magazines played an important role (almost exclusively for men) in changing sexual attitudes, but they cannot change the male authoritarianism of the sexuality they show.

They have produced a false sexual liberation in which guys sleep around and their mates are amazed by their prowess; women who adopt the same liberated attitude are regarded (often subtly) as "tarts". The Cosmopolitan liberation is women playing men's games.

The biggest hypocrites were the "underground" magazines. For all their preachings on sexual liberation, men by and large did the talking about it and the women looked after the office.

But is not enough to be against sex magazines because they are exploitative, end of conversation. Too often the puritans of the revolution seek to repress the admission that men and women have desires, enjoy making love with their own or the opposite sex.

They are scared to admit that millions get excited, masturbate or draw inspiration from the exploitative images in these magazines. What do they suggest these people (men) masturbate to? Should they hold their breath and think of England until after the revolution? Will there be sex magazines after the revolution?

The puritans carefully split their lives into their "politics" and their "private life." Luckily the women's movement has challenged this false distinction that has a long history in the Left.

In his famous conversation with Clara Zetkin, Lenin expressed dismay at what he considered bourgeois influence on socialist women: "I have been told that at the evenings arranged

Images of sex: a hard look at soft core

EATEN BY SHARKS. Crushed by gorillas and bears. Burned alive in skyscrapers. Buried under earthquakes. Massacred by schizos, cops and part-time lumberjacks.

These cinematic representations of our species - all encouraging thrills associated with human pain, fear, destruction and helplessness - are of course legal money spinners. But the graphic representation of sexual behaviour (the legal definition of pornography) is still suppressed by the state.

Most people's experience of porn is limited to magazines like *Mayfair* and *Penthouse* which merely confirm bourgeois notions of sexuality: idealised pictures of young womanhood, being available before settling down into the consumption/production unit (the family). More importantly the 'sexuality' of these women is pictorially represented as a state of passive narcissism, essentially enhanced by expensively exotic decor.

This gross libel on human sexuality in the 'soft core' magazines is reinforced by consumerist features and advertisements for commodities, the possession or use of which (it is implied) will make the reader a contender for the 'charms' (sic) of women similar to those presented. Little is done against all this by the authorities who characterise such stuff as a "healthy escape valve for the lads". The desire for sexual information and stimulation is, via 'soft core', transformed into and incorporated within, sexist ideologies. This can be further exploited by its failure to offer a mean-

Differences between sex mags are often ignored. "Soft porn" is legal and in the mainstream of dominant sexual ideology. "Hard porn", Tony Nicholls argues, is suppressed because it poses a direct threat to conventional notions of sexuality.

ingful and satisfying approach to individual human sexual reality. It creates a world of sexual promise to be realised only through consumption of the whole role-playing bit.

Down-market come a rash of magazines that still have some trouble with the law. These base their economic survival on advertising sex aids - plastic, rubber, nylon and pills - and offer "genuine Scandinavian porn" by mail order. "Just send £10". Needless to say this is a complete con.

Printed below is an extract from *Private*, typical of this "borderline" porn and produced in London's East End :-

She bit her lip as he entered her, stretching her sex lips wide. Thank God he didn't hurt, it was just a glorious filling of her body. Not hurried, like when John Robert rogered, but slow and gentle; they moved together, her legs tightening around his waist.

"I'm going to spunk," he panted.

"Then spunk Tom, I want to feel your sperm in my body."

It's worth noting that since the obscene book trials in the sixties, the erotic stories in magazines are much less likely to arouse legal prosecution than the visual representation of what they describe.

A good third of *Private* and its stable mates



Playbirds and *Whitehouse* will contain photos of naked women opening their legs wide towards camera. On one level these publications are less pretentious than their West End cousins and are all about the fascination and stylised form of visual aid for Fourth Form biology perhaps? For the most part social or economic contexts for sexual association are absent but the women are still depicted as sexually passive objects - waiting for men.

It may come as no surprise but the producers of the up-market "soft core" material are united with the establishment against the repealing of laws used to suppress explicit portrayals of sexual activity. If these forms of censorship were lifted, the 'soft' market would disappear overnight and the association of sex with consumerism would be vitally threatened.

Sexuality exists as much in the imagination as it does in the sexual organs. It is shaped by ideological values of "good" and "bad", time and place.

Many of us have been taught wrongly that normal sex covers a very limited range of behaviour and association. We can often be embarrassed and guilt-ridden when our fantasies go beyond these limits. It is therefore useful to become aware of what other people do, to realise that our fantasies and behaviour are not "weird", "abnormal" and private, but widely shared.

It speaks volumes for our culture that whilst human violence is part of the everyday fabric of entertainment and news, the visual presentation of physical love-making is associated with criminality and filth.

'Hard core' visual porn explores many areas of human sexual behaviour and owes nothing to the passive 'soft' variety where the accent is on acquisition not sexual action. Endless representations of passive sexuality serve only to mystify and repress the potential reality of sex as an active process towards a satisfyingly involved and mutual pleasure relationship.

This is not to say that, under existing arrangements, 'hard core' is resistant to the economic base of sexism. Because of the legal (and ideological) sanctions against it, a male market forms the basis for production and this is often reflected in the presentation of the material.

At a fundamental level, 'hard core' pornography offends and threatens bourgeois morality because of its potential to celebrate sexual behaviour as a mutual exploration of pleasure in the human body without reference to marriage property or "social normality". It is, as yet, crude propaganda for sexual tolerance and awareness.

Tony Nicholls



Agitprop



OF COURSE, DEAR. I WAS JUST CHECKING THAT THEY'VE LISTED THE JUBILEE IN AGITPROP.

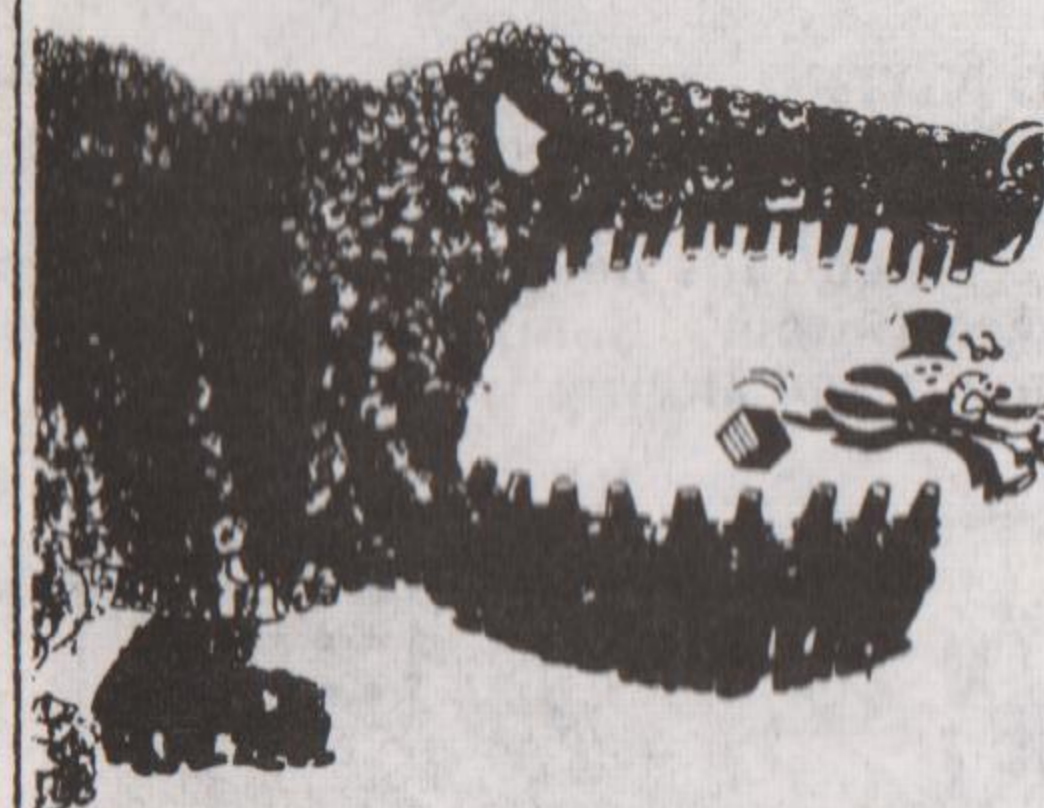


SEX/POL

WOMEN ONLY: conference on feminism and non-violence to be held at Blackheath Friends Meeting House, Lawn Terrace, London SE3; 11 - 13 March. Cost £2. Creche provided. Further details: Jenny Jacob, 37 Rochester Way, London SE3.

ONE YEAR ON: Rally to evaluate progress made in Women's Rights. Organised by Women's Rights Planning Committee, sponsored by Working Women's Charter. Dates and details: Mandy Snell, 33 Wemyss Rd., London SE3. Tel: 01 - 318 3763.

A PRETTY GIRL LIKE YOU: a half-hour play, consisting of a unified collection of sketches and songs based on the Working Women's Charter, is being offered to interested groups. The issues covered include abortion, nursery provision and women's involvement in the Trade Unions, and a discussion follows the play. Available evenings and weekends, £5 in London, plus expenses elsewhere. Details: 01-808 3457 (evenings).



IMPERIALISM

AGEE/HOSENBALL DEFENCE COMMITTEE is bringing out a series of CIA Briefings. So far: Assassination Plots against Foreign Leaders (20p), Jamaica De-Stabilised (25p), Covert Action, by Phil Agee (25p), How American Intelligence serves the Multi-Nationals (20p), and Imperialism and the Immigration Act (25p). Out soon: The CIA in Britain (25p). From AHDC, 186 Kings Cross Road, London WC1, 01-278-01-278-4575. The Committee is planning a blitz of co-ordinated demonstrations all round the country, if either Agee or Hosenball are finally deported. Details from the committee office.

ZIMBABWE MEDICAL AID: Z.I.M.A. is a recently launched organisation formed with the intention of mobilising material medical aid for the Zimbabwean people displaced to camps in neighbouring countries, particularly Mozambique. Further information from: J.K. Cruikshank, 84 Tindell St., Balsall Heath, Birmingham B12 9QS. Tel: 021 - 440 6297.

THIRD WORLD FIRST: traditionally a 'development organisation' which aims to involve students in radical self-education about and action against injustice and oppression in the third world, they are now producing a handbook. Ideas or experiences in any sphere like community action, education, employment, immigration legislation, the press, anti-fascist campaigns etc. are needed by March. Please write to: Maggie Wilson, Third World First, 232 Cowley Rd., Oxford.

COMMUNITY

HOSPITALS: Save our Hospitals delegate conference on March 19 for all trade unionists in hospitals, at Holborn Assembly Rooms, Holborn, London WC1. Delegate fee (£1) from Hospital Worker Conference, 265a Seven Sisters Rd., London N4.



Conference: All-London Squatters Conference on March 26/27. Details from: 01-359 8814.

CACTL WALES CONFERENCE. The Campaign Against a Criminal Trespass Law (CACTL) in Wales is holding a one day conference on Saturday March 12. It starts at 11am and will be held in the

Miners' Hall, Merthyr Tydfil. Fee is £1.00, which includes lunch. Creche facilities will be available. For details write C/o AEUW TASS 18, Anne's Close, Merthyr Tydfil, or phone Merthyr Tydfil 6251/2

CACTL: Campaign against the Criminal Trespass Law is planning a demonstration for March 19. Phone 01-289 3877 for details.



STREET THEATRE: Latest issue of Community Action contains features on street theatre, nursery campaigns, housing lobby and more. Single copies from: Community Action, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1; 18p. plus postage.

Welsh Housing: As housing misery grows in Wales, probably a third of Wales unemployed are building workers. To fight this 'absurd end of absurd economic policies and political priorities', get in touch with South Wales Housing Action 35, Deri Road, Penylan, Cardiff.

Future Studies: A conference on 'Industry, The Community and Appropriate Technology (ICAT)' is now being planned for 15-20. It will be five days of events in Leeds and the North of England as a follow-up to the ICAT conference in Bradford last year. Further details from the Future Studies Centre, 15 Kelso Road, Leeds LS2 9PR.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

Marxist Poly: 1-8 July 1977, Organised by NOISS, a week of lectures, discussions and debate around key aspects of Marxism. Want to contribute? Write to 6 Cotton Gardens London E2.

CONTACTS

LIBERTARIAN STUDENT NETWORK: all we can tell you is that this is now functioning. If such cryptic messages intrigue, you can hear more by contacting: Handy Bevanite, A06 Allesley House, Rootes Residences, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL

Questionnaires: CACTL is sending a questionnaire to as many squatters as possible asking about their aims, organisations and groups they are associated with. They hope to compile pamphlets on tactics to be used against the Criminal Trespass provisions in the Criminal Law Bill (which has now passed its second reading in the Lords). Copies from: CACTL Squatters Workshop, c/o 2 St. Paul's Rd., London N.1.

SCIENCE FOR PEOPLE: contacts - Edinburgh, Clive Gray, 031-661 4893; Birmingham, Rowena Clayton 021 - 449 2134; Sheffield, Dave Hayes, 0742 583741; Manchester, Ken Green, 061-273 3333. For others in Bath, Glasgow, Cambridge, Sussex and Canterbury, contact Science for People, 9 Poland St., London W1.

ABORTION; Doctors for a Woman's Choice on Abortion is a pressure group supported by 275 doctors "who wish to relinquish their legal right to make the abortion decision". Send names and addresses of sympathetic doctors to: Dr. Judy Bury, 8 Magdala Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 5BE.



bedfellows

From Previous Page

for reading and discussion with working women, sex and marriage problems came first. I could not believe my ears when I first heard that". Even Trotsky was forced to admit that the party had not thrashed out the issues enough.

My favorite example of separating the political and the personal is an excerpt from a Young Communist League Bulletin in America: "Some people have the idea that a YCLer is politically minded, that nothing outside of politics means anything. Gosh, no. They have a few simple problems of getting good men on the basketball team this spring, or opposition from other ping pong teams, or dating girls . . . In short, the YCL and its members are no different from other people except we believe in dialectical materialism as the solution to all problems."

The notable exception was the young Wilhelm Reich who built a movement of over 40,000 members on a series of demands that linked the struggle to change social relations in sexuality with the class struggle. After only two years of this sex-pol movement's existence he was expelled from the German Communist Party.

So now it is time to re-appropriate our desires. For men's sexuality and sexual imagery continues to be influenced by sex magazines. If you publish non-sexist kids' books to change your own kids' ideas, it is logical also to publish erotica, sexual imagery (call it what you will), that challenges social relations in sexuality; in short, that starts to change people's ideas about how they enjoy each other sexually.

Russell Southwood