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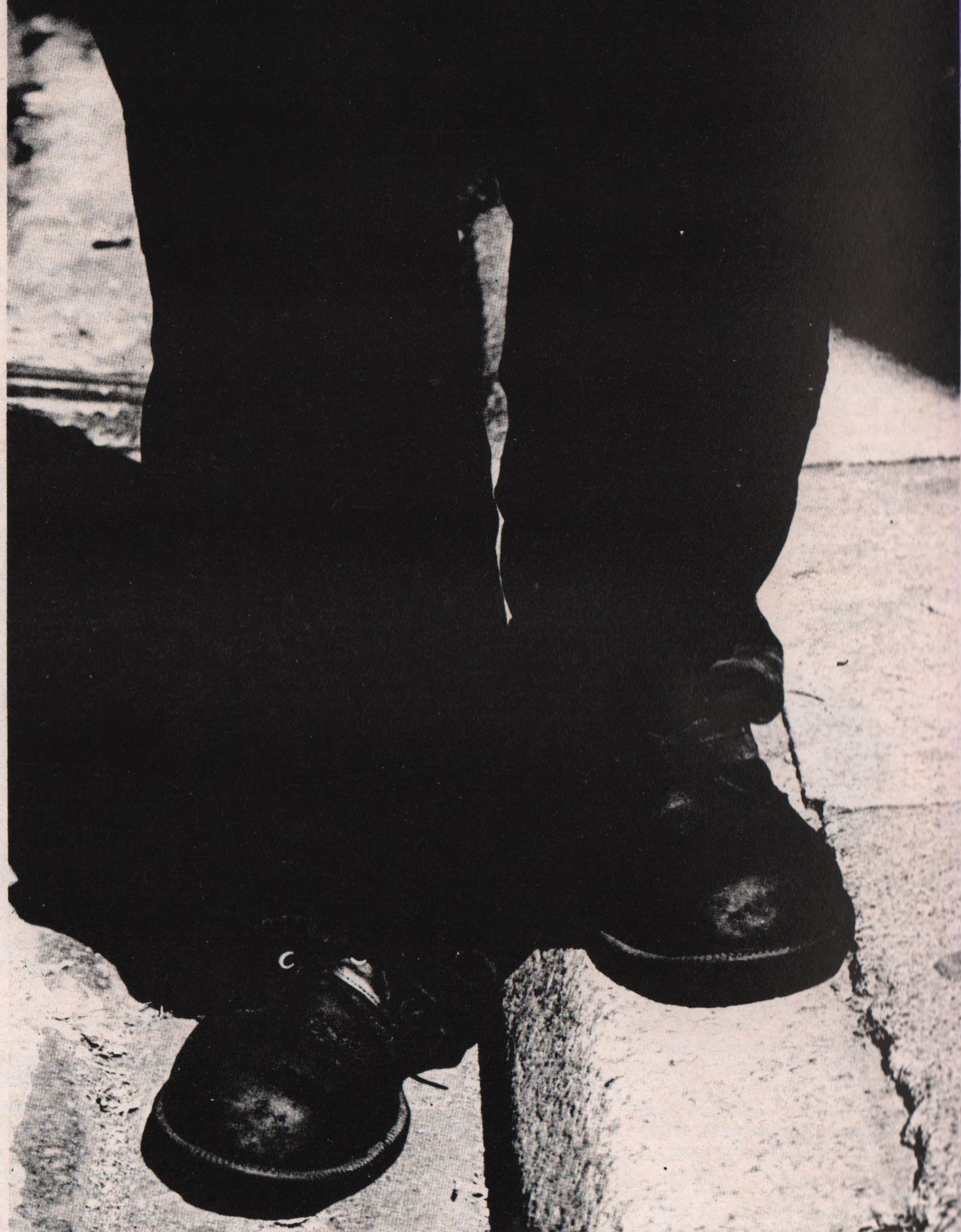
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Sarah Cox and Robert Golden



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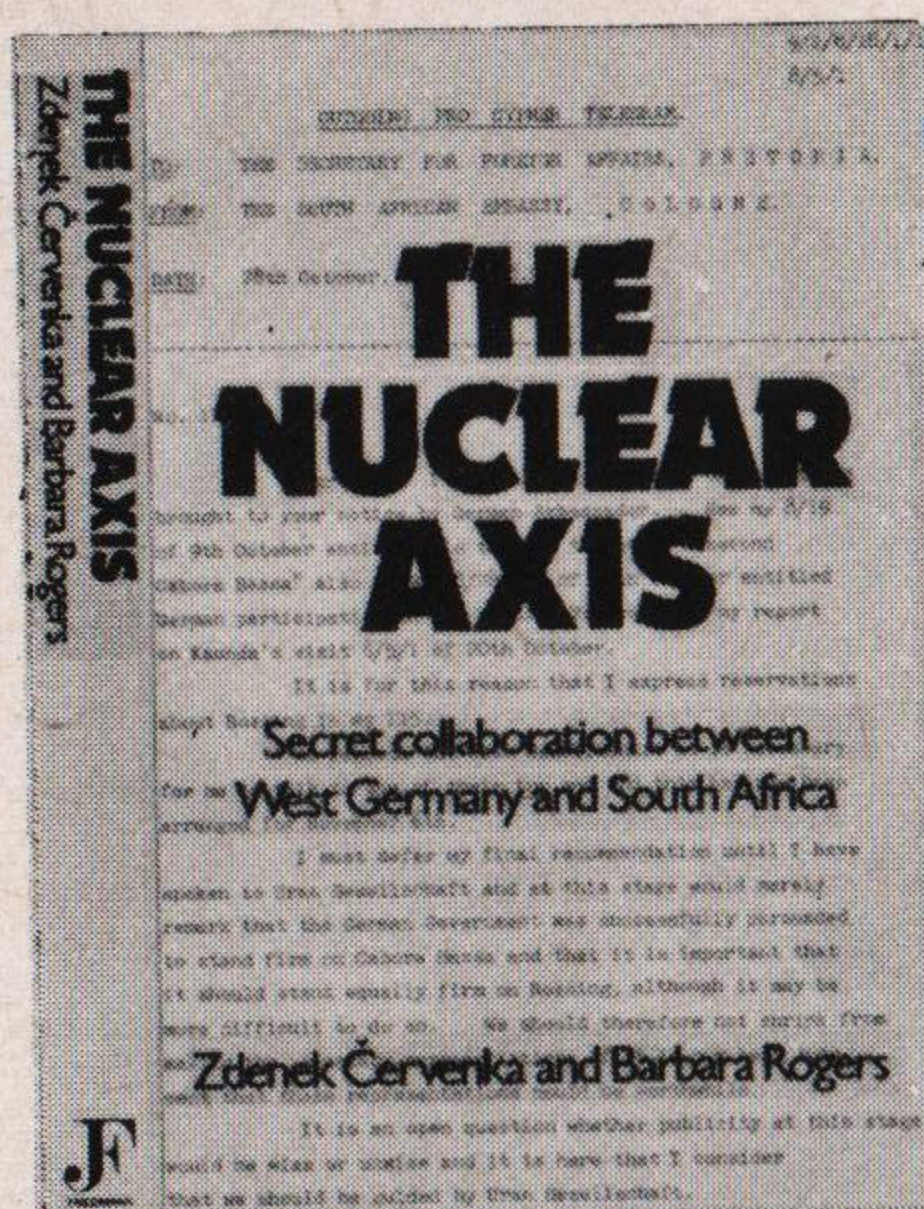


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The contraception feature pictures were taken by Richard and Sally Greenhill.



£9.25's worth of cheap indigo cotton: run-down of the denim industry begins on page 18

Working Committee meetings are held at 7.30 every Tuesday evening in our offices. Readers are welcome to attend and assist in the development of the magazine. Written contributions, photographs, cartoons and story ideas are also welcome.



# Exclusive

DOCUMENTS MADE available to The Leveller show how two leading UK pharmaceutical companies, Allen and Hanbury's and Glaxo Holdings, made dubious payments which may have totalled more than £1 million, to their agent in Spain between 1959 and 1973. The payments defrauded the Spanish people of several million pounds through loss of revenue to the Treasury, and overcharging the health service. From 1959 to at least 1970 surreptitious payments were made in to the Swiss bank account of the companies' agent.

Glaxo is one of the five biggest drug companies in the world. Last year its profits were a cool £73.9 million. In the early 1960s it took over Allen and Hanbury's. The company has grown astronomically since World War 2, and is hailed in the City as a great British "success story". This is the story of how part of that success was achieved.

The agent during the period was P. Junyent Font, a Barcelona businessman and Spanish national, who ran a pharmaceutical processing and supply company called Industrial Ibenca Quimico Pharmaceutica SA (INIBSA). The payments were commissions on products, mainly raw materials, bought by INIBSA from the companies, under an agreement made between Junyent and Allen and Hanbury's in 1959 and subsequently honoured by Glaxo. A large part of the business concerned an antibiotic, called *Geporan*, manufactured by Glaxo. The agreement to pay a commission was legal and is common practice.

But the payments were disguised in the companies' accounts, particularly Glaxo's. Money owed to INIBSA was transferred to Junyent's personal account at the Societe General Alsacienne de Banque in Zurich. Glaxo knowingly abetted Junyent in breaking Spanish foreign exchange laws, for which the punishments are draconian. The company may also have been in breach of UK foreign exchange regulations and of Section 485 of the Income and Corporation Tax Act 1970 governing inter-company payments.

The evidence details how powerful multinational companies can rig prices to the detriment of consumers, conceal it in their accounts, and then use the law and their political connections to silence investigators. Competition between rival drug firms, supposedly beneficial to consumers, is partly responsible.

There are also grounds for suspicion about a land deal in 1973 in which INIBSA and Junyent sold Glaxo a site for a new factory at a grossly inflated price of over £1million. The deal was probably part of a pay-off to Junyent, who was obstructing Glaxo's plans for setting up a

# British drug firm in £1m swindle

Glaxo, a household-name drug company, paid huge sums of money into a secret Swiss bank account as part of a cosy arrangement with its Spanish agent. It then cooked the books to hide the payment. *The Leveller* shows how it was done, and what it cost the Spanish people, of whose hospitals a Glaxo market survey said: "People usually go there to die."

local company to exploit the rapidly-growing Spanish drugs market.

Both Junyent, and Glaxo's present finance director, Paul Girolami (the finance director in the latter part of the period was HC Mace) have admitted that the payments and the methods by which they are made are "questionable". They disagree, however, about the size and dates of the payments.

Junyent has confessed: "Until 1969 the arrangements whereby I received the overcredits in my name in Zurich would not have been looked on favourably by the Spanish authorities. If they had known what my arrangements were, this could have resulted in certain proceedings being taken against me which may have resulted in a heavy fine being imposed on me."

He claims that the payments ended in 1969 and that they averaged about £30,000 a year. In January 1970 he received more than £51,000 commission on the previous year's business.

Girolami agrees about the suspect nature of the payments: "These transactions with INIBSA were of a highly confidential nature and their exposure to unauthorised persons would cause considerable embarrassment to the parties concerned."

But he feels that Junyent has understated the amount he got from Glaxo. The total from the early 1960's to 1970 is put at "very approximately" £200,000. "In one of the more recent years, it in fact amounted to about £80,000." For the finance director of a major corporation, Girolami is disarmingly vague about the fate of large sums of money.

Nor did the payments necessarily stop in 1970 - let alone 1969 as Junyent claims. "In 1969", Girolami has said, "my company endeavoured to terminate this agreement but because of legal difficulties, this was not possible until 1973." Direct payments to Switzerland may have stopped in 1970, but as the Glaxo man explains: "The commission was normal. It was the means of payment which was unusual. It ended in 1970. From then on, the payment was credited to his (Junyent's) account with us."

royalties if there is a royalty agreement), and the £50 difference is paid into the safe-keeping of the gnomes.

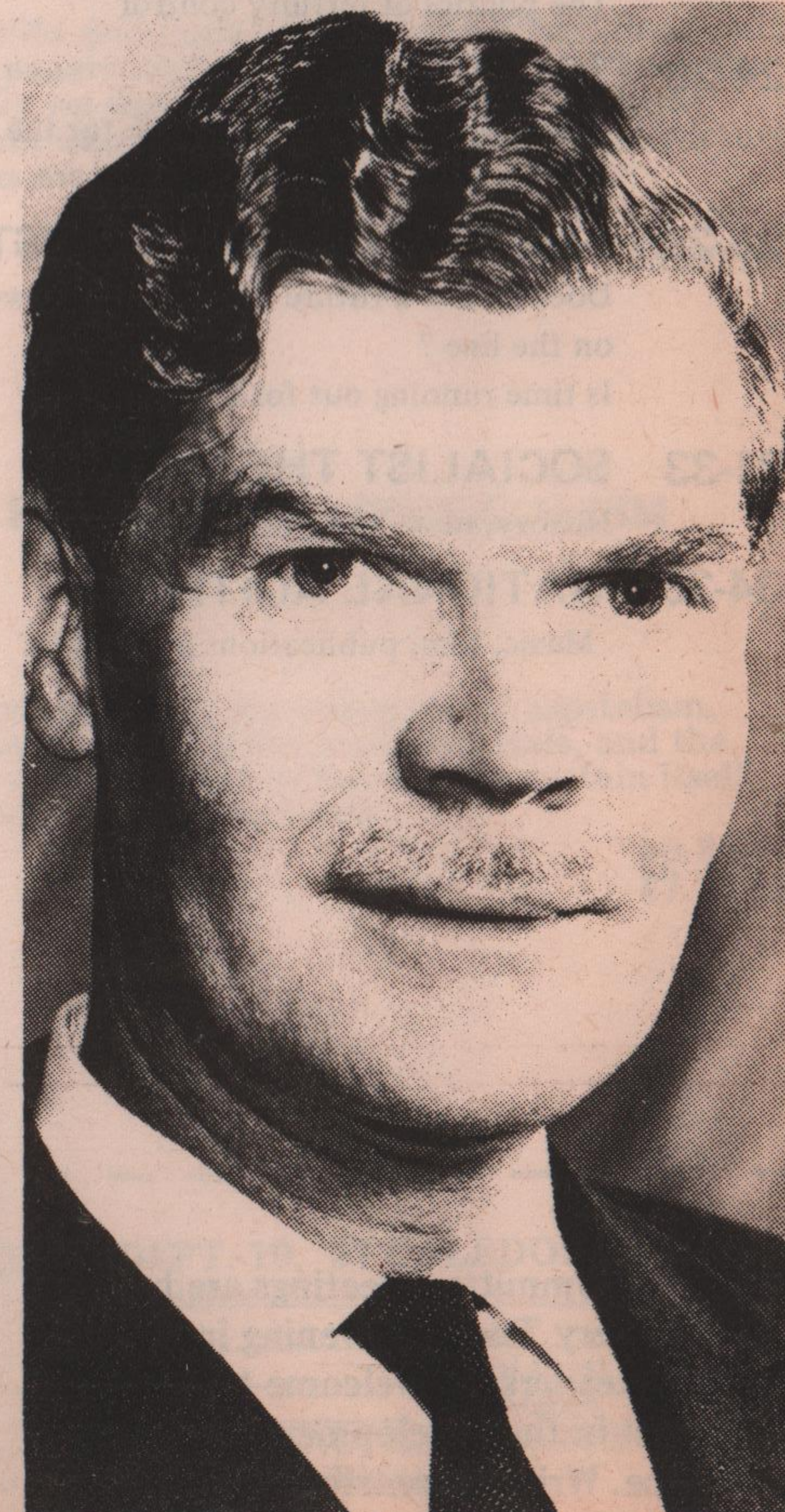
Finally, just to squeeze the last drop out of the Spanish tax-payer, FARTSA marks its own goods up to the true price by inflating the cost, packaging and marketing the raw material.

The artificially high price is paid by the health service and other consumers. But the saving on the goods bought from CRUDCO means that FARTSA has no cause to buy from local suppliers. Jobs are lost, wages are lower and the economy generally suffers. Another multi-national rip-off.

Other estimates of how much was paid into the Zurich account, based on Glaxo's officially declared exports to Spain, come to nearer £350,000 - which makes Girolami's £200,000 look very approximate indeed. The lapses of memory unfortunately suffered by both parties suggest that even this figure could be conservative.

But there is no doubt about the unusual means of payment; two methods were favoured by Glaxo. Until the late 1960's "overbilling" ("overcredits") was preferred. Glaxo invoiced INIBSA for more than the actual cost of the goods supplied. INIBSA made a smaller profit in Spain because of the higher paper cost (unless it fiddled its own books). But Glaxo paid the difference to Switzerland.

The imposition of heavy import duties in the late 1960's, however, made the alternative method of underbilling more attractive. This procedure is frequently used by the multinationals. The seller (Glaxo) sends the buyer



I. Mackinnon, managing director of Glaxo-Allenbury (Export)

(INIBSA) a bill for less than the true value of the goods bought. The documents offer step-by-step evidence of how it was done, including how the cash due to Junyent was hidden as "price adjustments". (See Box)

The advantages for Glaxo were that the arrangement tied INIBSA to it and secured a bigger sale than might otherwise have been the case. Glaxo also gained from the cash which INIBSA paid in advance to make up the difference between the low invoiced price and the real price. Glaxo got the interest on these transfers.

An internal memorandum of 19 January 1970 said: "based on the statement of accounts dated 30 November and taking into consideration those drafts which have not been paid in full, there is an outstanding balance payable to INIBSA amounting to £51,899 .. 3s. 5d ..... Make arrangements for the immediate transfer of £25,000 followed by a further transfer one week from now of £26,899..3s..5d to the account of Dr. P. Junyent at the following bank: Societe General Alsacienne de Banque, 1, Bleicherweg, Boit Postale 1097, Zurich". (See Spanish cutting.)

A statement of account from Glaxo Allenburys (Export) Ltd date 16 January 1970 details a sum "to balance" of exactly the same amount. This £51,899..3s..5d is entirely composed of entries to "price adjustment". The figure is confirmed - and made up the same way - in accounts drawn up on 31 May 1971, headed "Reconciliation of INIBSA balance with Group."

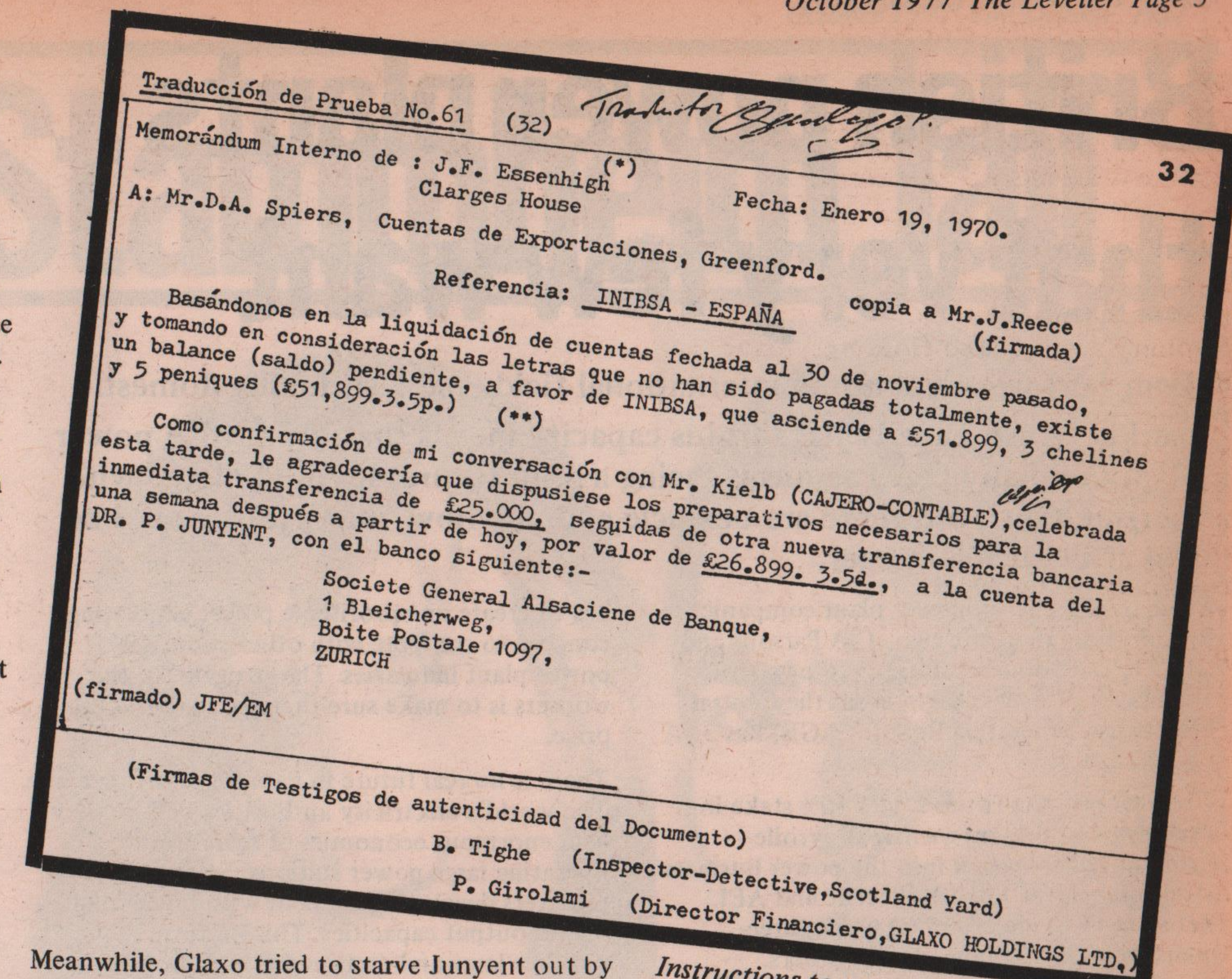
Among these figures is another mysterious set of entries entertainingly termed "possible memorandum adjustments", totalling £33,869.93. It would seem that further substantial sums were due to INIBSA which also had to be concealed. The technical complexities of Glaxo's accounts should not be allowed to obscure their purpose. Underbilling allowed INIBSA to avoid import duties as high as 50%. Because its costs were officially lower INIBSA could undercut competitors. The ultimate joy was that when selling to the health service, INIBSA could charge its normal mark-up of 30% on the true price of the product.

Cosy though the set-up may seem, however, from 1969 Junyent and Glaxo began to fall out. The Spanish drug market was expanding fast and Glaxo wanted a bigger share. Of more than 100 companies in the market, 45 had foreign participation. Glaxo could not afford to fall behind its competitors.

In 1970 Glaxo's sales to Spain, in which Ceporan dominated, were worth about £7.9million. Within three years, sales had risen to £38.4million. Nevertheless, Glaxo reckoned that in the changing economic and political climate, as the Franco era closed, it could do without Junyent. But the agreement with him, and his connections in high Francoist places, meant that he was hard to drop. For his part, Junyent was most reluctant to terminate his lucrative relationship with Glaxo. He began to demand impossible conditions.

A Glaxo memorandum of 16 December 1969 noted, "Glaxo's Spanish market .... is believed to have a high potential if vigorously exploited". But, it went on, "the Group's progress in Spain has been limited by the fact that the business has been in the hands of an agent ..... which has manufactured, promoted and distributed Group products on its own initiative. The Glaxo name is almost unknown in Spain. Product promotion has been unimaginative, and market penetration has been unimpressive."

The answer to such a dire state of affairs was to apply for permission to set up a subsidiary, Glaxo Espanola. The company believed that it would be more successful in this venture than its arch-rival, Beecham, whose application had been refused. Competition was hotting up.



Meanwhile, Glaxo tried to starve Junyent out by withholding supplies. A guerrilla battle developed in 1971, INIBSA's stocklist showing that supplies of Ceporan fluctuated wildly. Junyent responded by taking Glaxo to court in Spain. An internal Glaxo memorandum of 27 October stated: "No further correspondence may take place between INIBSA and the Company, or any member of its staff."

Legal proceedings were started in Spain to dissolve the agency agreement. Junyent tried to negotiate terms more attractive to Glaxo even causing complete confusion on one occasion: by offering to buy Ceporan at the real price - which turned out to be £0.983 a gramme. Glaxo persisted in its efforts to ditch Junyent. A survey of the market described the scope for expansion: "Spain has few hospitals. They are poorly equipped, understaffed and ill-maintained. People usually go there to die. Some modern prestige propaganda effect outweighs their medical importance."

Such poignant remarks did not prevent the company from pushing ahead with its plans to exploit further the health service and its expiring users. When the application for a wholly-owned subsidiary was rejected, Glaxo formed another company, Safesa Ibercia SA, in April 1973, in which it had a 50% stake. A press release on 24 May explained: "This company is the exclusive holder of all product registrations for Glaxo's pharmaceutical products in Spain and will conduct the group's pharmaceutical business in that country."

In the end a devious and expensive way of getting rid of Junyent was dreamed up. In 1965 he had bought land at Alcalá de Henares, near the airport outside Madrid, for about £31,000. Four years later, part of the land was sold to INIBSA for INIBSA shares worth about £425,000. Then in 1973 both plots were bought by Glaxo for the tidy sum of £1,071,428, which Junyent admitted signing "ahead of the actual deed of sale".

The sale was officially registered on 5 November 1973. An earlier Glaxo memorandum had noted: "We completed the settlement agreement with INIBSA in the Court (at Barcelona) last Saturday (April 7)." The chairman of Glaxo Allenburys (Export), R.A. Langridge, is reputed to have wailed: "This is a total sell out." Certainly Glaxo probably paid about four times what the land was worth.

Instructions to pay money into Switzerland

How this huge payment was made, and whether exchange control permission was obtained, are unanswered questions. But what is clear is that the victims have never been Glaxo, nor its Spanish agents. They have been the Spanish Health Service, and the Spanish people.

Junyent dodges the press





# British power plants that very few want

Poor performances in the international field, and a shrinking domestic market which already has surplus capacity means that the British power plant company C.A.Parsons is facing a grim future. It could merge with its rival, GEC, but there are obstacle and, anyhow, many jobs would be lost after such a merger.

There used to be six power plant companies in Britain. Now there are two—C A Parsons and GEC. In the booming sixties, there was an abundance of orders. At present the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) has 30% excess capacity.

GEC—who in the fifties sold a 40% stake in Parsons to its present owners, Reyrolle—reluctantly came back into the power business after taking over English Electric and AEI. Between 1970 and 1975 GEC got three-quarters of all UK power plant orders.

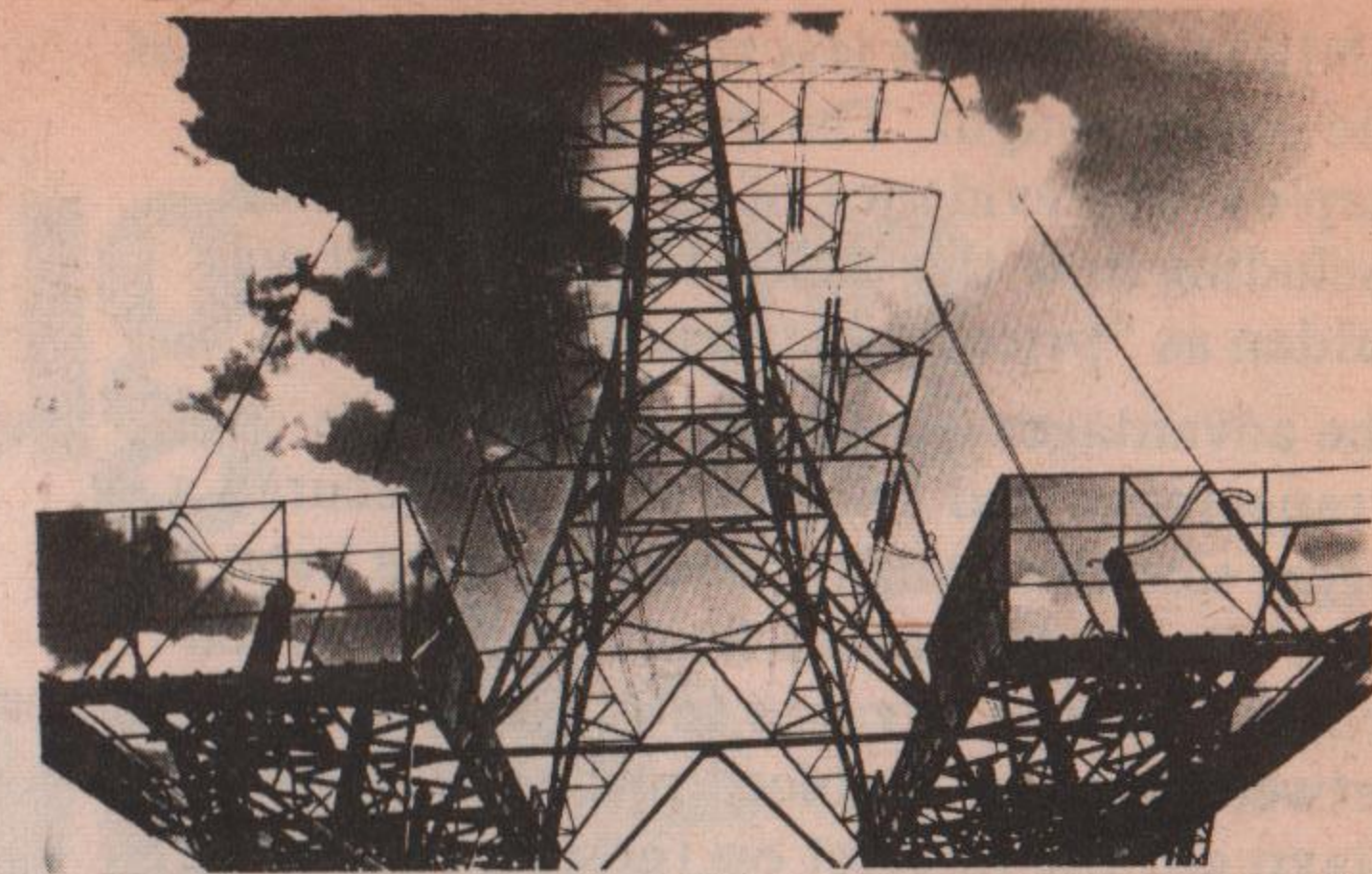
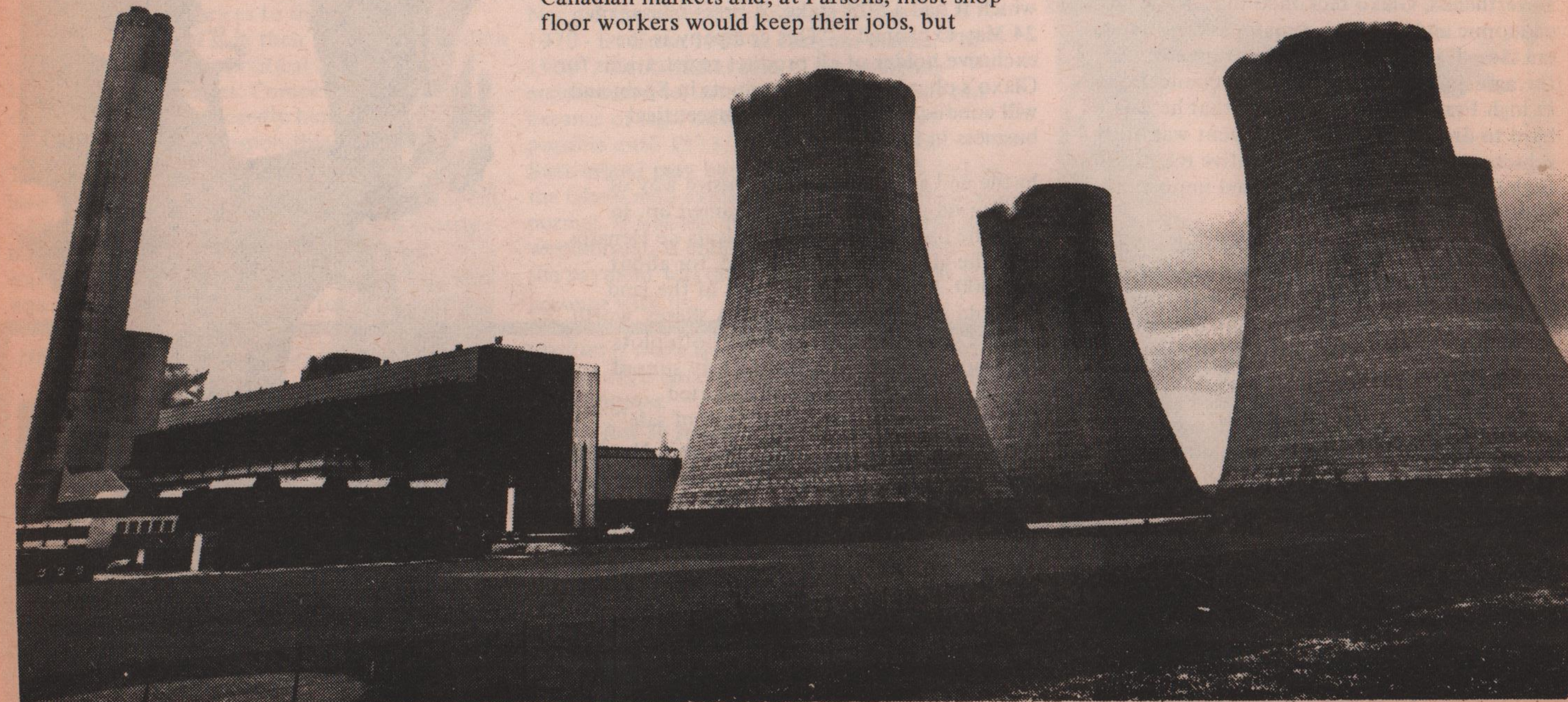
In the meantime, its competitor C A Parsons was bailed out by the Heath Government which gave it the Ince B power station order to avoid a repeat of Upper Clyde in the north east. Now with Drax B, the Labour Government has done the same but this time round there are no easy solutions to the crisis.

GEC saw the crunch coming back in 1976 and put pressure on the Government to do something. A NEDO report was issued, urging Government and CEGB action. The civil servants then called in the "Think Tank" to convince the Treasury that reorganisation of the industry was a costly priority

The "Think Tank" recommended a merger between GEC's and Parsons' turbogenerator divisions. So did the National Enterprise Board when it was called in. Even the Parsons combine committee agreed that a merger would be desirable. But it objects to GEC control because it fears that Arnold Weinstock will create massive redundancies.

The challenge for the capitalists—The Think Tank, the NEB, the companies and the CEGB

*The CEGB has 30 per cent over-capacity. Do we need more turbines ?*



duplication of research and design work would be eliminated. In effect, Parsons would be the fabrication end of the Swiss-based giant. Because Parsons has no financial muscle it would find it difficult to make a foreign tie-up on equal terms.

So its present owners, Reyrolle, will probably settle for some loose form of technology or market sharing arrangement with a foreign producer; an arrangement that most foreign customers are likely to view with some suspicion.

Finally, there is no prospect of bringing forward orders for other CEGB power stations. These orders, like Drax B, would replace the older, labour-intensive power stations. They will use less coal, which must eventually put miners out of work. When the National Union of Miners and the Electrical Power Engineers Union (whose General Secretary is on the NEB) realise this they will stop their practice of helping out Parsons workers by encouraging the government to place more orders.

At the end of the day, everything seems set for a merger with GEC—but for workers in both GEC and Parsons that will mean further redundancies. One of the NEB's tasks in the last round of negotiations was to ensure that the Heaton plant was kept open and also, to help Parsons match GEC, making up for the financial muscle which Parsons lacks.

Some observers believe that GEC would quite happily push Parsons out of business by competing for whatever contracts are on offer. It is also possible that Weinstock, who soon came to regret committing himself to the "Think Tank", was only too pleased to extract himself from their scheme. If this is the case, he's not in much mood to start talking to Parsons again.

But despite all this, Parsons probably has no choice but to get involved in the merger. Although this time the government may have to produce some sort of financial bribe to make GEC play ball.

—is to create one profitable power generating concern to compete with other countries' power plant industries. The struggle for the workers is to make sure their jobs are not the price.

There is no real future in Parsons surviving alone. The world's electricity authorities believe they gain enormous economies of scale from operating large power stations. So the manufacturers develop equipment with higher and higher output capacities. This, in turn, requires large and continuous spending on research and development which only large firms can afford.

So size is the nub of the problem and the surviving British companies are too small to compete internationally. Everyone—including the Parsons unions—agree they have to get bigger. The question is how, and for Parsons prospects are gloomy. They will be lucky to get the next big international order coming on the market from Australia and their Canadian market is slipping away, much as their American market did in the late 60s.

Since a 500 megawatt set delivered to the Tennessee Valley Authority in 1962 failed to meet the guaranteed efficiency rate, Parsons have not received a single American contract. In Canada, the Parsons-supplied power plant for Ontario Hydro has experienced several breakdowns; a factor which has probably influenced the Canadian utility company to buy elsewhere. American and German power plant firms, Westinghouse and Brown Boveri, are on the short list for the next set of contracts.

European producers like Brown Boveri are also worried by over capacity and for this reason a link with Parsons would be quite enticing. It would give Brown Boveri access to the UK and Canadian markets and, at Parsons, most shop floor workers would keep their jobs, but

# Inside Stammheim Jail



After suffering brutal attacks from prison authorities - punishment for the shooting of banker Jurgen Ponto on 30 July - members of the Red Army Fraction (RAF) in Stammheim Prison, Stuttgart, went on hunger strike. Pictured above (from left to right) are

Jan-Carl Raspe, Gudrun Ensslin and Andreas Baader. Taken secretly inside Stammheim Prison, before the hunger strike started, these pictures are published for the first time, exclusively in *The Leveller*.

Ponto, chairman of the Dresdner Bank and on the boards of Krupps, Daimler-Benz, AEG-Telefunken and Thyssen, was shot dead at his home near Frankfurt by three young people, two of them women. Six days later, on 5 August, Andreas Baader was "accidentally" locked inside Gudrun Ensslin's cell after the period of "free association" was over.

No accident this. The area where association is permitted is monitored by guards and closed circuit TV. Extensive notes are taken of who speaks with whom, and whose goes in whose cell. One hour later, the "mistake" was discovered. The two were hauled out and beaten. Prison authorities informed the extreme right-wing mass circulation *Bild Zeitung* that they had been in bed together.

Three days later, fifty police and prison warders attacked the eleven RAF members in Stammheim. And when the authorities then

decreed that they would be returned to solitary confinement, the prisoners decided to oppose this by starting a hunger and thirst strike. "I don't care if they die," declared Kurt Redmann, Federal Attorney General, in a newspaper interview.

Gudrun Ensslin and two other women prisoners were rushed to a city hospital on 23 August. There are now 33 West German prisoners on hunger and thirst strike and the Association of German Doctors has declared no responsibility for those who "clearly wish to die". There is open admiration in West Germany for the "British method", allowing hunger strikers, like Frank Stagg, to starve to death.

The West German constitution prohibits the death penalty, so the authorities have found a simple and cheap solution to this problem: provoke the prisoners into a hunger strike and

then declare that if they wish to die they will be allowed to do so.

The public campaign against the lawyers, and particularly the office of Klaus Croissant in Stuttgart (bombed on 15 August) continues unabated. German press accusations - that Croissant was behind the 'gang' - have been enthusiastically taken up by the European papers, including the *Sunday Times*, with the aid of photos supplied by the West German police.

The bomb which exploded outside Croissant's office, destroying files and papers, left two office workers uninjured in a back room. Police response was immediate and typical. They arrested one of the workers and fingerprinted him on suspicion of being involved in the attack.

Phil Kelly

## Shorts

Goats and monkeys!—as if they hadn't anything more serious to worry about.

The Rhodesian Air Force reported recently through its magazine *Bataleur* that what with its increasing call-up of civilians to fight the Good White Fight, some of this new intake are distressingly forgetting their proper station in life, and in general are not Playing the White Man.

The magazine fumed thus: "A major increase in the use of the word 'Mr' instead of appropriate ranks and titles throughout the Force is both incorrect and discourteous.

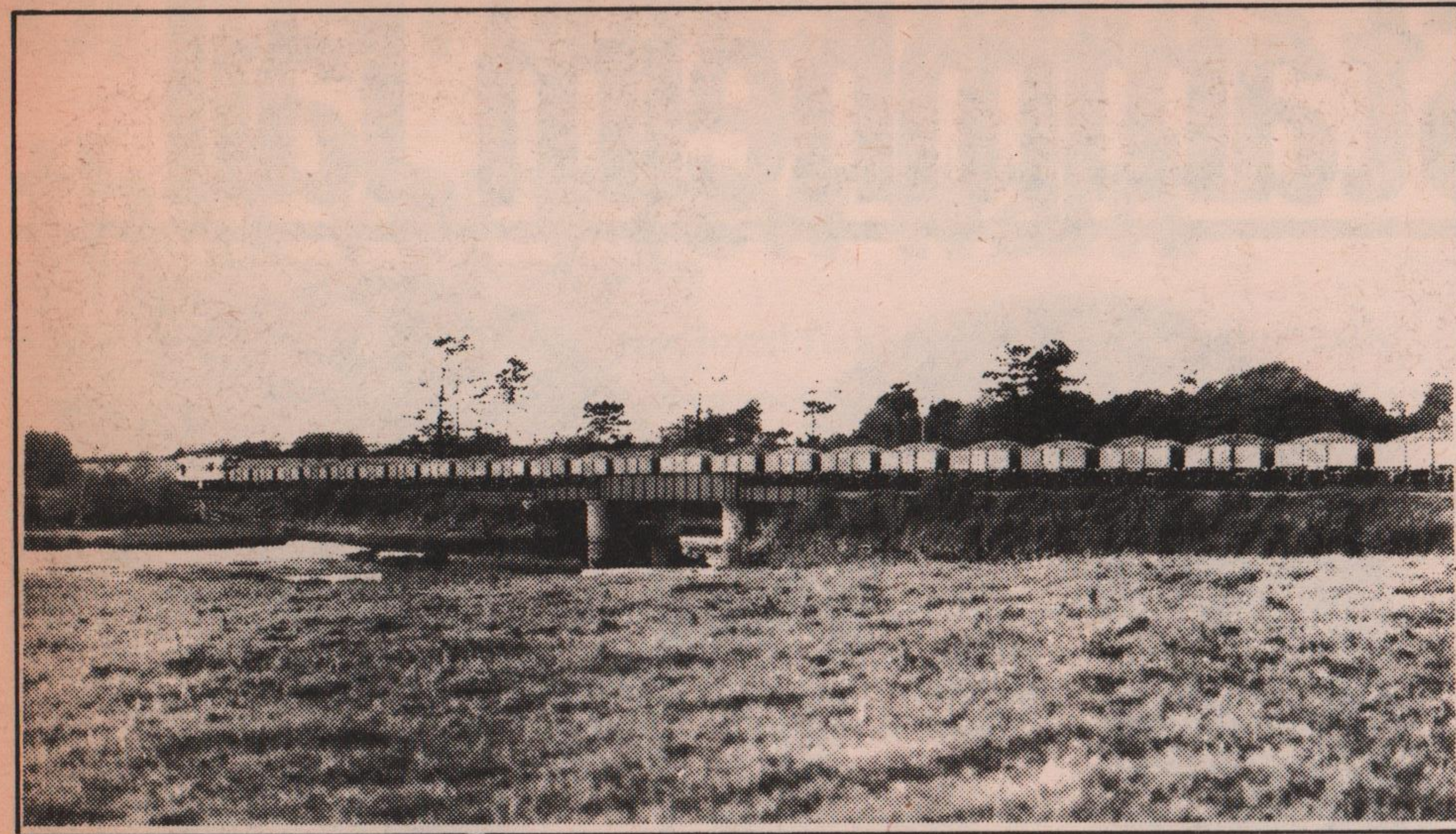
Furthermore, continues this piece of arrant nonsense, "The only correct way to refer to an officer of flight lieutenant rank or above is by his rank, and the only way to address him is by the use of the word 'Sir'."

DURING OCTOBER a caravan packed with information on abortion will be touring England and Wales. Organised by the National Abortion Campaign (NAC), the tour's itinerary will coincide with that of the women's theatre group Pirate Jenny, showing a revamped version of *Bouncing Back With Benyon*.

The caravan will be carrying display boards for use by local women in shopping centres, street markets, places of work. Boards containing information on abortion rights, facilities, the law, the medical profession, abortion in relation to women's struggle and the history of abortion will dispel the common prejudices about abortion.

Starting in the Southwest and Wales in the first week, the caravan will go on to London in the second and the North in the third week, ending up in Birmingham for NAC's demonstration on 29 October. Donations to help finance the trip are needed in order to make it a real success. Please send any donations or offers of help to The Caravan Committee, NAC, 30 Camden Road, London NW1 (01 - 485 4303).





## Canadians railroad Irish zinc riches

**NEW NATURAL RESOURCES**, multinational intervention and little long term benefit. It could be North Sea oil, but it's actually Ireland's new lead and zinc ore industry. *Brian Trench* reports on the Klondyke under the Irish grass.

ANY day now bright blue, custom-built rail wagons bearing the emblem TARA on their sides will be carrying zinc and lead concentrate to a loading terminal at Dublin Docks. Mining of Europe's largest lead-zinc ore deposit will have started in earnest.

The mine is at Navan, about 30 miles north-west of Dublin. The "development" company, Tara Exploration and Development Co. Ltd., is controlled by Charter Consolidated and three Canadian mining corporations—Noranda, Cominco and Northgate.

Tara could supply the raw material for one quarter of Europe's zinc production and one-tenth of the lead. The mine is expected to yield 220,000 tonnes of zinc concentrate and 42,000 of lead concentrate each year. The historic occasion of the move into full production is being marked by fat advertising supplements in two Irish National dailies and Navan's local paper. Each has trumpeted the achievements and hailed the pioneering spirit of the Irish exiles from Canada who set up the company.

The occasion is also being marked in a very different way by the Resources Protection Campaign. The Campaign's principal activists come from parties of the reformist left, and its policies are supported by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Trade union leaders pointed out that the export of the ore to nine European smelters is virtually the export of jobs. Smelted in Ireland and used in specially developed "downstream" industries, trade unionists claim that the metal could help make a serious dent in Ireland's 10 per cent unemployment rate.

Tara started the race ahead of the field. The company managed to obtain an unpublished report on soil surveys in County Meath prepared by the state-sponsored Agricultural Institute. The lead-zinc deposits in the Navan area showed up, and Tara obtained a mining lease from the then Fianna Fail government in

1970, just one month before the survey was published.

A strike was declared in November 1970. Tara shares shot up on the Toronto stock exchange. 90 pence in October '70, they were worth £9.06 a year later.

Ireland already had one lead-zinc mine, in the underdeveloped south-west. But this was big stuff, and the Irish Government fell over itself to encourage the North American companies. A tax free period of twenty years was on offer. "No wonder Canadians have found the facts hard to believe", a Canadian stockbroker reported.

But others were determined to cash in on the lead rush. Late starters strained to make up distance on Tara. Michael Weymes, a young vet and son of the local police chief, persuaded Patrick Wright, an ageing farmer with 100 acres of grazing land across the Blackwater river from the Tara strike, to form Bula Ltd., and to claim the mineral rights under his land—to which Tara already held a government-granted option. Jimmy Tully, Labour parliamentary representative (TD) for the constituency, exploded: "This is the most blatant piece of claim-jumping in the world in the last 100 years".

At least it's Irish claim-jumping, some retorted. Jimmy's son happens to be Tara's Secretary. Eventually, Bula won their case in the Supreme Court; the Government's acquisition of subterranean mineral rights across the nation was rejected. Wright is now dead, and Weymes, with his associates, now controls—what? In fact, not much more than a plush office, a feasibility study, and a *potentially* lucrative mine. But for 49 per cent of the Company, the Fine Gael-Labour coalition Government did a deal which left Weymes and two others with £9.5 million—tax-free.

Tara were advised that Bula didn't have a hope. In any case, they were bound to be left with at least some part of Ireland to excavate. The 'investors'—and gamblers—got stuck in. Ex-rugby star Tony O'Reilly is Vice President of

Heinz and principal share holder in Independent newspapers, which have just bought the Stratford Express group in London.

O'Reilly and friends bought into Tara early in 1972. Their company, Fitzwilliam Associates, sold out 21 months later, years before an ounce of ore left the mine. They took with them £800,000 for Reilly, and up to £300,000 each for three associates. Dessie O'Malley was another Tara investor—his brother-in-law Peter McAleer was a Tara Vice-President and legal adviser. O'Malley was a staunch opponent of the Fine Gael-Labour deal with Bula, and was often accused of basing his opposition on personal interest. Now that Fianna Fail are back in power, O'Malley is Minister for Industry and Commerce.

Tara interrupted development work to wait the outcome of Bula's court case. When it came to negotiate a final deal with the government, the coalition talked a lot tougher than Fianna Fail's late 1960's tax-holiday hymns. Tara stalled and protested. 'Nationalise them' said the left and the trade union movement, and even a section of the Labour Party. In the end, the deal with Tara gave the state 25 per cent of the shares, 10 per cent royalties on profits, and company tax at 50 per cent.

Tara swallowed their pride, borrowed 150 million dollars from Canadian banks and started digging: 1,200 feet into the earth, and deep into the local community. The company became a sponsor of every conceivable cultural and sporting activity within a ten-mile radius of Navan. A few hundred pounds were shelled out for park benches here, £1,000 to level playing fields there.

In reality, the ore will have gone in little more than 20 years at the present projected rate of extraction. There have been feasibility studies and false alarms, but not a brick has been laid for the construction of a smelter. The mine's effect on the national economy is greatly diminished without it.

Navan is supposed to be a boom town, its main street only minutes walk from the Tara site office. But it is part image and part reality. There is still unemployment which won't go, even though Tara is reaching its peak activity. Yet Navan is one of the dearest towns in Ireland. House prices have rocketed. There's a delicatessen and a restaurant with fancy prices, but it's still a small market town with a declining furniture industry.

Local residents have taken the company to court to restrain it from unscheduled night blasting. Five deaths since October have brought home the hazards of mining. The Irish Transport and General Workers Union has won a high basic wage rate, but confrontation looms and a tough battle is expected on bonus rates.

The deeper problem facing Tara is the falling world price of zinc over the past three years. The income from zinc in the first year could be as much as £30 million pounds below the figure projected at the time of negotiating the bank loans. But the uncomfortable truth is that even a nationalised mine would have had to face that problem.

### LATE NEWS

As the first Tara ore arrives at the Dublin docks for exporting from Ireland through the adapted Goulding Fertilizers jetty, a group of former workers with Goulding—which closed down July 1976—have been staging a protest picket.

They are protesting outside the jetty at its being used to transport the ore, seeing quite rightly the chances of Irish jobs leaving Ireland with the ore.

## Gay rights in N.Ireland - 'It's not British'

Being gay in Northern Ireland is not always fun. But an obscure official commission in Belfast has recommended that the laws on homosexuality and divorce be brought into line with the rest of the UK. The Rev Ian Paisley is not amused, however. DAVID MARTIN reports.

"It's sodomy!" thundered the Rev. Ian Paisley, "The crime of sodomy is a crime against God and man, and its practice is a terrible step to the total demoralisation of any country and must inevitably lead to the breakdown of all decency in the province".

What on earth could be this bid to 'destroy the moral fibre of Ulster', as Paisley spluttered? Why 'twas a recommendation from a widely-unheard body with no statutory powers, known as the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights, which suggested that the laws on homosexuality and divorce in Northern Ireland be brought into line with those prevailing in England and Wales, instead of malingering in their current primitive state.

It was the homosexuality recommendations that summoned forth the awesome wrath of Paisley and his ilk, and it provides a chance for looking at the gay situation in Northern Ireland, one which inevitably has been

obscured by all the rest of the war there.

And it is not a very happy one. The reactionary and fossilized mentality of the ruling unionist structure has its effect not only on political powers of discrimination, intimidation and whatever but also on the mental mores of the place.

Gays in Northern Ireland have been getting it head on, especially from the R.U.C. That esteemed police force last year set up a special 'Gay Squad' (to discourage, rather than participate in the practice), allegedly pitched at Assistant Chief Constable level, which was meant to investigate Belfast's gay community.

During this Squad's 'investigations', 23 male homosexuals were arrested and interrogated, all files belonging to the Gay Liberation Society and the 1974 Committee for Homosexual Law Reform in Northern Ireland were confiscated, and hundreds of personal



Paisley: "vile crime of sodomy."

items including letters and photographs were seized.

Joseph Lecky, secretary of the Union for Sexual Freedoms in Ireland, found that only some of his confiscated personal possessions were returned, and many of them had been written on.

Many of Mr. Lecky's possessions were subsequently returned to other people, so that he is still not sure whether some of these items remain with the RUC or with baffled individuals. He is also sure that police had photocopied anything that might be of use for them in their 'Gay Squad' files.

Of the 23 men arrested, only two were later charged, and they were convicted on minor drug offences. Indeed, it seemed that RUC enthusiasm notwithstanding, the Director of Public Prosecutions there was following an unofficial policy of not prosecuting in cases which would not have involved prosecution in Britain.

Even if direct persecution by the RUC has eased off, many Gays suspect that they are not receiving sufficient police protection in their daily life, with Mr. Lecky for example, who had his house burgled, feeling the RUC responded with little zeal as he was one of the 23 arrested in the gay 'swoop'.

Similarly, many gays believe that RUC investigations into the murder of Thomas McKenzie on 11 July 1976, were inadequate because the victim was a homosexual.

Gays co-operated with the RUC in this murder hunt when police visited the homes of many gays and their disco in Cornmarket (later bombed by the Provisionals), but within a week of the murder, the files had apparently been closed, an unusual occurrence in the North these days.

The Advisory Commission's recommendations may well go through for implementation during the next Parliamentary session, but their progress will be defied by the band of Official Unionist MPs at Westminster who have indicated their intention of opposing the homosexuality part of the recommendations.

Or as Paisley, to domestic applause, wailed: "The announcement by Roy Mason that he is going to make legal the vile crime of sodomy between consenting adults in private is a pointer to what we can expect from the Whitehall dictatorship." Make of that what you will.

## British justice on trial

**THE OLD BAILEY** will be the setting this 3 October for what potentially could be one of British legal history's most dramatic appeals. That day, the four Irish people who were convicted (three got life sentences) in November for the fatal Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings in October 1974 will, to put it mildly, bring it to the attention of the court that four other Irishmen have in sworn affidavits themselves claimed responsibility for those bombings. (See The Leveller, Issue 4).

This second group are three of the four—Joe O'Connell, Eddie Butler, and Henry Duggan—involved in the Balcombe Street siege and Brendan Down who was convicted in Manchester.

As the Balcombe Street trial got underway at the beginning of this year, these sensational allegations were made in court, were then dismissed by the trial judge as irrelevant to the case, and even worse, shamefully under-reported in the British press.

The implications are obvious. Surrey police, in their panic after the Guildford bombings, fabricated confessions for the likely four they had assembled—Paul Hill, Gerry Conlon, Paddy Armstrong, and Carole Richardson. Furthermore, they intimidated defence witnesses who were ready and willing to provide full alibis, to ensure that they did not appear.

The four men who can ignite this fuse will of course have to be in the appeal court themselves to repeat their claims—which is why the appeal is being held in the Old Bailey,

rebuilt recently with the rebellious future in mind. The presiding Appeal judge will be none other than Lord Justice Roskill, who so endeared himself last June by quashing the conviction of the Guardsman on rape charges lest his Army career was ruined.

Meanwhile in July, another Guildford-linked appeal was turned down when the Belfast family of Maguires (Mrs Annie Maguire, her husband, two other sons, and three other men) all got nothing out of the Law Courts, except a token reduction in sentence for the one who was most obviously innocent.

Arising from this rejected appeal, one of the group, 57-year old Patrick Conlon who suffers viciously from a TB condition, will at the present rate be the next Irishman to die in an English prison. Currently in the notorious Wakefield Gaol, where hunger-striker Frank Stagg died in February last year, Mr Conlon is being refused the necessary medical treatment. He is being forced to do prison work, when he is clearly incapable, and now has the psychological fall-back of appealing his twelve-year sentence totally removed.

Frank Maguire, the Independent MP for Fermanagh-South Tyrone, forecast after visiting Mr Conlon that he would be dead within six months unless something happened. But despite the strenuous efforts of the London-based Prisoners Aid Committee to get independent medical help in to him, the Home Office are clearly undeterred by the prospect of yet another Irishman dying while incarcerated at Her Majesty's Pleasure. And this her joyous Jubilee year too.

David Martin



# Behind the US human rights smokescreen

SINCE BECOMING U.S. President Jimmy Carter has promoted his image as a crusader of human rights. Carter has openly defended Soviet and Eastern European dissidents' right to free speech and other democratic rights, and the Democratic Party-controlled US Congress has made human rights stipulations to loans and military aid to South American regimes, causing Brazil, Argentina and others to refuse them. Chile was recently denied a loan until it demonstrated respect for human rights. The American representative to the United Nations, Andrew Young, has been loudly calling for majority rule in Zimbabwe and South Africa. These actions have been applauded by the liberal media throughout the world. It has created illusions about the Carter government among millions of the oppressed.

The reasons for the American government's need for a face lift was that its image was scarred by the horrors of Vietnam, Chile, Watergate, and the macabre doings of the CIA and the FBI. The Democratic Party needed a new ideological platform to woo the voters. Capitalism is now to be sold with a "human face".

Under closer examination, this facade begins to shatter. For strategic reasons, Carter remains silent on a number of regimes which horrendously oppress their political opponents, like South Korea, Taiwan, Philippines, Iran, Turkey, and Indonesia. And under pressure of capitalist interests he has backed off from his initial militant criticisms of governments violating human rights, particularly of the Soviet Union.

The capitalists, in particular those involved in financing loans to the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and South America, are worried that Carter's human rights smiles are upsetting their interests. The Comecon countries have outstanding debts to American banks of 6,000

million dollars. Their total debts to the West in 1976 were 40,000 million dollars, according to one source (David Lascelles, *Comecon's debts to the West: a cause for concern*, Financial Times, 5 May 1977), and 50,000 million dollars in another (The Economist, 6 August 1977).

So there is growing economic inter-dependence between the Comecon countries and the western capitalist world. The rulers of the Comecon states are coming to play the role of managers and profit collectors for capitalists. The workers of the Comecon countries who are exploited by their "Red Bourgeoisie" will increasingly be exploited by the "White" bourgeoisie. West and East will come closer together, despite the occasional sword waving. "In an atmosphere of continued confrontation over human rights issues, economic co-operation may provide the key to the survival of east-west 'detente' . . ." (David Egli, *Trade ties to save detente*, Financial Times, 15 April 1977).

As much less American than Western European

capital is tied up in the Comecon states, it was not surprising that the German and French governments would object to Carter's public criticism of the Soviet regime.

While German government criticism of Carter's human rights policies towards the Soviet Union has been restrained, the French have come out with open criticism. President Giscard had accused Carter of breaking the diplomatic code of conduct. "The problem is that the Soviets perceive this campaign as a means of pressure to get them to abandon their system. Chancellor Schmidt told me he shares our perceptions of detente, and the need to respect the code of conduct". (Paul Webster, *Fears grow that Carter may bring back Cold War*, The Guardian, 10 July 1977).

Why is Moscow, capital of the world's second most powerful military power, fearful of Carter's support of Dr. Sakharov and the dissident movement in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe? The Western press describes the dissident movement in the Soviet Union as "50 or so people in various dissident movements who can be considered activists" (David Satter, *The dissidents who strive for Western freedoms in Russia*, Financial Times, 7 March 1977). In Eastern Europe, almost everybody agrees that opposition to the rulers, especially Moscow, is national, and only the fear of Moscow's tanks is keeping Eastern Europe under its dominance.

The Western press fails to do an over-all analysis of the oppositions in the Soviet Union. They focus on the dissidents in Moscow. This is partly because Western journalists are limited by the Soviet authorities to Moscow and allowing them carefully chaperoned trips to other parts of the Soviet Union. In addition, they tend to give most attention to the oppositionists who are pro-West. Their assumption that the working class is passive is because they expect the working class to act in the same way as they do in the West. But the political conditions are different.

Strike leaders in the Soviet Union are viciously punished. The leader of the Kiev hydro-electric construction workers has disappeared according

to the left oppositionist Leonid Plyusch, who now resides in France. A member of the Moscow Helsinki Monitoring Group, Lyudmilla Alekseyeva, has stated that the leaders of the massive Novo-Cherkask strike in 1963 have also disappeared. If the workers cannot strike they find other methods of protest, and they are poor work performance and sabotage of production. The socialist journal *Critique* has been in the forefront of bringing this out; an analysis which has not only been absent in the bourgeois publications, but also in the left press, which on the Soviet Union has substituted analysis with quotes from the Marxist classics! The *Morning Star* doesn't even quote the classics, but limits itself to quoting Soviet government statements on oppositionists, or the Western Press. Analysis of the Soviet Union by the *Morning Star* does not exist.

Another source of opposition in the Soviet Union which is massive stems from national oppression. This has been widely ignored by the bourgeois and the left press. Most of the Western left doesn't even know that Russians only form 50% of the population, and that in the non-Russian republics Russians are an economic privileged minority. According to one political prisoner, 60 to 70% of the estimated 10,000 political prisoners in the Soviet Union are Ukrainian.

The Jewish question in the Soviet Union is poorly understood. Most Jews in the Soviet Union do not want to leave for Israel; this is Western Zionist propaganda. Most Soviet Jewish emigres do not go to Israel but elsewhere in the West. Jews leave the Soviet Union because of anti-Semitism.

A leading journal in the Soviet Union, *Moskva*, wrote that there is a Jewish doctrine which calls for Jewish world domination to make slaves of everybody else. It follows that "anti-semitism may arise as a spontaneous reaction of the enslaved strata of the working people to the barbaric exploitation carried out by the Jewish bourgeoisie". Only Victor Zorza in *The Guardian* has bothered to expose this official anti-Semitic propaganda.

The capitalist press uses repression against

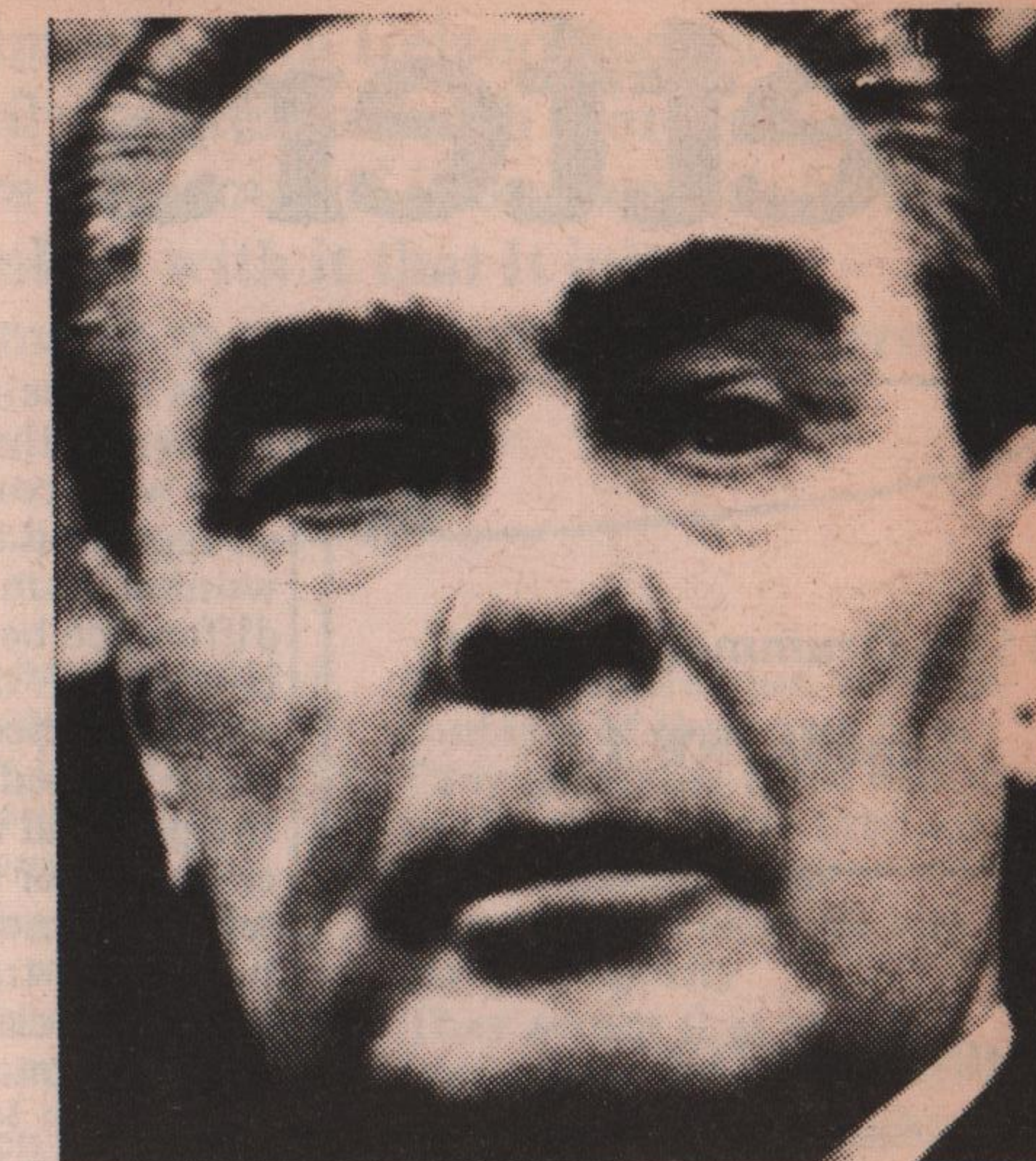
fundamental democratic rights in the Comecon countries against the Left in particular, and Communism in general, so the barbaric rulers of the Comecon countries need to be identified as Communists by the capitalists in order to discredit the Communist movement among the working class at home.

Peregrine Worsthorpe, for instance, (*Dissent Has Its Dangers*, Sunday Telegraph, February 27 1977) is frightened of the Soviet Union liberalizing! He fears that if the Soviet Union liberalizes it might become a more attractive place and undermine anti-Communism! So Worsthorpe is against the West going too far in aiding dissidents.

Capitalist governments and media have made political capital from the repressions in the Comecon countries. This reached a shrill pitch after the signing of the Helsinki Declaration.

Richard Davy, *What the Helsinki declaration was really all about*, The Times, 15 June 1977, gives the best descriptive analysis of it. "There are four sections, or 'baskets', as they became known when participants threw in proposals during negotiation. The first contains 10 principles guiding relations between states, including respect for sovereignty, non-use of force, inviolability of frontiers, non-intervention in internal affairs, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, self-determination and fulfillment of obligations under international law. It also contains military confidence-building measures, including the requirement to give prior notification of certain military manoeuvres. . . . Basket II is a long section on cooperation in economics, science, technology and the environment. Basket III is about cooperation in humanitarian and other fields, including human contacts, the freer movement of people and information, family reunification, education and culture. Basket IV is about follow-up, and commits the signatories to this year's meeting in Belgrade."

While much human rights virtue was being expressed by the British media and government before and during the Belgrade conference,



Brezhnev: Barbaric ruler

Britain itself was violating the Helsinki Declaration. The Declaration calls for national self-determination but the British government oppresses the Irish who demand it. The Declaration calls for the workers' right to form trade unions. The British government sends in thousands of police to defend the owner of Grunwicks against workers demanding the right to unionize. The police defend fascist thugs who attempt to deny blacks not only basic democratic rights, but their very existence, by deporting, or killing them.

The Soviet rulers, not to be outdone by any government in violating basic democratic rights, sentenced two leading members of the Ukrainian Group to implement the Helsinki Declaration, Rudenko and Tykhy, to seven and ten years of imprisonment. This was done at a closed trial on June 30 1977, just two weeks after the opening of the Belgrade Conference. It was done to test the Western governments. The response was silence not only from the governments but from the Western press as a whole. The financial interests of our rulers will always overcome their defence of "human rights and fundamental freedoms", in the East, or the West. Victor Haynes

## Southern Africa

of global interdependence and attempts to construct a post-Cold War liberal theory to renovate the international capitalist system and rescue it from its profound crises. By proposing to revise and modernise global institutions in a post-Vietnam world, the Commission accurately reflects the transnational ideology of the multinational corporations.

The extent to which the Carter administration's foreign policy hierarchy has been filled with members of the Trilateral Commission is phenomenal. They include Carter, Andrew Young, Vice-President Mondale, Brzezinski, Secretaries Blumenthal (Treasury), Brown (Defence) and Vance, and five other assistant under secretaries of state. Young thus shares a *Weltanschauung* with men who, both in and out of government, occupy the commanding heights of the US politico-economic system.

In recent years, Young has been Carter's most important ally in the black community. During the 1976 election, Young's engineering of 92% of the black vote behind Carter was crucial in ensuring his success. He was in a strong position to demand a key government post. The choice of Ambassador to the UN—normally a secondary position—indicates the importance of Third World issues within Carter's foreign strategy. The appointment of a former close associate of Martin Luther King, with a strong liberal outlook, was a clever tactical shift to regain lost ground.

In the UN itself, Carter's strategy has been to break up the solidarity of the Afro-Arab voting bloc. An enticement in this direction may be a US proposal of a permanent seat for Nigeria on the Security Council. Arab support for this measure could be obtained by offering a seat to Saudi Arabia, the leading representative of the conservative Arab states which fear Soviet penetration of Africa. In any case, Young will try to prevent future anti-Israel proposals among African states. In March 1977, he said that the human rights campaign in Africa had already produced "some softening of the rhetoric of African countries against Israel. Now that Africa is getting attention, they're on the verge of becoming more cooperative."

An important component in Young's outlook is his special faith in the value of the multinational corporation. "I cannot see the world without them", he says. "If you want to supply the developing countries with what they most need—food, clothing, housing, etc.—the multinationals have proved that they can certainly do it far more efficiently than the Marxist systems. That is why I believe that the potential for a world capitalist revolution is much greater than is yet realised."

Young explained to Harry Oppenheimer, the foremost South African magnate: "Look at Atlanta, it's a city much too busy to have time for hatred." Despite 300 years of capitalist

exploitation of US blacks, Young remains a firm believer in US mythology. "I define revolution as the extension of resources, goods and services to people who did not have it previously. And American technology, frankly, does that better than anybody in the world."

Young's mode of analysis is remarkably sophisticated in some ways. He has frequently asserted that "we've got to get beyond the capitalism versus communism Cold War type of debate, and make the issue one of oppression, wherever it exists, in whatever system." When Young made his famous statement about Cubans being an "element of stability and order" in Angola, he horrified commentators. Young is convinced that, regardless of the self-designation of any African regime, they all need and desire good economic relations with the US. In Angola Gulf Oil has actually surpassed its pre-war output of oil and its installations are being guarded, ironically enough, by Cuban troops.

Young's thinking corresponds to the views of the multinational corporations. Their own strategy has rapidly evolved to deal with the growth of Third World economic nationalism. When once asked whether there might be a future Marxist government in Rhodesia, Young replied: "I don't know what a Marxist government means anymore. If Angola is a Marxist government and its main trading partner is the United States, then that doesn't worry me."

Barry Cohen



Young: open-mouth diplomacy

# How Young is playing the same old game

SINCE THE start of the Carter administration eight months ago, there has been an extraordinary amount of controversy over the "new" US foreign policy. Now that the "Lone Ranger" style of Kissinger politics was over, many Americans—particularly liberals and blacks—largely embraced the new era of "open diplomacy". It may have been a long time since America felt truly great, but, O Lord, it was going to feel good again. The appointment of Andrew Young, Jimmy Carter's closest and most valuable black political ally, as US Ambassador to the United Nations (UN), was seen as symbolic of the revamped international politics of the Carter administration.

An understanding of the relationship between power and class in the US, as well as the nature of US imperialism, should warn us about new US initiatives on old problems. The fundamental needs and interests of US monopoly capitalism continue; the requirements for their successful protection remain as well. For the Carter

administration, the failures of the Nixon-Kissinger era had to be overcome quickly. In areas such as southern Africa, historical events were rushing ahead and heightening old contradictions.

In spite of a flood of rhetoric during the Carter electoral campaign about his plans for new people and fresh policies, the team chosen to manage US global interests derives as usual, from the foreign policy establishment.

Top policy makers have all been members of liberal "think tanks" that harboured the Democratic Government-in-exile. The key one was the Trilateral Commission.

Established in 1973 under the sponsorship of David Rockefeller of the Chase Manhattan Bank, the Trilateral Commission was designed to repair the fissures that had appeared in the Western alliance during the Vietnam years of Nixon. Ideologically based on "liberal internationalism", the Commission stresses the theme



# Letters

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## FEMINIST HISTORY

I was pleased that Sue Bruley took up so many detailed points in her review of my book about Stella Browne, *A New World for Women*. There has not been much discussion about the relationship of socialism and feminism between the wars and I wrote with the hope that people would look at the period in more detail.

I think she's right that it's neither a biography nor a general study of birth control. But I wanted to produce something which would



stimulate more enquiry. The local connections would be very interesting to trace. For instance, Harry Wicks spoke at the Battersea History Workshop about the local Women's Co-op Guild support for birth control and about the free love tradition in the Battersea socialist movement. I owe an apology to Zelda Curtis for she knew communists who discussed Ellis in the thirties.

However I disagree with some of the assumptions behind Sue's review. I don't think any of us know enough about either the left's attitude and practice towards women or about feminism after 1918 to say as Sue does that feminism after 1918 was no longer a 'vital force'. She doesn't prove it by banishing feminism in the twenties and thirties on the grounds that Stella Browne was isolated as a woman in the Communist Party.

Given the links between the Independent Labour Party and the suffragette movement before 1914 I think it more probable that socialist feminist women would go into the local branches of the Labour Party. This point is borne out by Dora Russell.

I'm not claiming Stella Browne is not a 'major spokesperson' for feminism. On the contrary I point out in the book that her sexual radicalism belonged to only a minority strand in feminism similar to the ideas of the pre-World War I journal *The Freewoman*. I would guess that Maude Royden, Eleanor Rathbone, Winifred Holtby and Vera Brittain are examples of much better known feminists.

I was not being dismissive of women in the Communist Party who were committed to class struggle and to work among women. I am saying there is a difference between having a concept of 'the women question' which has been part of the marxist tradition and an understanding of the political implications of women's control over sex and procreation which has not. Insofar as this has been a left tradition it belongs to utopian socialism and anarchist communism.

I think we need to find out more about attitudes to women on the left and the part women played in left organisations in order to assess the relation between official lines and local reality. But I don't think we have to be bound by the terms in which these organisations saw the liberation of women.

Stella Browne expressed a particular combination of radical strands. She questioned the hold of the powerful over education and knowledge, argued women's right to sexual pleasure, of the need for control over our own bodies, challenged men's ownership of women as property as well as the workers lack of control over the conditions of labour.

Her politics did not come out of nowhere. There are echoes of nineteenth century free thinkers who campaigned for birth control as part of the right to knowledge. There are her links with late nineteenth century sexual theorists Carpenter and Ellis; with American socialist feminism through Sanger; with the German sex reform movement; with Soviet left communism through Kollantai and with the marxism of the Plebs League in Britain.



I don't think people develop their political ideas in a vacuum and I think it would be very odd if Stella Browne was completely unique although I think the range of the connections she made was unusual.

I'm not suggesting she had a worked-out theory about the relationship between biological reproduction, production and consciousness. It would have been difficult to do this in the context of marxism between the wars. But she did express responses within the left to feminism and sexual theory which did not assume that marxism was a complete cut and dried set of beliefs. Her marxism was not closed.

The Russian revolution gave a great impetus to socialist ideas and practice. Leninism provided a more developed theory of revolutionary organising out of this experience. But the focus on the Bolsheviks and the fortunes of the Soviet Union

meant that old understandings were also dismissed. Heterodoxy is usually discussed in terms of theories of psycho-analysis or aesthetics or attacks from the left of the Communist Party on the lack of autonomy for workplace organisation.

Criticism came not as a coherent theoretical tendency but as a series of unfinished responses. The issues of subjective experience and autonomous organisation touch closely upon the predicament of women as a sex. I don't think Browne and Kollantai were the only marxist women to see this. I believe we would find other women with the same kind of dissatisfaction with orthodox marxism even before Stalinism and fascism steamrollered enquiry. I agree they were a minority and a



defeated minority but this does not make them any the less interesting.

Finally, I think it's too simple to say that the Labour Party's '... tradition was based on ... ideas of evolutionary socialism through social engineering and municipal reform.' This describes the politics of fabianism and the lib-lab influence on the leadership.

The Independent Labour Party was a more complex creature, carrying bits of utopian socialism and communitarianism, pacifism, an intense localism and a spiritual passion which came surprisingly close to the mysticism which Sue thinks I'm too soft on.

Stella Browne's tragedy was that she had to choose between two polarities, an intransigent revolutionary movement and a non-revolutionary socialism which was rather more open. I don't think it's surprising she wavered and lost heart as time passed. I hope such a polarity won't be forced on us this time around.

Sheila Rowbotham  
London E8

## MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC

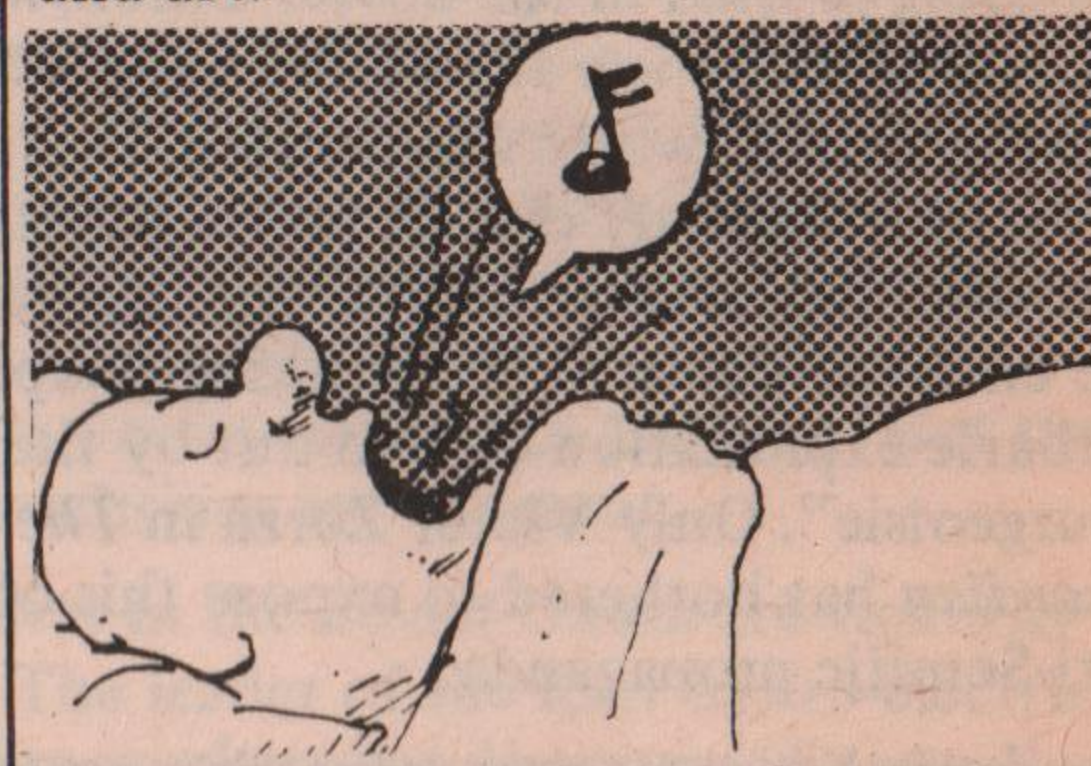
In reply to Ian Walker's article "Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On", firstly—for some musicians, playing with People's Liberation Music (PLM) is their main way of expressing support for politics (and we have a lot of sympathisers in the music profession). Our political guidance has always come from the political line of the Communist Party of England, Marxist-Leninist (CPEML), but on the question of all being members of CPEML, we are all supporters or friends of CPEML (why didn't Ian Walker ask PLM anyway?).

Horace Herring  
Whole Earth  
Brighton



PLM's participation in Music For Socialism was not on any liberal basis. There were three interrelated issues we wanted to put to the people there: to present songs in support of and from the Irish people's struggle against British imperialism, for national self-determination; songs from the struggle of the British working class against exploitation by the same oppressor; songs from the struggle of the world's people against imperialism in the spirit of proletarian internationalists.

PLM holds that the skills and abilities of cultural workers must be brought over to serve the struggle of the working class for socialism. "No revolutionary writer or artist can do any meaningful work unless he is closely linked with the masses, gives expression to their thoughts and feelings and serves them as a loyal spokesman. Only by speaking for the masses can he educate them and only by being their pupil can he be their teacher." Mao Tse Tung—Yenan forum on literature and art.



## DON'T KNOCK ROCK 'N POP

I have read the last two issues of *The Leveller*, particularly the section on music. One tendency I found creeping in was to dismiss pop music as rubbish because you don't like the capitalist system that promotes.

You won't win many friends by attacking pop music, which in many cases is far better than so called radical bands. As one of your writers said, imagine you were a sixteen year old listening to the Who in 1966, what would/did you think of people who criticised their music for being capitalist decadence/subversive nonsense/too loud/not as good as Frank Sinatra.

If you want to understand people, listen to their music. The same for punk now as for rock ten years ago. So don't get into the trip of attacking popular things as rubbish. That's getting elitist. Better to try and explain that it's the system that produces such things that need changing rather than the things it produces. Of course, whether you can do one without the other is an endlessly debatable point. Or is good music from capitalism worse than bad music from socialism?

## WRONG ON FOLK

What is your electricity correspondent doing writing about music? Russell Southwood's piece on 'Rebel Music' in the last issue of *The Leveller* exemplifies in an acute form the weakness of the magazine's 'culture' pages: the lack of any clearly defined, properly thought out critical position. Consequently, what is offered is not analysis but a patchwork of descriptive journalism stuck together with labels.

His labels are more bizarre than most. He fabricates one which he calls mysteriously 'traditional folk protest' and then sticks it, with a fine lack of discrimination, first on Guthrie, Seeger and Dylan and then, even more amazingly, on Fairport Convention and Steeleye Span. Not content with that, he invents an entirely new historical song form called '12th century madrigals' which he appears to believe might have something to do with English folk music.

Are these the meanderings of a mind numbed by overexposure to the sounds of electricity? Can it be that this radical investigative journalist knows nothing about his subject? He's heard of Donovan all right, but seems to think that socially conscious songs in Britain began there. In fact, the radical nature of the British folk revival in the late fifties and early sixties, together with the growth of CND as a mass movement, produced a vigorous crop of topical songs which not only pre-dated the American 'protest song' movement but also, in part, inspired it. Pete Seeger's visit to Britain in 1961 (after which he declared himself impressed by 'the large number of really first-rate songs being made up') led to a call in *Sing Out!* for more new American songs and the founding of the topical song magazine

*Broadside*, which provided the first outlet for Dylan, Ochs and others.

The hole at the centre of his review is, of course, the assumption that unless music is happening in the glare of media publicity it isn't happening at all. His bland comments on electric music show that he hasn't grasped the nature of the debate that has been taking place in the last year or so. He ignores the problems of working within a market system dominated and controlled by businessmen. He says nothing about the quality of the communication and the relationship between audience and performers in that system; nothing about the kind of content possible in an idiom which relies on sounds, volume and repetition to generate excitement and which propagates the message that the words don't matter.

A member of *The Men of No Property* interviewed in *The Leveller* No. 7. July/Aug 1977.

He confuses the dominant music idiom with the popular idiom and assumes mindlessly that what most people hear is what most people want. He asserts ludicrously that 'electric music ... makes the biggest claim to talk about everyone's life'; the fact that rock is an exclusive music and that the range of emotions and concerns expressed in it is extraordinarily small and largely adolescent has obviously escaped him.

Finally, his remark that 'a bus worker or a housewife' (are these the left's equivalent stereotypes to the politician's ordinary man in the street or the TV programme planner's long distance lorry driver?) would find no relevance in songs about pressgangs in Ireland or the Diggers is patronising to the point of being insulting. Folk club audiences, not primarily made up of history academics, in my experience, have no difficulty in identifying with transported poachers, pressganged ploughboys, beggars, deserters, machine wreckers, female highwaymen, pitmen, millgirls, servant girls and the other lower class heroes and heroines of folksongs. Does he think only those with degrees are capable of making connections?

Incidentally, but not irrelevantly, I am not a folksinger, I am not a satirist and my roots are not in the sixties.

Leon Rosselson  
Wembley

## LACK OF VISION

I am inspired (?) to write to you by the discussion between Roger Protz and Tim Gopsill on 'Consumerism' in the July/August issue.

I am afraid that I cannot agree with the 'religious left' arguments of Tim Gopsill, who seems to believe that 'workers control' will solve all problems. Whatever we may learn from other countries, our nearest experiences to workers control in the UK appear to be in the 'professions and para-professions',

"... we're concerned primarily with Ireland and left-wing politics. We're not primarily concerned with womens liberation. Of course we're in favour of it but we think that if you get too heavily involved with it that it just side-tracks you from the much more serious problem here in Belfast."

which I now believe to have become as big a threat to us as capitalism. I find myself increasingly in sympathy with the sentiments of Ivan Illich's *Medical Nemesis*: 'The medical establishment has become a major threat to health', which would also apply to other profession professions. We have been canded into believing a series of myths, eg. teachers know what education is; social workers know what caring is; doctors know what health is ...

As a former teacher, and social worker, and currently an NHS employee, I have become increasingly aware of how these myths (perpetuated and strengthened by the TUs) are a very real threat to a move towards a sensitive socialist society.

Similarly, I noted in Sur Bruley's review of Sheila Rowbotham's book on Edward Carpenter, her own inability to accept Carpenter's non-materialistic socialism.



It seems to me that there is need for a new debate on the left about 'ends' as well as 'means'.

Am I the only person who finds the apparent lack of vision about the sort of society we want to live in, of the 'leaders' of the left, depressing? The 19th and early 20th Century socialists did have visions; what became of them, or has everybody been seduced by a materialistic, industrial-socialist society?

Howard Knight  
Sheffield S4

## CONSUMERISM—NO SELL-OUT

Nice of Tim Gopsill to deliver us his tablet of stone on the subject of consumerism: "Consumerism is a negation of socialism and a sell-out when adopted by socialists because it challenges only the product of capitalist production, not the ownership and control. And it diverts energy from that struggle" (Issue 7).

What all us isolated lefties need, and are some way from getting, is a mass socialist movement in Britain. I reckon—with my middle-class, humanistic and admittedly non-marxist perspective—that most people won't become socialists until:

a) They explore and articulate

their dissatisfaction with the contents of their own lives. b) They generalise these experiences to the point where they see that present institutional arrangements offer no way out for the majority. c) They accept that profit, hierarchy and coercion are not the only bases on which society can be run.

The way I see it, the heightened perception flowing from (a) is at the base of the whole process, and existing socialists can contribute to building and spreading this understanding on several levels.

For instance, people can criticise capitalism's preoccupation with material—"living standard"—values, its obsession with work and efficiency, its unremitting insistence on order-giving/order-taking relationships, its obliteration of cultural diversity, its imposition of a culture that is also a class weapon.

Taking capitalism more on its own terms, people can point to its inability to provide sufficient purchasing power for most people to enjoy many if not most of the goods and services which the system is supposedly so good at delivering. In many "extreme" cases it cannot even deliver the basics of food, shelter and warmth.

Taking capitalism even more deeply on its own terms, socialists can show how and why its mass goods and services are becoming increasingly more shoddy, less reliable, more dangerous and less ecologically sound. They can also show that the supposedly great variety of choice offered by "free enterprise" is illusory. They can expose specific swindles such as decimatisation, metrication and the use of non-standard packaging.

This third approach seems to me wholly to justify socialists working in and with the consumer movement. I accept that consumerism today has a largely middle-class orientation, but it is already playing a useful exemplary role and is capable of being re-oriented to produce a much more widespread social effect.

Tim Gopsill argues that consumerism is undesirable because it diverts socialists' energy from things he thinks they ought to be doing. I expect he would say his ideas were "objectively correct", or summum similar. This is typical of the inflexibility and desire to impose priorities on others in struggle that has produced the left we have in Britain today—small groups of enthusiasts, splitting and re-splitting, occasionally even amalgamating, but above all talking to themselves because no-one else will listen.

Dave Bradney  
London N6

A man who enslaves a woman  
can never himself be free

K. Marx

[Karl Marx, Liverpool 1977; on reading the above.]



# Dancing on Lenin's grave—the party ends

THE PARTY is over, argues *Bob Dent*. The most significant political developments of the last ten years—the proliferation of the “non-aligned” and community press, movement bookshops, action groups like National Abortion Campaign, the Womens Liberation Movement, the “information explosion” of research groups and advice centres, agitprop cultural projects—have by and large been initiated by non-card carrying members of the British left. Winds of change have blown from Southern Europe and the “historical” role of the party may itself be part of history.

The mushrooming of political forces outside party structures has the appearance of a mish-mash of disparate activities. But on closer examination the separate activities exhibit similar ideological and organisational features.

All these activities have been initiated over the last ten years by people who, for the most part, have not been aligned to any particular party or group.

Most are undertaken for their own sake. Light years away from the traditional left concepts of duty, recruitment, and activity undertaken “on behalf of” the working class, the revolution, or whatever.

Organisation tends to take the form of coordination of activities around specific projects rather than propaganda around a theoretical programme. Structures assuming particular tasks arise from particular circumstances and disband when those circumstances change. National or broader-based organisation tends to be in networks of horizontal links rather than in top-down structures. The accent is on doing rather than demanding.

The recent growth of such projects is significant in itself. But what makes the current period especially interesting is that there has been a shift in revolutionary political perspectives which is simultaneously feeding off and refuelling these non-party developments. This shift can be characterised in several ways which, taken together, sound the death knell of the era of political parties:

■ a growing critique of the separation of daily life and political activity, leading to a recognition of motivation based on personal experience, beginning from one's own perceptions and needs

■ a growing recognition of every act as political leading to a totality of critiques far too broad to be encompassed by any single ideology or party

■ a tendency to use theory as a reflection of one's own practice in the world as opposed to a set of formulae to understand the world ‘out there’

■ without rejecting totally the concept of crises and sharp political breaks, revolution comes to be perceived more as a process, which manifests itself in all areas of human activity. The central question concerns power in all its manifestations. The goal—to take control over one's life.

How does all this affect the left groups? It seems that the present convulsion of reorganisation within the English left is a response to, and admission of, the left's failure to connect with these autonomous non-party movements. More and more people are less and less attracted to political parties. So . . . the parties change. The way they change is well described by Henri Simon in *The New Movement* (Solidarity pamphlet no.51).

*“The appearance of the autonomous movement(s) has led to the evolution of the concept of the party. In former times, the Party, as a ‘leadership’ saw itself as the revolutionary vanguard, identifying itself with the proletariat. It saw itself as a ‘conscious fraction’ of the proletariat, who had to play a determining role in the raising of ‘class consciousness’, the high level of which would be the essential sign of the formation of the proletariat as a class. The modern heirs of the Party are well aware of the difficulty of maintaining such a position; so they entrust the party or the group with the very precise mission of making good what they consider to be any deficiencies in working class activity. This gives rise to groups specialised in intervention, liaison, exemplary action, theoretical explanation etc. But even these ‘groups’ can no longer exercise the hierarchical function of specialists in the general movement of struggle. The New Movement, that of workers and others in struggle, considers all these elements. the old*

*groups like the new, to be of exactly equal importance as their own actions. They take what they can borrow from those who come to them and reject what does not suit them. Theory and practice appear now to be no more than one and the same element in the revolutionary process—neither can precede or dominate the other. No one political group has thus an essential role to play.”*

But what of state power, the armed forces, large-scale economic organisation? It's in this area that the argument for the revolutionary party appears strongest—the need for a conscious and organised vanguard to contest the centralised, hierarchical nature of state power. And it has to be admitted that this argument has dominated the revolutionary left since the victory of Bolshevism. Those currents which have emerged to assert that popular power can be exercised autonomously, in assemblies and councils without mediation by either unions or parties, have definitely been minority currents (there is a rich tradition waiting to be modernised, for a start see Gombin's *The Origins of Modern Leftism*). Their practical expressions, from Kronstadt 1921 to Hungary 1956, have been physically and brutally suppressed.

But what has put these hitherto minority tendencies back on the agenda has been France 1968, Poland 1972 and 1976, and perhaps most of all Portugal 1974–5. For it was in Portugal that the concept of “*apartidario*” (non-party) appeared as part of a generalised struggle and not just as a theoretical battle cry of a few militants. People became so pissed off with the manipulations of the various “workers vanguards” that a conscious attempt was begun to work out a politics of non-party organisation.

The left groups usually misunderstand these attempts because they can't see that organisation and politics can be developed outside of the party system. This need not imply the abolition or destruction of parties. But it does imply a recognition that the claims of the parties to be a permanent ideological vanguard, their claims to universality, can no longer be, and are no longer being, accepted by politically aware people.

The growth in this country of politically motivated autonomous projects and processes, combining life-style and “macro-politics”, parallels developments in other parts of the world and confirms that the Portuguese experience was not specifically local. It confirms that the revolutionary movement has entered a “post-party” era.

*The Leveller*, a good example of a non-party project, could become a useful tool of communication, where information, experience and ideas can be exchanged enabling us to find new ways of acting more effectively. For one thing is sure, the old ways aren't good enough.

# Ladywood—the left's blind alley

Ladywood put the far left on the front pages of the national press, but now the dust has settled was it really a victory? Trevor Fisher, who has been involved in the struggle at Ladywood for some years, argues that the pattern emerging after Stechford and Ladywood is a dangerous one. The fight has been against fascism and racism, but not for socialism. Class politics has been replaced by strategies which are short-sighted and opportunist.

Just a month after the announcement of the result, the Ladywood by-election has passed into British left mythology. “Ladywood result boosts anti-fascists” claimed a *Socialist Challenge* special edition. Socialist Worker agreed. “It is clear that there are large numbers of people in the area who can be won to the building of a revolutionary party.”

Behind the rhetoric, the real story begins at Stechford—a crucial election for the revolutionary parties. A poll which saw a sensational Tory victory in a safe Labour seat and nearly 3,000 votes for the National Front also saw the IMG, with Brian Heron, and the SWP, fielding Paul Foot, enter the fight.

Both groups won small though significant votes, but the most important aspect of the campaign was the degree of black support. The revolutionaries were the only groups militantly opposed to racism. Clive Turnbull, IMG spokesman, estimates that 75% of their helpers from within Stechford were from the Asian community.

IMG concentrated their efforts after the election on their Asian supporters, forming the ASIAN SOCIALIST LEAGUE from election contacts. The ASL fought the Saltley ward election two months later and their candidate, IMG member Raghieb Ahsan, gained 620 votes—more than the IMG vote in the entire Stechford constituency. Encouraged, the League stepped up agitational work among the Asian community in East Birmingham. The League campaigned for better conditions in local schools, against racist tax laws and the social contract, and with IMG support aided Asian workers in disputes in two local factories, recruiting over 150 members.

The SWP made less impact, but when the Ladywood writ was moved both the SWP and newly formed Socialist Unity (IMG dominated in Birmingham) stood candidates. Both were black workers—Kim Gordon of the SWP black paper *Flame*, and Raghieb Ahsan of the IMG/ASL—but in the initial stages of the campaign the running was made on a conventional socialist platform. Gordon's election address—mailed to all voters—called on them to “Vote Socialist GORDON”, while Ahsan's campaigned for “A Socialist Solution” and was supported by an impressive list of local leftists, including eleven shop stewards.

As the campaign developed, however, racism and fascism became the dominant issues for the far left. Where the dominant slogans in Stechford had been AGAINST THE SOCIAL CONTRACT and FIGHT THE CUTS, in Ladywood the main slogans were FIGHT RACISM and THE POLICE ARE THE REAL MUGGERS.

Socialist Unity gained substantial support from the black population (two thirds of helpers from the local community were black) and the turning point of the campaign was the Battle of Boulton Road. An earlier skirmish with the Front had gone virtually unnoticed,

but in the wake of Lewisham two days earlier, the confrontation at Boulton Rd. school hit TV news and the front pages.

For the first time, the far left in Ladywood found itself headline news. Moreover, Marplan's extensive surveys immediately before the Battle indicated virtually no support for the far left—yet when the poll took place three days later, both polled significantly.

	MARPLAN POLL	
	Sunday 14th August	Thursday 18th August
Labour	61%	53%
Conservative	32%	23%
Liberal	4%	5%
National Front	2%	6%
Others	1%*	8%**

\* 6 candidates  
\*\*S.U.—3.4%, SWP—1%.

(The Battle of Boulton Road took place on Monday 15th August.)

Low figures in a derisory poll of 43% of electors in a small constituency are hard to interpret, but both revolutionary groups concluded that the fight against racism and fascism was the key issue of the election. Socialist Unity—which immediately after Boulton Rd held a meeting of nearly 200 people—concentrated their propaganda heavily on this struggle. SOCIALIST UNITY—THE STRUGGLE AGAINST RACISM AND FASCISM it advertised a meeting in Central Birmingham. SOCIALIST UNITY MEETING AGAINST RACISM AND THE NATIONAL FRONT announced the group for their post election rally in Ladywood. The SWP, half of whose leaflets were devoted to attacking the Front, also campaigned heavily on the race issue. “In a curious way,” *Socialist Challenge* concluded on September 1st, “The issues which dominated the by-election were not Labour's reactionary economic and social policies but racism and fascism . . .”



Kim Gordon, SWP

This is indeed a curious conclusion. Marplan's poll indicated that the issue which most people thought was “important” was rising prices (45%), with standards of living (41%) and unemployment (31%) next. Immigration—with law and order—was rated “important” by a large percentage (26%) but unlike Stechford, immigration never became an open controversy at Ladywood.

Stechford and Ladywood showed that the far left could attract more support and coverage than usual by a militant stand against racism and fascism. Raghieb Ahsan argued after the election that “Any steps taken by blacks against racism and fascism are steps in the right direction for socialism.”

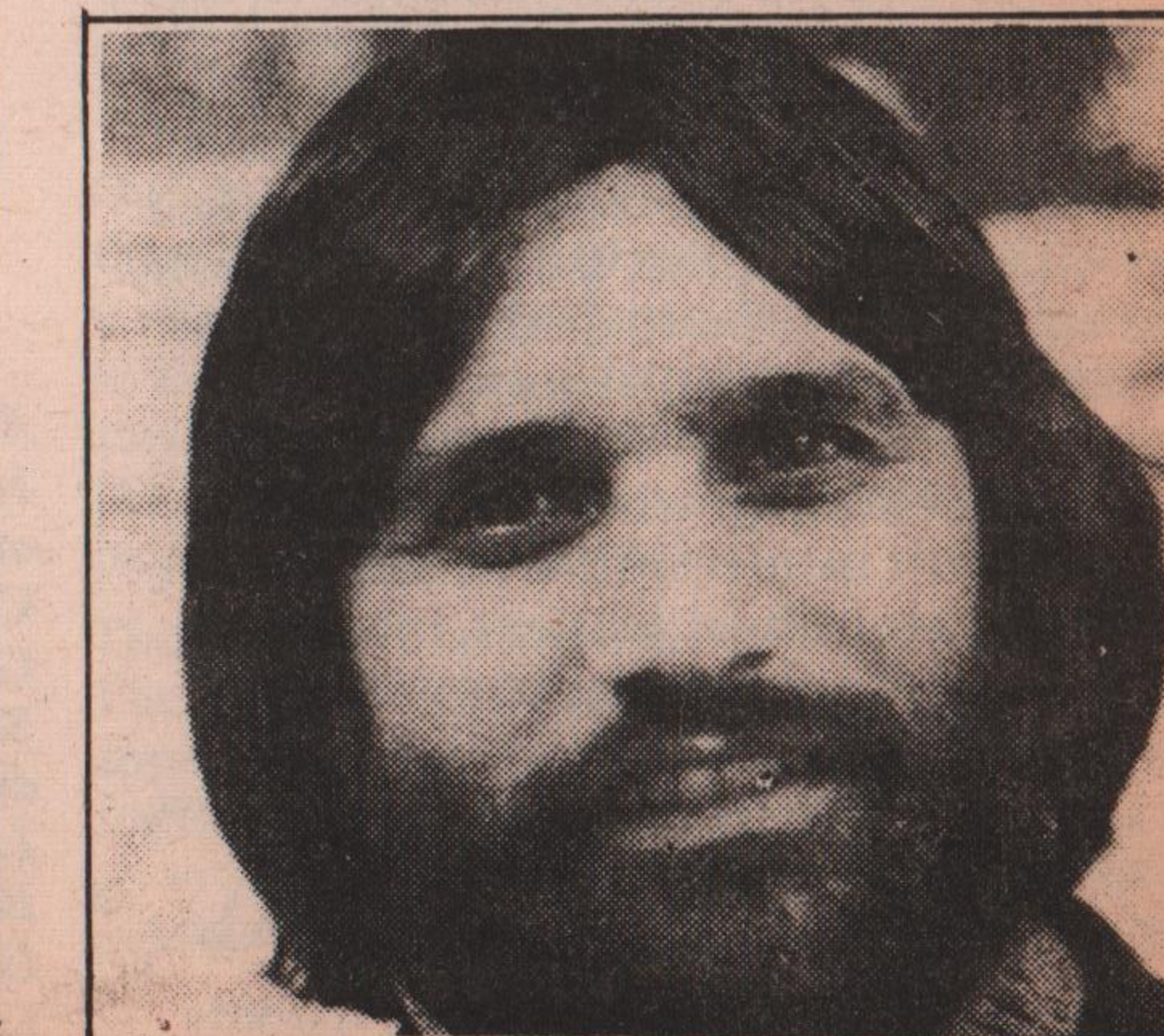
The development of black consciousness in Handsworth and Ladywood, however, has been largely towards black nationalism and rastafarianism, and it is not clear that any activity will do more than reinforce ethnic consciousness among beleaguered communities. Clive Turnbull conceded that “simple fascist bashing is not enough” and “the only thing which will break the idea of rastafarianism, for example, is a long term campaign of socialist policies.” In Ladywood, the image of left politics which caught the eye was militant anti-fascism, not socialist policies.

Moreover, neither left candidates at Ladywood offered a clear class line on the race issue. Neither explained the need for class unity amongst black and white workers, or exposed the Front's campaign as an attempt to divide workers on race lines.

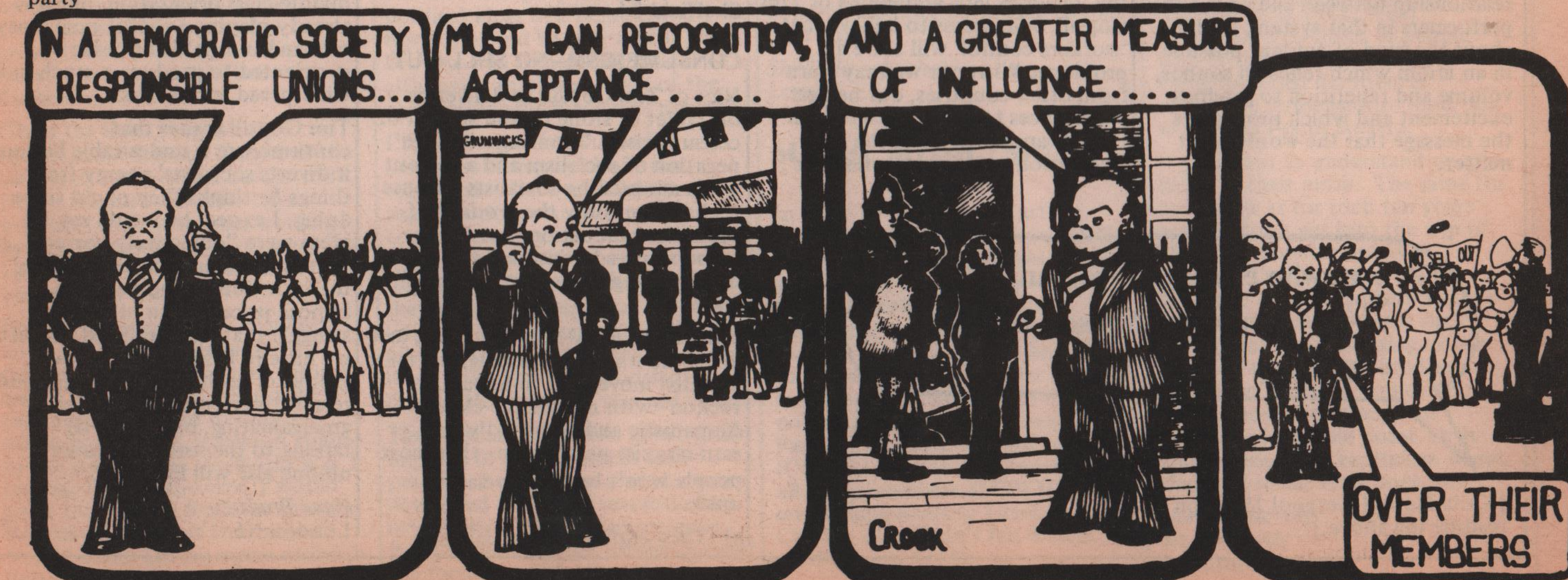
For Kim Gordon, the significant race issue was police harassment of black youth, while Raghieb Ahsan attacked racism, nazism, immigration laws and the police without mentioning racism and class, or the roots of racism in capitalism. This is not likely to build class consciousness among black workers, nor convince white workers of the need for unity with black. There is even a danger of unwittingly helping the Front's attempts to split the working class on racial lines.

When the dust of Ladywood died down, the dominant fact remained Labour's victory. Despite everything, an absolute majority of those people who bothered to trudge down to the ballot boxes endorsed Labour's “reactionary economic and social policies”, and eight out of ten voters voted for one of the major reformist parties.

By the end of the Ladywood campaign, the far left was well on the way to convincing itself that the prime target for socialist agitation in Britain was not mass reformist consciousness, but the vicious—yet still secondary—growth of fascism. In tackling fascism, Ladywood suggested that the far left was beginning to lose sight of the class basis of the essential issues. Ladywood may yet come to be seen as a major turning point for socialist policies in Britain, but whether towards or away from class politics has yet to be decided.



Raghieb Ahsan, Socialist Unity





# One woman's war story

**"THE TROUBLE with the working class is that they don't know how to write", said one of Mrs Hall's friends at their Luton WEA class. Mrs Hall has proved her friend wrong with a book of her recollections which are a triumph of description and a joy to read. She has captured in print the patterns of her memories and the tones of her own voice. She lives with her husband on a Luton estate where I visited her to ask how she came to write her book.**

Her WEA class, which had been reading *Akenfield*, had gone on to compare the book with the film and been led to speculate how various aspects of their own unwritten history might best be presented. She was encouraged to record memories of her working-class childhood and adolescence in Southall.

Edith Acreman (nee Hall) was born 69 years ago. Five years before, her grandfather had been killed by machinery at the foundry, but this was made light of since compensation for such mishaps was meagre and punitive. The war grabbed a favourite uncle when she was six, and she was not to see her father again until he returned garbed in the hospital blue of a war prisoner, so bent and stricken with dysentery that she called him "mister".

Her early years were passed in a world of women, and the canary girls of the book's title well describe women's importance to the wartime domestic and national economy. While men died and families collapsed, working-class girls left home to work in the munitions factories. Annie, Doris, Posie and Olive all left crowded East End homes and the fear of air-raids to work in an arms factory in Hayes. The skins of these 'common' Cockney canary girls were jaundiced by chemicals, their hours were long, their free time minimal, but Mrs Hall fondly remembers their sexuality and exuberance—as well as the astronomical salaries which sustained the Acreman family. When food ships to England were torpedoed, Mrs Acreman's stockpot could always coax flavour out of bones and vegetables, and send Edith to school and the canary girls to work with porridge-lined stomachs.

With an intensity of feeling that drowned all others, the women waited for the sentimental postcards with foreign stamps that reassured them their loved ones were alive. Although for older women, like Edith's grandmother, who had lost a son in the Boer War and only learnt of it when war was over, these cards bore their news with indecent speed. Indeed, the patriotic cards reproduced in the book do jar somewhat indecently with Mrs Hall's own spare uncorrupted text. Her lack of sentimentality gives lie to an ideology which prettifies death, murders natural sentiment and justifies war. She writes without illusions, too, of women whose "greatest stigma was to be considered lazy," emphasising to me that she felt "women were very much, as they are now, their own enemies—they didn't believe in stainless steel because it might make them lazy."

She was eleven when persuaded by a friendly woman teacher to attend socialist Sunday

school, and there compared the precepts of the bible with those of socialism. "Bow the knee to nobody," is the fourth commandment in her *Child's Socialist Reader* which she showed me.

The canary girls left. One joyfully embarked on "real married life" after 6 years separation from her husband: husband and wife died within days of each other. Olive bore her dead lover a baby son and died herself in the process, and Doris died at the inept hands of a knitting needle Nelly. Knitting needles had, of course, been around for generations of women who "couldn't have any more", but never had they been in such demand, a terrible indictment of bourgeois sentimentality which Edith took to heart. It was then that she scanned her friends to see who was born of love and who of beer, and found her friends' fathers more inclined to the latter. She spoke of her friend Molly's father as "like the men are now, don't take much notice of a girl till she gets a bit older, then it's 'I'm not having her doing that', and domineering their daughters along with their wives". That was until he became a 'liable relative' under the means test—and dependent on poor Molly.

Edith's own father felt women could do no wrong: "I remember I thought, 'well you'd better find out'. There was a murder at the time, and he said, 'no, no, she couldn't have done it!' He really idolised women—I think mother had a lot to live up to really."

A baby brother and sister had died. With no money to pay for two graves, she was troubled by the pink on the school globe. "When we got to the singing of 'Britons never shall be slaves' I did think about it, because prior to Dad being called up he was a baker leaving home at 4am and working 6½ days a week."

Leaving school at fourteen she describes as a "traumatic experience", as was her first job at

the lampworks. Comparing her own brutally brief adolescence with the artificial prolongation of youth today, she said, "it was very bewildering really to be an adolescent. We were treated as the lowest sort of people." Men shouted at her in the street for stealing "their" jobs. "I was terribly upset and tried always to go home a different way. Well, I thought I was doing wrong—even though I knew the men would never do silly little jobs like I was doing, sticking things on lamps—because people were so desperate for jobs."

How did she respond to the men at work? Apparently the younger girls worked the night shift so rarely saw the men. When they were on the same job and shift they were invariably separated. "We didn't actually see these chappies, but we girls would send them flippant notes saying 'aren't you lazy, you cheeky thing!' for I considered they were mucking about. There was this man though, who said 'they're making a profit out of me and I only half-fill my truck—how much d'you think they're making out of you, when you fill your truck and get only half may wages?' He was a soldier's son, you see, and had been reasoning things out."

At work she got none but the most menial jobs and was then accused of slacking. Teased for her smallness, terrified by the older women about sex and the business of childbirth and its prevention, she tried several domestic jobs and found them no better. "By the time I was fourteen I was really a socialist", she said. "I was fifteen when Kevin Barry was shot by the black and tans in the Easter uprising and he was eighteen. And I thought, well he must be fighting for something".

At nightschool, where she went regularly straight from work, she learnt the 3 R's and longed for more, for now she was reading *The Worker* for herself as well as 'adult reading'."

It was when she was seventeen, and had had as many jobs, that she began attending WEA English classes. "There weren't only other people who'd left school early. There was one woman who was very keen on literature and she worked at Tickler's jam factory so we were together when I worked there. We had a lady teacher for some reason, and she said 'you might like these other books first' but no, I went straight over to Dante's *Inferno*. And then I read Hardy, and I read about Tess". This, she had written, was the "first serious novel I'd read in which the heroine was not of gentle birth. It made me feel human, and even when my employers talked to me as though I wasn't there, I felt I could take it."

By the time Edith began work the trade unions were already in a limp state, after trebling their membership between 1910 and 1920.

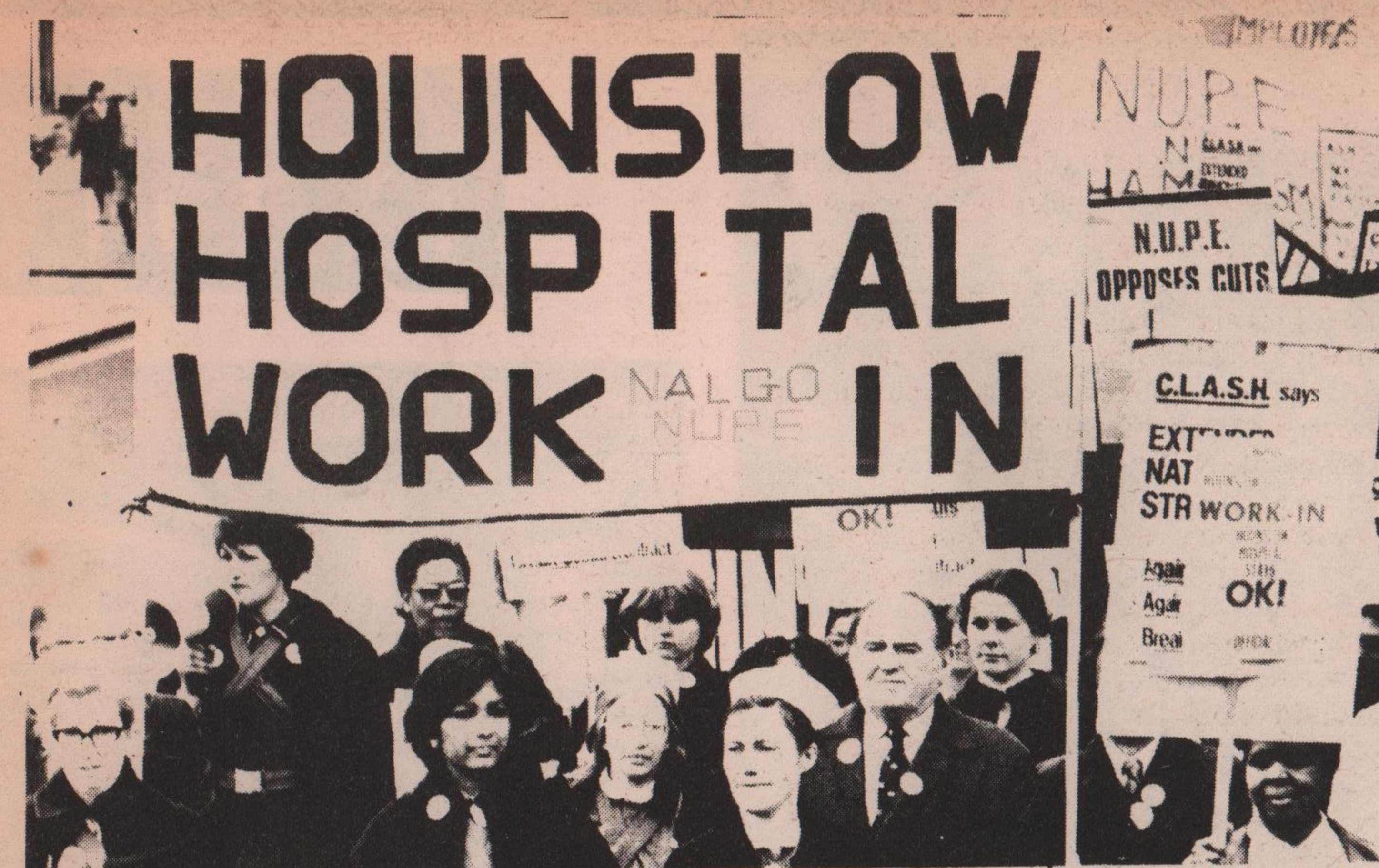
She records the horrified response to her attempt to organise the nurses in the fever hospital where she worked all through the depression and the General Strike. She records the miseries of the Family Means Test, which in its efforts to oust women from men's jobs broke more families than it buttressed. And above all, she describes the humiliation of unemployment. A seamstress friend, she writes, was mysteriously afflicted with a paralysed arm after prolonged unemployment. For her, "there was more stigma attached to unemployment than to sickness. Being unable to obtain work, she felt she was a failure. Of course, she and others in the same situation were not aware of this so the pain and the uselessness were genuine".

Mrs Hall knows enough about the struggles and cramped hands of a writer to describe this seamstress's sickness as a terrible verdict on a life without work, value or hope.

Cathy Porter.



Edith Hall, author of *Canary Girls and Stockpots*, available from Luton WEA, Barnsfield College, Luton, Beds. 65p.



## The cuts stop here—a hospital fights for its life

**THE STRUGGLE to save the Hounslow Hospital in Middlesex is a great deal more than a trade union matter. A solid backbone of trade union and community support in obstructing the closure, scheduled for 31 August, was built through a mass campaign in which new alliances were created and many people committed themselves to their first support of militant action.**

One difference between the Hounslow work-in and a conventional industrial dispute is the function of the picket. Banners announcing National and Local Government Officers Association (NALGO) and National Union of Public Employees (NUPE) support cover the hedges, and pickets approach the passers-by with a petition protesting at the closure. However, its purpose, along with weekly progress reports, is to show the local community that they are still there, not to keep strike-breakers and management out. The picket is to make sure people come in.

There have been other differences. A hospital is about taking care of people, and that means a lot to most hospital workers, who are not inclined to think of their work as just something-for-sale. Besides, they are mainly women and well trained in self-sacrifice for the good of others.

The cuts in the London area have been especially brutal. The Resource Allocation Working Party (RAWP) of the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) has designated the area "over-endowed". A man from the Hounslow Trades Council commented: "They say we have too much here. More than the rest of the country. Well, the others should find out what they've been doing without for all along! We have. And now that we've had it, why should we give it up? Like going back to salting meat in the cupboards after years of putting it in the fridge."

Hounslow Hospital serves an industrial area near the Heathrow Airport, a cottage hospital that relies heavily on relations with local GPs. The hospital is equipped for out-patient care, routine surgery, attention to minor accidents, and physiotherapy, like one of five satellites

around the huge district centre—the West Middlesex Hospital.

Two years ago, in anticipation of the cuts in health services, the shop stewards of the district health workers' unions formed a joint shop stewards committee to lay a base for workers' action. The Hounslow groups of NALGO (Health) affiliated with the Hounslow Trades Council—the first time a health workers' union in this country did so—and so linked in with the local labour movement.

The district administrative officer held a meeting of senior nurses two months after the defence committee's formation to present a proposal that the smaller hospitals, in the first instance Hounslow, close down for the three summer months. The nurses thought of their patients. Management assured them that if they opposed the plan it would not be enacted.

But one month later the proposal was made official policy. Management had proved itself untrustworthy, and no one believed assurances that the hospitals would reopen in the autumn. It was apparent that criticism of official actions would be necessary, *in the patients' interests*.

The shop stewards withdrew from consultative committees with management in June, after the district management team put out a paper referring to the savings that were planned "after consultation with staff". They decided that their presence would be used to rubber-stamp management decisions that they could not influence.

When internal documents of the DHSS came into the stewards' possession in July 1976, they learned of "resource allocation" plans for the district, by which the health service would be sliced beyond recognition. It became apparent that a service important to the area would be wiped out by a bureaucratic decision, and that the hospital closure was part of a systematic attack on the NHS, or the social wage.

The importance of a base in the labour movement became apparent after 23 February, when management announced that the closure would be effective on 31 August with no patients accepted after 1 June. Once it became official, much "respectable" support vanished. The defence committee for the Brentford Hospital,

for example, included members of the local Liberal Party and the Chamber of Commerce. They would not support actions such as an occupation, and accepted the closure. People learned from that.

But on 28 March, the staff at the Hounslow Hospital unanimously agreed to support a work-in. The Hounslow defence committee, unlike Brentford, was solidly based in the labour movement, and behind the action. It held public meetings, and lobbied trade union officials and MPs.

The staff decide to bring the fight for the hospital into the wider community, as well as the trade unions, and formed the liaison committee. Its members include delegates from the trades council and the hospital defence committee, doctors, solicitors and Russell Kerr. The liaison committee published a report stressing the importance of the Hounslow Hospital to the well-being of the district. This report lent *medical* weight to the campaign, which was important in convincing people that it was right to oppose the closure.

In addition to the defensive campaign however, the committee hoped to present a more positive long-range aim, an alternative to the unresponsive structure of the NHS with its priorities remote from those of the community. After listening to people's ideas and researching the area, they made suggestions for future medical and therapeutic uses. The Hounslow Hospital could become a community hospital responsive to local needs.

The network of support has proved impressive—the fruit of earlier education and organization. Within the first three weeks of the work-in, 30,000 signatures to a petition protesting the hospital closure were collected from the local community, and since then the number has more than doubled. Standing at the picket, most of the passers-by have already signed. One frail old woman in a green coat stopped to say "Oh, I've signed that already, dear", and added fervently, "I'm behind this, and I hope you win!"

The Southeast Region of the TUC, which covers 240,000 workers, is blacking all management-directed work that has not been approved by the defence committee. For example, no one will transfer the Bell Road Chest Clinic into Hounslow Hospital premises. To prevent management from sabotaging the work-in by evacuating patients, the London Ambulance Service will move no patients without defence committee approval, and the staff at Heathrow threatened to black the St. John's ambulances from the airport if they scabbed at the Hounslow.

## Stop press

Two weeks before the closure date, management announced they would not seek confrontation; as long as patients remained in the hospital they would be cared for. Official admissions ceased on 21 August, and management calculated for 20 patients on 31 August.

On 31 August, more than 500 people marched through Hounslow in support of the work-in: trade unionists, pensioners, women's groups—in the pouring rain. The work-in entered a new stage. There were 44 patients on the wards, not 20. If the staff were to accept transfers, the patients would be neglected.

The staff have continued to work at the hospital. The night of the 31st, two patients mysteriously appeared on the male ward, the first unofficial admissions. Local GPs are referring more. As we go to press the work-in continues, and the staff are running the show.

Kathleen Denny





# BLUE DENIM



IN 1976 people in England spent £325 million on 40 million pairs of jeans. Throughout the rest of Europe and the United States 800,000 million pairs were sold. The jeans you bought last year for £8.25 would now cost around £9, but they're still the biggest selling garment in the British clothing industry and have completely altered its traditional structure, with the wool, cotton and synthetic fibre industries in Lancashire and Yorkshire suffering fundamental damage in the course of changing over to jeans: they have had to scrap the colour-fast technology to make a new blue dye that fades.

Denim and jeans have become a central part of international sick advertising overtly degrading to women and often obscene. But jeans are also sold to us by an advertising industry which makes the most of their industrial history. Levi Strauss (the originator of Levi-Strauss jeans myths, not the gatherer of anthropological myths: there's no known connection between the two) has had his story told *ad nauseam*. Here were these miners out in the Wild West digging for gold. Everyday trousers wore out. Local contractor Levi-Strauss contacted relatives back in France (the name denim comes from *Serge de Nimes*): 'Send anything . . .'. Back came a load of tent material too tough and unyielding for work-clothes in Europe, and some little ladies (Marlene Dietrich?) stitched and overstitched with coarse yarns and metal wire—Levis were born! The miners preferred them to everything else.

It was not till the late 1950's that jeans moved from workwear to fashion, and in America, books about the relationship between folk art and jeans became best-sellers. These were the days of flower power, of the "false proletariat" (rich kids pretending to be workers, who needed fading jeans to look like the real thing).

"Suddenly, in 1971, denim went into orbit," as one denim manufacturer put it, though hard pressed to explain why. The clothes industry did another double-take, and colour somersaulted from the high technology dyes which rae the basis of the chemical industry, back to natural indigo." The Americans were still using indigo dyestuffs and we were forced back 50 years to do the same.

"What is indigo? It's a dirty filthy pigment dye. Made originally from vegetable, it's now synthetic and cannot be impregnated into the yarn." The dyestuff is pasted round the yarn, is passed through several impressions, and as it gets lighter and lighter in the wash, it eventually wears away altogether, since the dyestuff cannot penetrate.

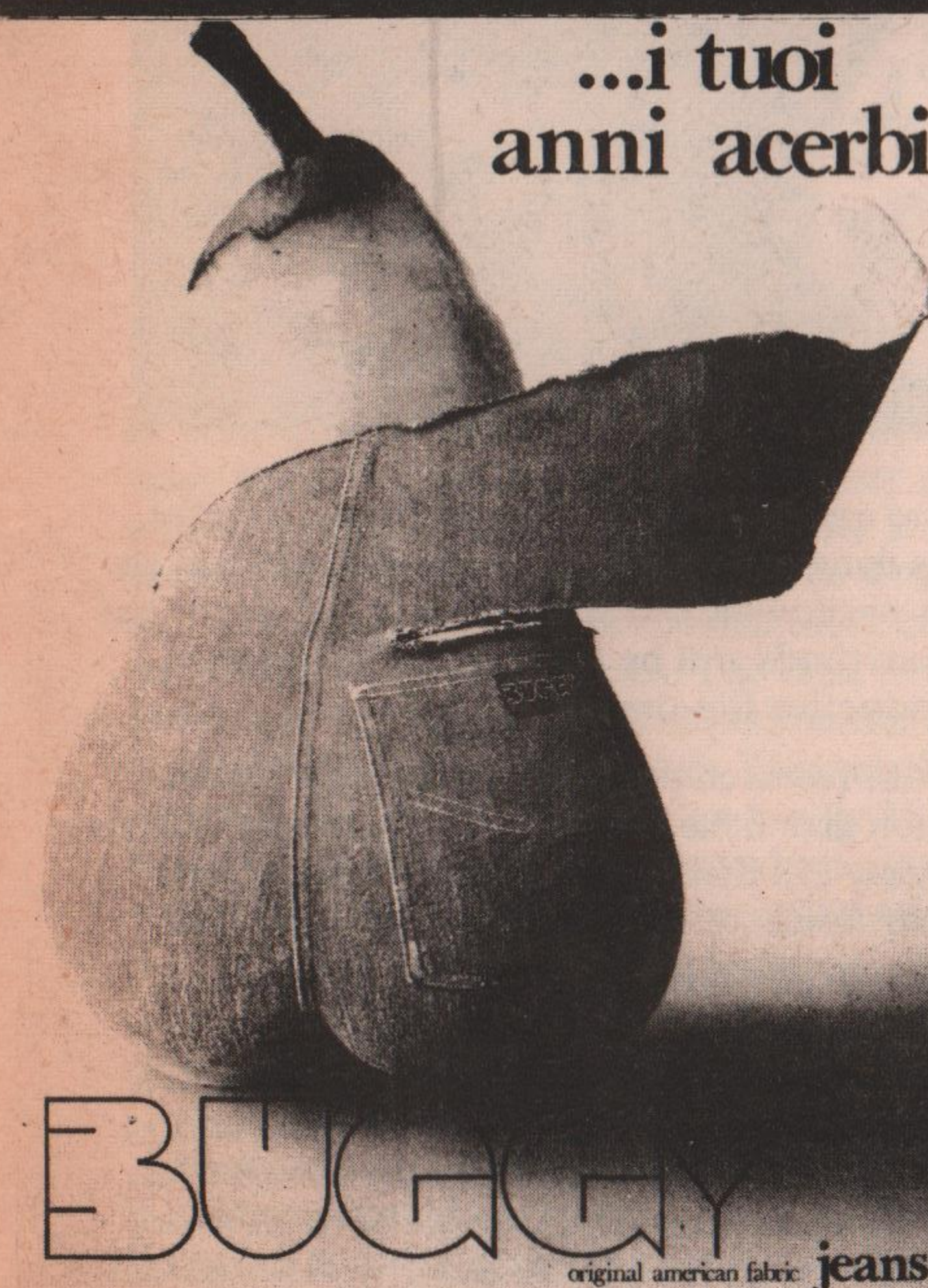
Although the fibre is not specified, denim is traditionally made from waste extracted from finer 'up-market' cotton, waste which would otherwise be used for kitchen cloths or engineering rags. But jeans are slightly more complicated to make than dishcloths.

The trade journal *British Clothing Manufacturer* recently described the problems of synthetically simulating indigo dyestuffs, with their characteristic colour "bleeding". All sorts of "guaranteed to fade" fabrics have been tried out, but it has been left to the multi-million multi-national Hoechst and DuPont, to put their full technological resources to solving a problem which is causing headaches throughout all the major chemical companies of the world. Millions of pounds (ICI Fibres), dollars (DuPont), Deutschmarks (Hoechst), and Dutch Florins (AZKO) have been invested to produce a fibre that will accept indigo dye and simulate cotton. They have not succeeded. Lancashire firms which once had a world lead in cotton finishes that were non-iron, and colour-fast, are now in decline or have passed over to one major group which buys up the processes and sells them under license to the 3rd World.

In 1975, Hoechst (a component of the pre-war IG Farben Industrie set-up) announced their

## MYTHS AND MONEY

'Indo-Jean Programme'. Scientists had at last discovered a way in which synthetics could discard dye gradually, during repeated washings; the clothiers now had to be induced to include fabrics containing up to 50% Trevira polyester. In the States, DuPont are already advertising their new Dacron polyester, specially formulated to work with cotton in indigo denim. As well as being the required dark blue colour, it gives



"special shrinkage control"; it will be coming to Britain next year. DuPont make no secret of the vast amount of research that went into achieving this fibre, for the textile giants considered all efforts justified in the interest of keeping synthetics in the jeans industry. Do the skin and lungs of the textile workers who actually handle this migrant indigo dye, merit such attention? Not fading likely.

Reports from sewing factories show that the women (it's women's work) don't like denim because they become covered in blue dye up to their elbows and find that it sweats off onto their underclothes and skin. Some get dermatitis, others complain of respiratory trouble. But so far little of this has come the way of the Factory Inspectorate and this is not only because women are so badly organised, and so rarely complain. It is because many denim garments are made by outworkers, and there is little hard information on the effect of indigo dye on these workers and their families. The outworkers' lot must be deduced from the complaints of factory-workers who at least have the benefit of basic Factory Act legislation.

As is pretty well known, the same jeans going for £9 in a suburban high street will go for £20 in a chic boutique where you pay for the atmosphere. Of that £9 for an average pair of jeans about £2 goes on cloth, another £2 on zips, fastenings and trimmings, and the rest goes to the retailers. Of that £2, about 70p would go to a sewer working in a factory. With outworkers, who tend to make the more simple denim clothes like skirts and childrens' wear, the figure will be more like 25p or if they're lucky, 50p. Even with branded jeans, which have to be made on full-scale production lines in factories, the work content can go no higher than 70p.

The clothing industry has historically attracted low-paid immigrant workers. Most of the Jews who fled tsarist oppression in the early years of this century clustered around the Commercial Road and Shacklewell Lane in the East End of London where they were joined by Indians and Pakistanis. It seems to be the Pakistani women outworkers who come off worst. Many of them earn as little as 25p for a pair of jeans, 15p for a skirt, but since custom requires their husbands to hand them their work and then take the money for it, they have no direct knowledge of what their pay is and absolutely no power to get it raised. These women suffer doubly in the

outworking racket.

A little better off are the Greeks who have recently settled in the Finsbury Park area (North London) where former outworkers have managed to set up individual or cooperative factories to beat the system. But the entire denim industry involves the super-exploitation of women's labour.

And jeans are imported from the 3rd World, either through cottage industries or through investment by major companies like Lee Cooper of France, which last year announced a large investment in jeans production in Tunisia. This July, Levi Strauss followed suit, with three factories producing five million pairs of jeans a year. Turkey and Greece are using jeans to get them associate membership of the EEC, and India is also turning out vast quantities of them.

When Dr. Krishna Murti, head of the Textile Division of UNCTAD, called for more imports of these garments from the 3rd World to the industrialised countries of eastern and western Europe, he suggested that the developed world be encouraged to manufacture 'specialities' (like Scottish woollens, Irish linen, Swiss embroidery), while the 3rd World continued to concentrate on simpler things. The clothing industry of Britain and other EEC countries opposed this and complain loudly of the amount of "low cost" imports which create unemployment for indigenous workers. Closer inspection of the textile industry would lead to other conclusions. In any case, whether the Pakistani woman is better off in Peshawar or Shacklewell is difficult for us to know unless we actually ask her.

The clothing industry happily anticipates that 1978 will see a move away from indigo to coloured jeans. Degrading and revolting ads are already up which show women's bottoms with the slogan: 'Put some colour on your cheeks.'

Maeve Ridgway



# All our loving



Sexuality is not always to the forefront of issues debated and discussed by the British left, apart from in the women's movement. *The Leveller* is setting out to try and repair this state of affairs.

In launching a series of articles on sexuality, we look first at contraception—its methods and politics. We examine the technology and future of contraception; we print a questionnaire on the subject for heterosexual men; and we present a chart-form comparison of the (dis)advantages and risks of currently available means of contraception.

In a future issue we will look at another aspect of contraception: how it affects our sex lives and attitudes. And we will be analysing the responses to the questionnaire for men on page 23.

1957 was 'the year of the Pill'. Hailed as technology's greatest gift to women, it seemed to promise liberation from unwanted pregnancy and a revolution in sexual mores. Greater gains became possible for capitalism: the refinement of its own labour stock and new ways to control the birth rate of whole populations in the third world.

Twenty years on, we are only just beginning to

realise that the pill was paid for with our third world sisters' bodies. And that what technology gives in the present may be paid for in future with our own bodies. Twenty years later, the Pill is still on trial. It is too early to say what effect it will have on women who take it for most of their reproductive lives. Meanwhile, it remains the leading form of birth control among younger women in many advanced capitalist countries, with the lowest rate of

failure among birth control methods. Fearful of its dangers, but rejecting the alternatives, we keep swallowing our daily dose in the hope that new methods will be perfected within our reproductive life-time.

Current research programmes for new contraception give little sustenance to this hope. Trials of a new Pill which reduces the frequency of menstruation to three times a year have just been completed in Scotland, but this will simply make Pill-taking more convenient, not necessarily safer. A coil which releases a daily dose of progesterone (a hormone usually secreted in women after ovulation) has been tested at a London hospital. Present users of the coil may benefit from this, but it is unlikely to relieve the side-effects which make many women change to other contraception after trying intra-uterine devices (IUD).

In 1972 the World Health Organisation (WHO) established an expanded programme of research and development in human reproduction, involving more than 650 scientists in 60 countries, on a variety of methods including pills and injectables for both sexes; and for women alone, IUDs, vaginal rings, intracervical devices, post-coital preparations and vaccines.

When the Women in Science group examined two of the WHO projects in detail\*, they found that major political and medical problems were being ignored or minimised. In the case of the injectable drug Depo Provera, used on an increasing scale by women in over 70 countries (including Britain), Ralph Nader's researchers found that the incidence of breast cancer rises considerably in dogs given the drug. While immediate conclusions cannot be drawn for humans, this research does indicate that Depo Provera is too hazardous a drug for contraceptive use. It contains a progestogen derived from the same source as two other progestogens which have been implicated in breast cancer studies. In Britain, the Committee for Safety in Medicines has only approved it for short-term use, but doctors are entitled to use DP as they wish. Many are now prescribing it for women who cannot successfully use any other contraception. How many of these women know that the drug they are being offered has not been fully approved?

The WHO research into immunisation against the hormone Human Chorionic Gonadotrophin (HCG) is a similar story. HCG is naturally produced by the body to maintain pregnancy, and immunisation against it induces abortion in early primates. Immunisation is achieved by linking a fragment of HCG to tetanus toxoid. The Women in Science group think it likely that "this type of treatment could lead to kidney damage", the risk increasing with the number of pregnancies the immunised woman has had.

In the US and Britain research into HCG is being carried out on animals and is subject to rigorous controls. But there are parallel studies being carried out on women in India, the Dominican republic, Brazil, Chile, Finland and Sweden. It is difficult enough in the advanced capitalist countries to ensure that people voluntarily taking part in experiments turn up regularly for testing. In the developing world, the problems are much greater. Yet mobility of population and lack of back-up medical care are not being taken into consideration by the testing agencies, despite the fact that this immunisation technique requires repeated vaccinations to remain effective over a long period.

Failure by the medical and scientific establishments to come up with more acceptable forms of contraception had often been attributed to their male domination and the view they share with state agencies that female fertility is a factor for political manipulation. The Women and Science group have revealed a more complex interconnection of obstacles. The crux is the process of testing, in which experimental subjects and doctors rely on each other. This relationship, essential for reliable results, can hardly be achieved while women have sound reasons for mistrusting the medical profession and scientists.

Third world women, while desperate for birth control, also see it as an imperialist weapon. We know that mass testing is necessary for safe contraception, but we are reluctant to volunteer ourselves or anyone else for it. In many other forms of drug research, the dilemma is not so acute because the trial subjects have something to gain. If you have terminal cancer you have little to lose trying a new cure, whatever its side-effects. With contraception, you have a choice: no-one is forced for lack of alternatives to try a new method. And the more aware women become of the need to control their fertility and safeguard their health themselves, the less are they likely to undergo trials with new drugs or devices whose long term side-effects are unknown.

Until these social and political aspects of testing are recognised by the experimenters themselves, it is difficult to see how we can advocate trials of any new contraceptive techniques. Only the feminists in the US and Europe who are and psychologically, but few doctors take account of this when recommending particular methods.

Present contraceptive use—largely as a result of the Pill and the IUD—is generally regarded as women's responsibility. In Britain, however, condoms (sheaths) are still the most widely used contraceptive because they can be bought over the counter. But the trend is towards greater use of woman-based methods. Technologically, male contraception is still primitive—the male pill is more a media joke than reality (recent tests have shown that it could make men grown breasts). Part of the reason for the lag in male contraceptive development may be the general assumption that contraception is a woman's affair, but that is related to the deeper truth that many women feel they can only trust themselves. The Women's Movement has made it possible for us to communicate our experiences to other women, but we have not yet succeeded in breaking down many of those old barriers with men. What is their understanding of contraceptive problems? How do they react to women's need to discuss contraception and perhaps change their present methods? Or to suggestions that they take responsibility for contraception?

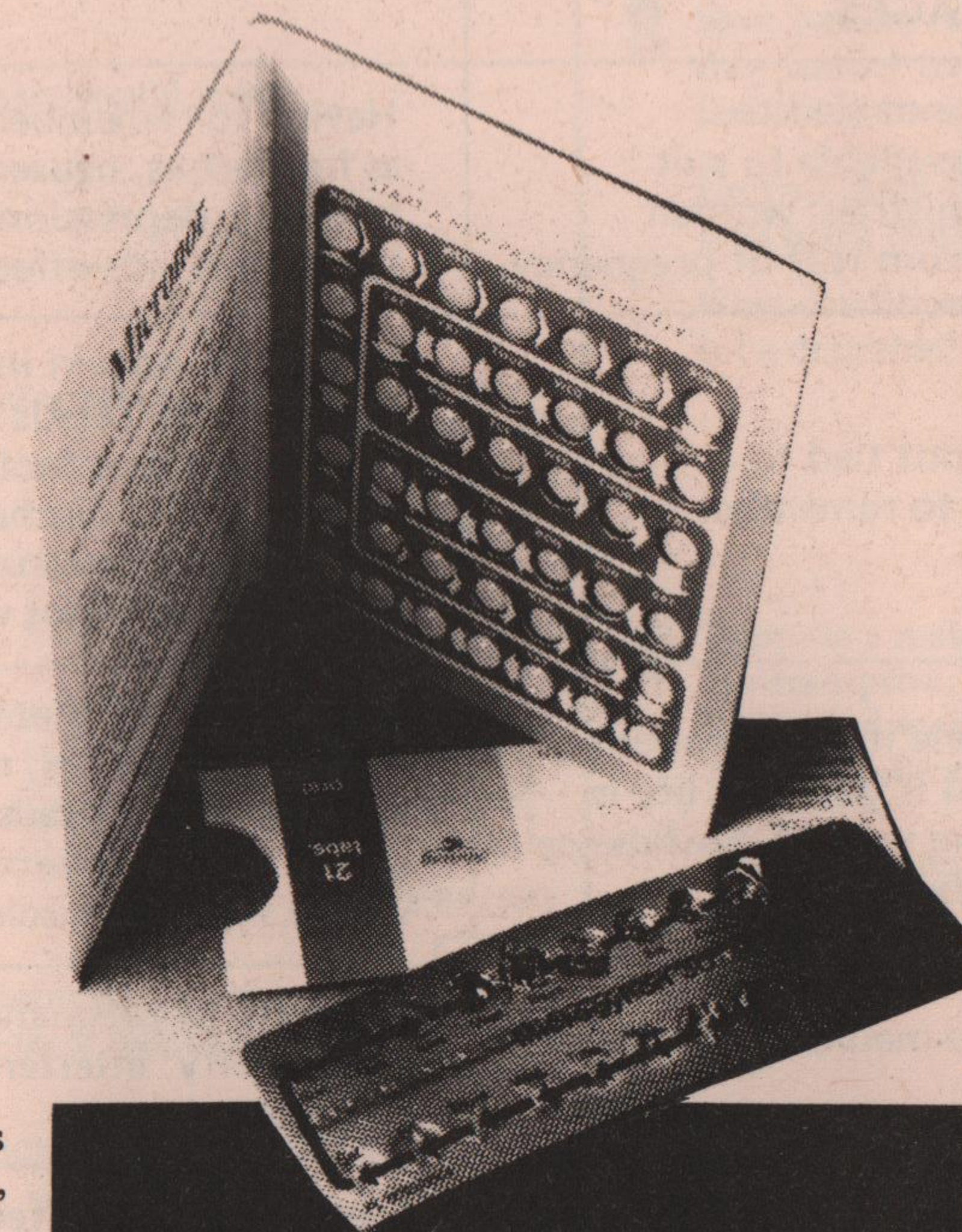


Table 1 Contraceptive Methods and Risk of Pregnancy

Method	Average risk of pregnancy in 100 women using method for one year
Pill	less than 1%
IUD	3%
Diaphragm with spermicide	12%
Condom	15%
Withdrawal	16%
Rhythm	16%
Foams, jellies etc.	variable
Douching after intercourse	over 40%
no method	80%



It is essential to answer these questions because it is now technologically possible for birth control to depend on men. Sterilisation is rapidly becoming the contraceptive choice for many people. In the US, among more than a quarter of couples of childbearing age, either the husband or wife has been sterilised. Adverse publicity and medical controversy has led many women (especially those married 15 years or more) to stop using the pill, replacing it with sterilisation.

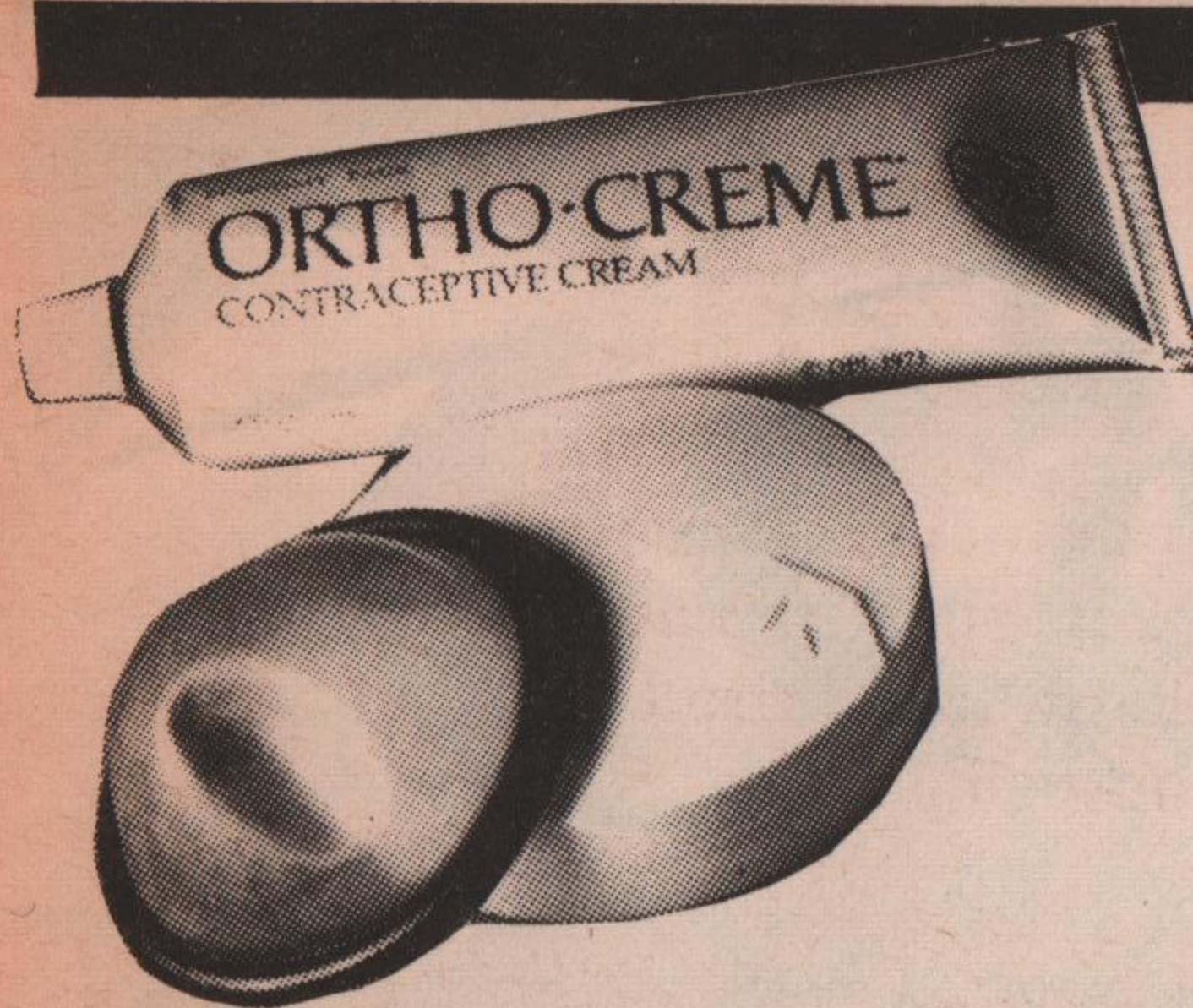
practising menstrual extraction have found a partial solution—by group monitoring and working with doctors on an equal basis.

Menstrual extraction is simple and needs no sophisticated equipment, so it lends itself to this type of trial. It may prove one of the few viable methods currently being tested. Drugs, on the other hand, are only available from doctors, who depend largely on the drug companies for information. It seems that we cannot get very far without democratic control of the drug companies and health service, so that men and women can determine both their contraceptive needs and the ways they should be met.

The ensuing changes in medical science and practice would make it possible for us to decide on the basis of all available information and knowledge whether or not we wish to participate in drug trials (including experiments with new contraceptives). If people then decide that existing contraceptive research is not worth the risks, there is always the chance that new channels of investigation will be opened up. The more people understand about their contraceptive needs, the more likely this is.

The Women's Movement, through health and self-help groups, can be a powerful agent in educating people and collecting information about present contraceptive methods for its own analysis. It has a completely different approach from doctors and scientists because it is concerned with contraception both as a means of preventing pregnancy and as part of our sexual and social lives. It should be obvious that different contraceptives affect people's sexuality in different ways, medically





Although more women (3.8 million) than men (3 million) in the US are sterilised, the male operation (vasectomy) is safer and simpler. In the future it may be preferable because it need not stop men from having children, since it is now possible to build a sperm bank for artificial insemination before having a vasectomy. Reversible vasectomy is not far away. Of course, this doesn't mean that women wouldn't need contraception (unless all men were vasectomised), but it does extend the range of options available.

Contraceptive development will continue to occur in an uneven way. Some women under advanced capitalism may start rejecting the Pill and the IUD, reverting to the diaphragm. Or more people of both sexes may choose sterilisation, while others may opt for the shorter term convenience of the newer

technologies (especially if they feel happier sexually using them). Meanwhile in Ireland women are demanding the Pill and the IUD against the Church. In India and South America both sexes are fighting for the right to remain fertile against compulsory sterilisation.

Within and outside the metropolitan heartlands, contraception can be—and often is—a powerful form of social control. The demands we make relating to it should reflect different social and political conditions, although they must obviously be based on the right of individuals to control their own fertility. It would be good to see contraception, together with abortion, become an international political issue. Its future lies as much in political consciousness as it does in technology.

**\* We are grateful for help from the Women in Science group, whose paper, The Politics of Contraception, contains much of the information on which this article is based.**

**Other helpful sources were:**  
 Women's Health Handbook: A Self-Help Guide, compiled by Nancy MacKeith.  
 From Woman to Woman, Lucienne Lanson (Penguin).  
 Everywoman by Derek Llewellyn-Jones (Faber).  
 Vasectomy and Vasectomy by David and Helen Wolfers (Mayflower).



Health visitor shows a woman the coil

The choice is yours . . . this chart is a brief guide to the pros and cons of the major contraceptive methods used at present in Britain

METHOD	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Pill	Highly effective; use not tied to intercourse; variety available to suit individual body chemistries; women who use it feel free from fear of pregnancy.	Having to remember to take it; possible side effects such as headaches, nausea, loss of libido, weight gain, unexpected bleeding, depression. Increased danger of blood clotting. Long-term side-effects not known.
Intra-Uterine Device (IUD)	Fairly effective; use not tied to intercourse; no need to remember to use it.	May cause pain in insertion or removal; may need yearly replacement; Needs removing if woman wants to conceive. Reported side-effects include intensified menstrual bleeding, back pain and discharge. Risk of pelvic infection and perforation of uterus wall. May be spontaneously expelled, sometimes without woman knowing.
Diaphragm	Physically safe; reliable if used properly; more flexible method if your sex life is intermittent; may give woman confidence in handling her own body.	Only moderate theoretical effectiveness; diminishes spontaneity of sex; messy (sticky spermicide!), some spermicides can cause irritation or infection; can sometimes be felt during intercourse; may not be suitable for women whose vaginal muscles are too tight or too loose.
Condom	Sold over counter; no medical help needed for use.	High risk of pregnancy; may break in use; diminishes spontaneity; interferes with sensation; costly if used over long period.
Withdrawal	Costs nothing; needs no medical help for use; can be used if no other form of contraception available.	Low theoretical effectiveness; requires precision timing; interrupting sex is not the best way to enjoy it; woman may suffer from arousal without orgasm.
Rhythm	Needs no chemical or manual device; gives woman knowledge of her cycle. Astrological charts may help to improve efficiency, so that present high pregnancy risk with this method can be reduced.	Low theoretical effectiveness; requires abstinence, which can cause sexual and emotional problems. Strong discipline needed to keep this method successful.
Female Sterilisation	Highly effective; does not affect intercourse; puts an end to contraceptive problems for women.	Risk of complications from operation; permanence; possible psychological effects; often difficult to obtain (especially for women without children).
Vasectomy	Highly effective; does not affect intercourse; ends contraceptive problems for man; is simpler than female sterilisation; greater possibility of reversal.	Delay of up to 6 months in becoming effective; permanence; spontaneous reversal in rare cases; slight risk of complication from operation; possible psychological effects.

# Contraception

## Questions for men

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE has been designed to discover our male readers heterosexual readers' attitudes to contraception. We hope it will stimulate discussion among readers of both sexes. When you've filled it in (please be honest), tear it out or photocopy it and send it back to us, using extra sheets of paper to expand answers if you wish.

There are no right answers and no scores for this questionnaire. Please tick the appropriate boxes, and answer the open-ended questions as briefly as possible. If any question raises points on which you want to express yourself at greater length than the space allows, please do so: we welcome your comments/experience/information.

- 1** Which forms of contraception have you had experience of?
- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Pill                     | Diaphragm                | IUD(Coil etc)            | Spermicide               | Condom                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Vasectomy                | Female Sterilisation     | Safe Period              | Withdrawal               |                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
- Other  (specify)
- Which do you think is the most satisfactory?
- Why?

Which is the least satisfactory?  
 Why?

Are there any forms of contraception you would never consider using?  
 If so, why?

- 2** Does the kind of contraceptive you prefer depend on what kind of sexual relationship you are having?  
 If so, why?  YES/NO

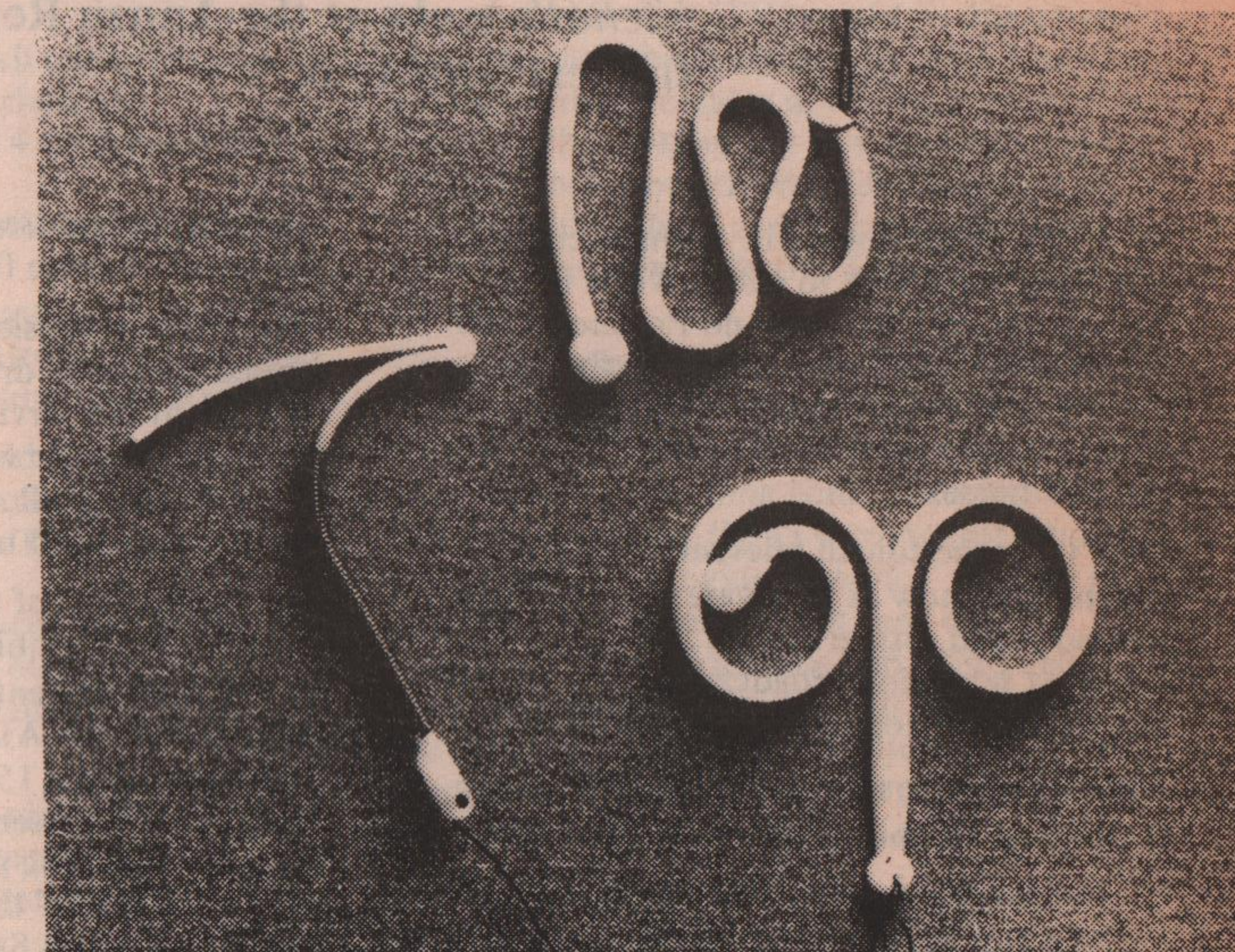
- 3** Have you ever  
 a) visited a 'family planning' clinic?  
 b) discussed contraception with your doctor?  YES/NO

- 4** Do you discuss contraception with  
 a) every woman you have sex with?  
 b) women with whom you have long-term relationships?  
 c) women with whom you have short-term relationships?  
 d) none?  
 Do you ever take the initiative in introducing such discussions?  YES/NO

- 5** Do you ever seriously discuss contraception with other men?  
 If so, in what circumstances?  YES/NO

- 6** Do you find that some women resent any attempt to discuss/propose experimentation with contraception, on the grounds that it is up to them how they control their own fertility?  
 What do you think of this view?

- 7** When women bring up the subject of contraception, do you feel  
 a) bored?  
 b) embarrassed or put under pressure?  
 c) unwilling to talk about it?  
 d) interested?  
 e) other (specify)



IUDs: Would you fancy one inside you?

- 8** Most women take responsibility for contraception because they feel they cannot trust men to do so. Do you feel that this is the only realistic approach?
- Do you think that it will every be possible for women to rely on men using contraception?
- What conditions would be necessary for this to happen, and would it be desirable?

- 9** Suppose a male pill has been invented. Although an effective contraceptive, it has side effects such as nausea, headaches, loss of libido and weight gain; long-term effects are unknown. Would you agree to take part in a medical trial using this new pill?
- If not, how do you suggest that new forms of contraception (for both men and women) should be tested?

- 10** Suppose that vasectomy were easily available, much safer than female sterilisation and had no known side effects; and that artificial insemination facilities were offered to every man who was prepared to have a vasectomy. Would you build a sperm bank and then have a vasectomy?
- If not, would you change your answer if vasectomy were reversible?  
 If you still wouldn't, why not?

- 11** The Women's Liberation Movement has campaigned since its inception for free, easily available contraception and abortion facilities. Do you think this campaign should include specific demands for intensified research into male contraception?  
 Would you work within a campaign to achieve these demands?

- 12** List what to you are the three main criteria for satisfactory contraception.  YES/NO



# TV.....WHO 4?

British television is at the Crossroads. The biggest controversy about its future centres on the idea of another channel - Channel 4. The outcome of this debate could profoundly affect what we see on the box. Tony Nicholls looks at the Annan Report on the Future of Broadcasting and the reactions to it.

THE BBC doesn't want it. Commercial television can't wait to get it. While the Association of Directors and Producers and the Independent Broadcasting Authority wrestle with the alternatives, the largest union for television workers says, "Give it to the ITV bosses."

The "it" is the fourth television channel which exists now as hardware. Transmitters to send it and sets to receive it abound. The future of television broadcasting and its effect on our culture depend on who controls it.

Two basic proposals were put to the Annan Committee on the future of broadcasting\*:

1. The fourth channel should be given to the existing ITV Companies enabling them to match the BBC service with ITV1/ITV2.
2. The channel should be completely separate from BBC or ITV and organised to transmit programmes only. It would buy or finance programmes made by independent groups. The channel would therefore act as a publisher of material and would not make its own programmes.

Until now, the BBC and ITV have had control over production and distribution for all national and regional television. The duopoly has satisfied the BBC and made fortunes for the ITV companies.

A publishing channel challenges this deathly set-up. With only transmitting and purchasing resources, it would release the pool of frustrated talent that the BBC and ITV admit exist within and outside their organisations, sparking off a new industry of independent production companies offering material to Channel 4 on "merit".

After examining the evidence for two and a half years, the Annan Committee released its findings in March this year. The report recommends the establishment of an Open Broadcasting Authority (OBA) to run Channel 4 as a "publishing" enterprise.

The report questions the codes of "impartiality" and "balance" used in television and suggests that the OBA be "given as much freedom as the law will allow" to broadcast material

currently suppressed by the BBC and ITV in the name of these false gods.

Weak comprehension of television finances caused Annan to drag his feet over the introduction of the service. He thought Britain's economic climate would improve sufficiently in the 1980s to allow such a channel to go on the air, supported by advertising and grants.

The publication of the report has concentrated the Channel 4 lobbies into four major groups: 1) The Independent Television Companies Association (ITCA).

Representing the 15 commercial companies operating the present ITV network, ITCA keeps a low public profile, hiding its offices amid the skirts of the rag trade just north of London's Oxford Street. The companies operate on minimum six-year franchises from the IBA. Current franchises are due to end in July 1979 when renewals will be reviewed. The programme menu proposed for ITV2 looks suspect. After years of collecting items for the deep freeze, ITCA's approach to the television diet will not guarantee freshness and originality for even 12 months. Since the early 1970s, ITCA has campaigned for control of a second channel, but its case has been weakened by its most obvious motive—greed—and the protection of its interest in ITV1. "It's no secret that since 1975 independent television contractors have been wallowing in an almost embarrassing build-up of advertising revenue and profits." (*Investors Chronicle*, January 1977).

The diversification of ITCA's profits into everything from Rent-a-Flower to motels has left many with no doubt about the nature of its "commitment" to television broadcasting.

2) The Association of Directors and Producers.

ADP officially surfaced in January 1974 and is firmly founded in the television medium. It describes itself as "the professional body which represents the most senior creative programme makers in all departments of British television..." and as "... the single most important group of professional workers within the industry who are responsible for both content and presentation of programmes".

ADP smacks of the elitism that breeds isolation in progressive causes. Yet it has so far proved the most effective and outspoken opponent of ITCA's control of the fourth channel.

In its submission to Annan, ADP argued the case for a publishing house Channel 4 much like the OBA the Committee proposed.

The 200 or so "top name" members of ADP work at a level where they are acutely aware of the censorship of content imposed by the control-level of the broadcasting organisations. ADP is convinced of the need for a transformation of British television and argues for a channel independent of ITV and BBC to be established as soon as possible.

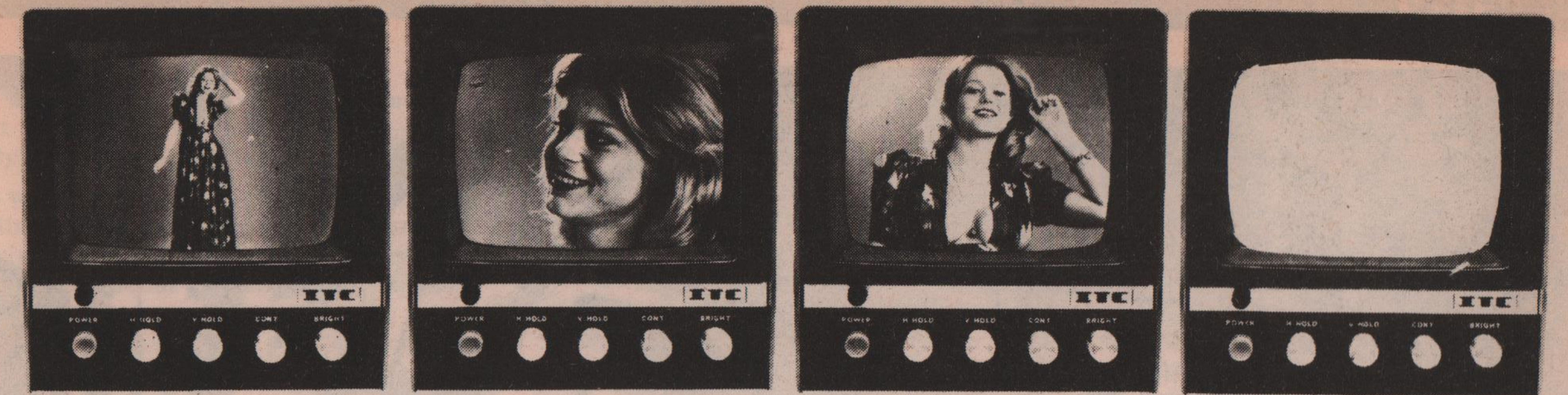
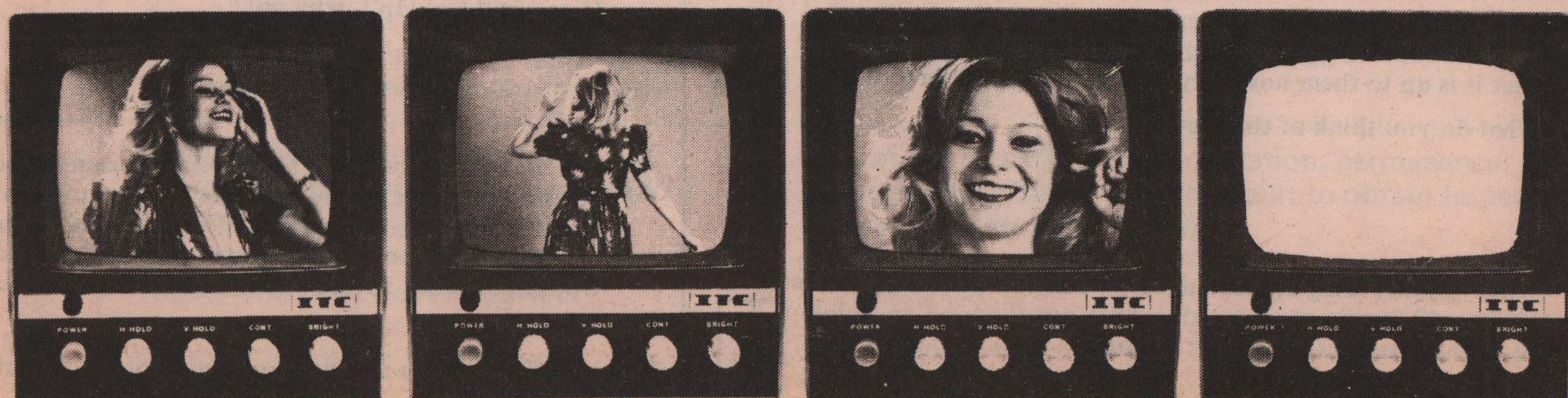
3) The Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians (ACTT).

Affiliated to the TUC in 1937, this union's membership figures can be broken down as follows: laboratories—5,858; film—5,237; television—7,965; educational TV—400.

The ACTT was first organised in the laboratories, then in the film industry. Its tenacity in the fight for recognition, wages and conditions from the then highly profitable companies is still a part of its tradition and experience. The collapse of the industry during the 1960s has been a hard lesson in the politics of job security and casualisation of labour. When ITV started 21 years ago the union began to organise effectively in the television industry.

Television is at present a very stable industry, with steady employment and a secure income from TV Section members to ACTT funds. Advancing this position is in ACTT's interest. Current negotiations to combine with the Association of Broadcasting and Allied Staffs (a mainly BBC union, membership about 13,000) are "healthy and almost coming to fruition", according to ACTT's general secretary Alan Sapper. This increase in tele-power (soon to make the TV Section the overwhelming force in the ACTT) added to traditional fear of casualised labour and freelance workers, has helped influence ACTT to propose ITV2 as the fourth channel.

Originally ACTT was opposed to a fourth



channel on the grounds of public expense. But The ACTT television shops formed a committee to consider the Annan Report after its publication. It recommended to the union executive that the introduction of ITV2 as soon as possible would enormously benefit television members by increasing the number of jobs and improving careers. The view was expressed that ITV2 would be a gold-mine for ITV companies and that union members could share in the bonanza. As conditions for supporting ITCA's claim, it was demanded that ACTT should have more say in running the companies and that some independent productions should have access to ITV2.

The ACTT executive used these recommendations as the basis of its reply to Annan, which still questioned the validity of the fourth channel but favoured ITV2. Almost a case of better the devil you know. "The ITV companies possess the resources—staff, studios, premises, expertise and revenue—to underpin the development of a new channel." Alan Sapper added that any diversion of advertising revenue or audience to a new channel independent of ITV could harm the finances of the ITV companies and risk the job security of his members. This argument was quickly adopted by ITCA.

4) The Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA).

IBA started life as the Independent Television Authority and was renamed in 1972 when it also took on responsibility for independent radio. A toothless watchdog over the ITV companies, its few "notable" deeds have been to ban programmes raising controversial subjects, keeping sex information out of advertising, and to stand around helpless when a commercial company is not meeting the conditions of its franchise.

Annan gave it a well-deserved kick up the bum. He recommended IBA's demotion to the status of a regional television authority. This, and the proposal for the OBA, caused IBA to make a dramatic reappraisal of its symbiotic relationship with the ITV companies. Thus IBA's recent suggestions for the fourth channel clearly support the position against ITV2. It now proposes that Channel 4 should come under its umbrella and that the airtime be filled with independent productions, ITV material, and educational programmes, in various proportions.

Under IBA's scheme, the ITV companies should sell advertising on Channel 4 and "by arrangement" with them money should flow back to various committees under the IBA to finance the independent source of programmes. Quite who will have effective control is not clear, and it seems IBA is still treading a careful path between its relations with ITCA and its insecurity with the Labour Government.

Which brings us back to the ADP, now apparently finding sympathy in IBA. Although not yet abandoning the concept of the OBA, it offers a well defined alternative plan:—

- a) Let Channel 4 live under the IBA's

- umbrella.;
- b) let the ITV companies sell advertising space on both this and their own channel;
- c) let IBA finance Channel 4 by levying the companies;
- d) make Channel 4 non-profit making with the minimum of bureaucracy;
- e) encourage the ITV companies to offer Channel 4's programme controller the facilities and programme ideas ITV cannot use itself.

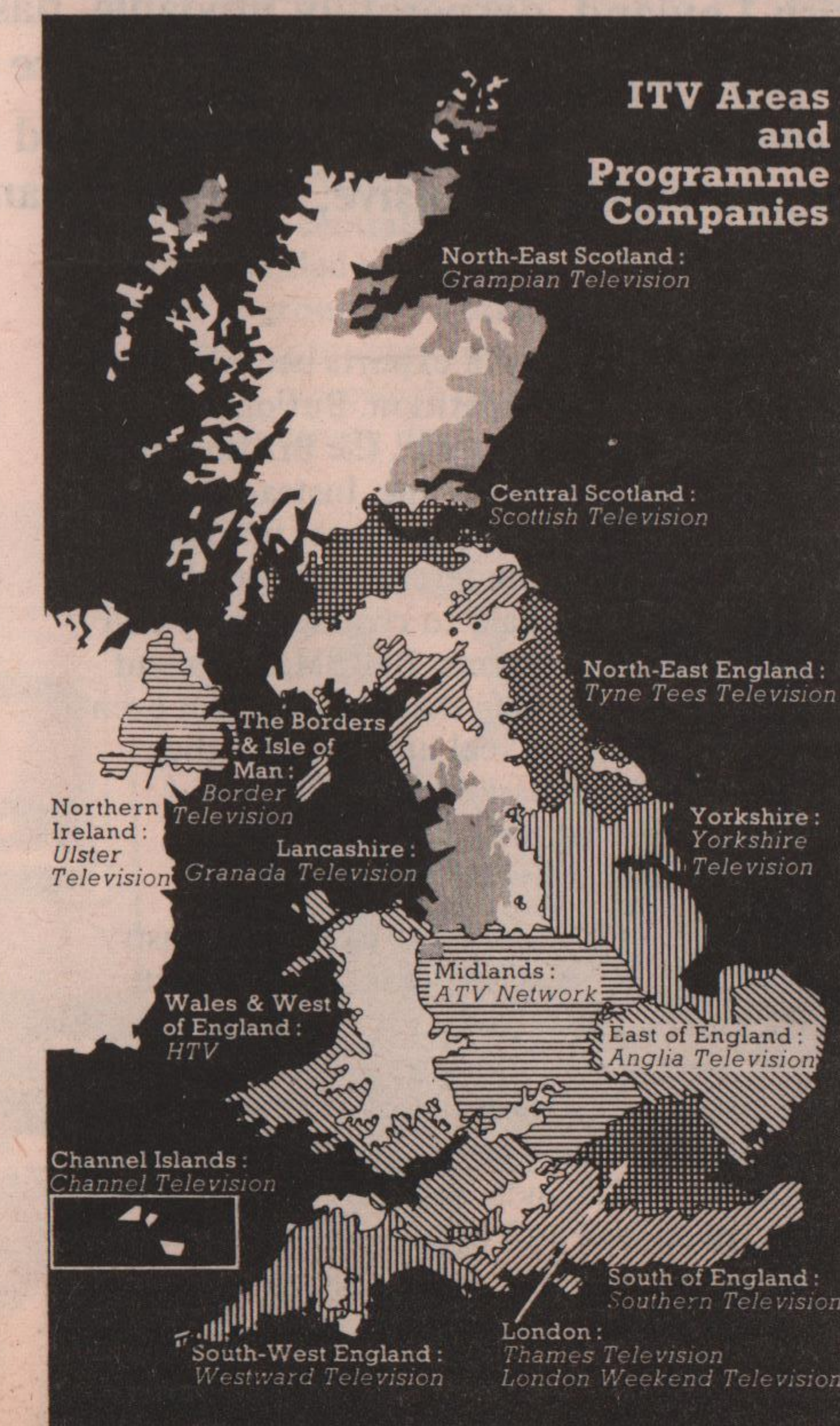
This solution, say ADP, could be set up as quickly as ITV2, satisfy the desire for more jobs now, and will not harm ITV1's finances.

Estimates for the cost of starting the new channel vary between £25–60 million. A publishing channel will initially require some public funding.

The commercial companies already pay a levy on their profits to the Exchequer and it is around this capital already generated by television that the argument rages.

The ITCA says ITV2 will cost £60 million and adds: "ITV2 unlike the OBA would not be paid for by the taxpayers." It claims that it will bear the initial losses over the first two years, but of course this will mean a reduction in the levy received by the government from ITV's profits. After the third year, all should be well and increased advertising revenue should enable the ITV companies to make good the levy deficit.

"So inevitably Channel 4 will begin life at public expense" says ADP, and continues: "It



How the companies divide the ITV regions

is conceivable that ITV2 might in due course generate enough advertising to cover its costs, yet advertising remains in one way or another a cost to the community however well hidden." ADP estimates put the cost of Channel 4 at around £40 million, and it insists that this cost must be borne by a further levy on the ITV companies.

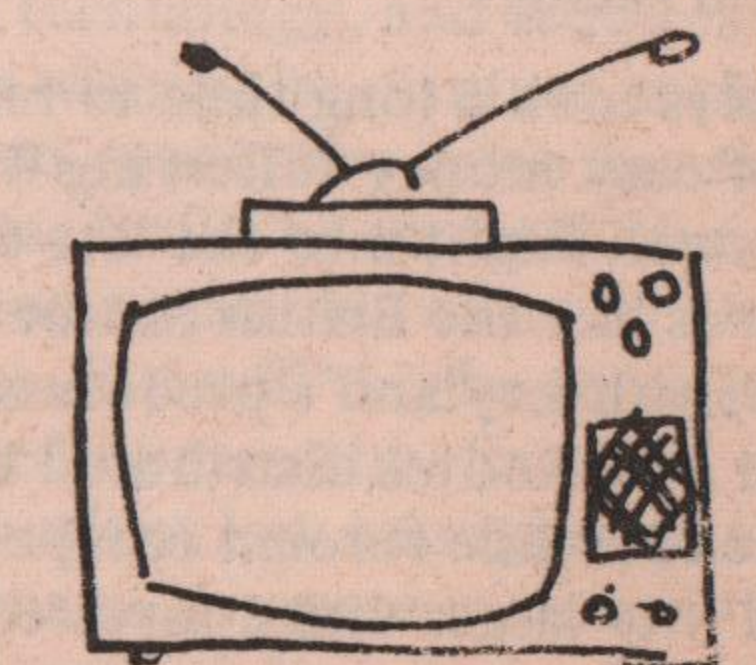
The same point was made in 1973 by Jeremy Isaacs, now programme controller of Thames TV. In a submission to the government supporting a publishing concept he writes: "It may be asked why the ITV companies should be expected to provide a 'service' channel of this sort. The answer is that they enjoy a monopoly public franchise and earn a more than reasonable return on their investment. As the price for the continued enjoyment of that monopoly, the Government is entitled to ask them to provide this new service."

ADP neatly suggests that Channel 4 be established at the same time as the ITV franchises come up for renewal. "Accepting the role we propose for them in Channel 4 should be a condition for renewing ITV companies' franchises."

The Annan report has been criticised for its naive liberalism. It has, however, raised the most original practical concept of the future of television likely to be implemented by the present government. It can be said that the report is strong on originality but weak on housekeeping. It also seriously underestimates the desire in the industry for increased job opportunity through the immediate expansion of creative output. Happily, positive suggestions have come from workers in the industry with clear solutions to the report's weaknesses, and yet maintaining the concept of a publishing channel.

What it all boils down to is that we have union and employer going for control of another commercial channel as an outlet for their production, while the ADP alternative is to use a public asset in a way which could improve and broaden the nature and content of broadcasting. At worst it could provide a wide spectrum of worthy minority viewing.

Once upon a time television showed us the world in a way we had never seen it before. Then its energy became interested in easy formulae, bureaucracy and goldmining. We need a publishing channel to put the guts back into TELE-VISION... or we will drown in the drizzle of monopoly-produced "entertainment".



\* Report of the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting, HMSO 1977, £7.25. Lord Annan, 60, is Provost of University College, London.





## From Coventry to Korea

THE CAR INDUSTRY characterises the crisis of British capital. It is one of the biggest sectors of manufacturing industry and is at the same-time both over- and under-capitalised. Too big, too diffuse, producing too many models, but hopelessly under-productive, most is in United States hands, bought when demand was rising, fuel was cheap and British capital was inadequate. British Leyland, desperately unviable, has had to be bailed out with enormous injections of state capital. And car workers, once among the industrial aristocracy, are becoming increasingly badly-paid, frustrated and insecure as the multi-nationals shift production to new capital-intensive, low-wage plants in the Middle and Far East and South America.

BRITISH car workers have often struggled hard *within* their industry but they had never really been confronted by the necessity of having to struggle for it. In fact, the eagerness with which many people have left the plants with redundancy money in their pockets shows that a lot didn't give a damn.

It was inevitable that one day some kind of crunch would come. The question was—would the militancy which had brought some success over pay and conditions prepare the car workers for the kind of attacks they had to face, and are still facing?

British car makers took a long time to realise that the days of easy money following World War Two were over. Right into the late 60s British companies like the British Motor Corporation (British Leyland's predecessor), Jaguar, Daimler and Rootes distributed their profits as dividends while foreign competitors, already merged into larger units, invested heavily in plant.

First Volkswagen and Fiat, and later Toyota and Nissan went for high volume production. British car makers, instead of competing, followed the sellers' market of the day. Just

after the war this was in exports because there was little foreign competition. But once Volkswagen got going again, the British pulled out of competitive exporting. Instead they cultivated the developing mass car market in Britain itself. The long term result was that little attention was paid to costings compared with other manufacturers. BMC Management were reported as saying that they did not even know how much the real unit costs of their cars were or what marketing was about. Inevitably, this led to penetration of the British car market by foreign car makers.

It was not a well prepared British car industry that faced this onslaught. It had started with vehicles and engines as means of production rather than consumer-oriented cars. British car makers had set up their factories where skilled labour had grown up in engineering industries, like the West Midlands. What they made was highly specialised and their production runs were low.

Also, most car factories were pure assembly plants. Bodies, engines and electrical components were brought in from outside with the assembler often just adding a distinctive touch.

There was little vertical integration of the production process. The attempts to catch up with producers like Ford, who started from scratch with vertical production—importing ore and working right through to finishing—have lasted now for nearly 40 years. They are still not finished and explain much of the constant foment in the British car industry.

Two main shifts have occurred in the last 15 years: the restructuring of capital to create larger productive units; and rationalised model ranges for longer production runs. All this has been accompanied by constant attacks on the practices and composition of the working class employed in the industry.

There were three major company developments with the car industry:

- The creation of the British Leyland Motor Corporation by the Labour Government's Industrial Re-organisation Corporation, and its eventual demise as a private enterprise.
- The takeover of the Rootes Group by Chrysler, and Vauxhall by General Motors.
- The rise of Ford.

The final result of all these mergers is that the

largest independent British car maker is now Reliant. A builder of specialist cars, it was recently bought by the J. Nash Company.

In this whole process, it was always Ford that made the running. Its method of organising its assembly process—with high vertical integration, and division of labour between plants, together with its management techniques and pay structure set the example for other car makers to follow.

For instance, one of the main moves initiated by the Ryder Plan for British Leyland was the large scale recruitment of Ford managers. It was no accident that Leyland's industrial relations became distinctly more American in flavour soon afterwards; with workers being locked out at Alvis in Coventry and Washwood Heath, Birmingham for 'disruptive behaviour'.

Ford's competitive strength—its ability to produce basic cars cheaply in volume—has forced other companies to change their own practices on pain of extinction. It was the Rootes Group's hopeless struggle to impose volume production on its workforce that eventually gave Chrysler the opportunity to take over the company and succeed where its predecessors had failed.

British car makers, unlike their American and Japanese counterparts, have never been able to build a plant which produced vehicles on an optimum scale. They clung to the idea that buyer in the middle range car market was interested in distinctive *marques* and continued to produce a variety of different models. So they lost out on the economies to be reaped from high volume production and standardisation of engines and components.

Volkswagen were knocking out millions of Beetles while the British Motor Corporation (British Leyland's predecessor) continued to manufacture the Mini as the Austin Seven, Morris Mini-Minor, Riley Elf, Wolsey Hornet, and Austin and Morris Coopers, for a number of years.

Reducing the number of model variants has meant a great deal of infighting inside the older British companies. They were severely under-capitalised and their capital equipment had become hopelessly outdated in many cases. So they were unable to make sweeping changes of models and staggered on with 'face lifts' of the piecemeal introduction of new types.

And all this was in spite of the fact that the British car industry was a world leader in engineering and design skills.

But it was not car plant management that made the running. Workers militancy—particularly for

productivity and wages structure—was one of the determining factors of profitability. Again Ford set the pace. It built its plants in areas of 'green labour' using government subsidies to offset the costs of setting up. From the beginning, they operated with a deskilled workforce paid on a flat day rate, backed up by strict discipline. Rootes attempted the formula at Linwood, less successfully.

The companies which began life in the West Midlands form a striking contrast. Literally—starting off in sheds they were based on a skilled workforce—coachbuilders, tinsmiths and skilled metal workers. Because of their low levels of investment they were forced to introduce schemes to compensate for poor equipment.

Continued full employment and a high demand for cars made this system explode back in the face of these companies. Managements were unable to control or predict wages. Sectional bargaining helped concentrate power on the shop floor and created the material basis for the power of the shop stewards. The power which the shop floor was able to build up was also expressed in control over the production process.

This ran against the use of workers' skills to increase output. Workers were able to push up manning levels on certain kinds of jobs, and forms of workplace economy within the workforce were developed, relating to the allocation of overtime, work sharing, etc. The response to this state of affairs since the late sixties has been the introduction of centralised and "scientifically validated" payments systems, such as the Measured Day Work; together with increased discipline to enforce the "man assignments".

But this in turn has brought its own crop of problems. More deskilling and the abolition of incentive schemes means that workers take even less interest in work. Shop floor problems can no longer be lubricated by the money element, but become naked power struggles between capital and labour. Sabotage, "carelessness" and absenteeism increase, requiring more expenditure on inspection and supervision to maintain discipline.

To combat this, Leyland has used the threat of closure a number of times to enforce levels of productivity. And, of course, the actual transition to centralised pay structures, and to a more deskilled workforce has meant a constant struggle as groups of workers have tried to cling on to their autonomy or traditional privileges. Buying out piecework or ill-fated attempts to make productivity deals cost British companies dearly.



On the line at Chrysler's Ryton plant



The dislocations caused by the OPEC price increases in 1973 occurred at a time when car firms were grappling with the problems created by a long period of relatively full employment. The slump in the car industry provided the opportunity for managements to get their wages structures and levels, manning and productivity back into a shape which would allow for long term profitable production; a process naturally accompanied by disruption for both workers and individual capitalists. Contrary to a number of myths popular among both trade unionists and certain sections of the Left the British car worker does in fact work less hard than his or her Continental, American or Japanese counterpart. Productivity levels, with the same equipment and manning are lower—especially on certain types of jobs where workers have built up power. But instead of recognising this for a working class achievement, they deny it. The origin and use of the crisis become a mystery, only explained by the stupidity, malevolence or suspicious lack of patriotism of British capitalists or US subsidiaries. During the crisis the main drive has taken the form of manning cuts (through forced and voluntary redundancy), increased mobility of labour and direct confrontation; blackmail and confrontation. At the same time "difficult sections"—such as body welding—have been attacked by the development of specific types of machines to remove workers from these sections, like for instance the Unimate automatic welders.

Car firms have always exploited pools of unemployment: or created them through periodic mass redundancies and lay offs, only to take on workers a year or six months later. Insecurity was a constant factor in the life of the car worker—even during the 'boom' period. But recently car firms seem to have abandoned the 'peaks and troughs' policy of the 1950s and 1960s, whereby workers would have overtime half the year, and then be laid off for three of four months. Exploiting the need for stable employment and overtime the companies now operate a much more pernicious and divisive system, using the crisis to reduce manning levels permanently, and give permanent overtime to those workers left in the plants. Aided by incomes policies which increased the desire and necessity for overtime, areas like Coventry now have a permanent high level of unemployment with workers in the plants compelled to work harder and longer.

In the last nine months the car firms have been reporting profits once more: the tactics employed over the last two years, together with government imposed wage cuts, have given the companies some respite. But the rates of return won't be sufficient to attract continuing investment: they will simply allow for continuing production on a stagnating base.

The car assembly line is a very authoritarian piece of technology, and requires authoritarian relations within the plants to make it work. The recent and continuing crisis has seen attempts to increase both the internal discipline in the plants, and to provide external means of discipline. But will this be enough? Can workers be chained to assembly lines and made to work hard enough at low enough wages and conditions to compete with societies with even sterner forms of discipline and control—such as South Korea, Brazil or Iran? Can a bourgeois democracy, with full employment and free trade unions in fact be a volume car producer?

Pete Burgess.



THE FORMATION of Ford's Langley Action Committee is one of the most important events to have taken place within the continual struggles around Ford's since its foundation. Ford is a firm which relies on an extremely well disciplined labour force and has successfully co-opted the unions within the company. Recently the national Ford Workers' Group was formed and FLAC is the Langley part of this.

FLAC was formed from the initiatives of Big Flame militants, but they now see it as taking over from Big Flame and acting as an independent libertarian workers' organisation.

The interview involved five line workers: Henry, who had previously been a postman; James, the only shop steward who was a West Indian and had worked at Langley for 12 years; Keith, another West Indian; Tom, who had left the army before working at Langley; and Brian, previously unemployed.

Langley is the Ford truck assembly plant for the UK and employs 2,500 workers, half of whom work on the line. The ratio of workers to stewards on the line is 120:1, an unusual ratio in itself, but compounded by the fact that other sectors provide a disproportionately large number of stewards—five plumbers provide one, 15 security guards another, and so on. The result is that while line workers are represented by 8 stewards, other workers have 28. But because the nature of their work makes line workers more militant, the ratio of shop stewards means they can be out-voted on the Shop Stewards' Committee, and acts as a very effective dampener on the growth of a militant leadership.

Moreover, unlike the other car companies, Ford has never had a piece-work system but instead has used measured day work. This is negotiated at national level by full-time officials, thereby removing much of the shop stewards' power. The stewards are also put in the position of enforcing the national agreement. If they fail to do this they are in danger of dismissal by the union.

Tying the stewards' hands behind their backs has helped to make Langley one of the quietest vehicle assembly plants in the country.

*How do you feel about the product you make?*

**Brian** I don't give a fuck. You soon lose interest.

**Tom** Never buy a Ford.

**James** It's just the cheapest truck on the market. It'll fall to pieces in a short time. The firms who buy Fords are the big fleet companies—they can afford a high turnover.

**Henry** Management's not interested. Quite often the wrong part goes in—say, the wrong grade of brake linings in a truck for the continent. If you say something to the foreman he'll say: "Forget it, nobody will ever find out." He cares less than we do. They are only interested in that line moving and not stopping for anything.

**Brian** We got a batch of flywheels that were covered in rust. So they just painted over the rust and fitted them. It's typical of the company.

**James** Our components are as cheap as possible, that's what counts at Fords.

**Tom** The N series of trucks were brought over from the continent and we make them at Langley for Europe now. Our wages are one-third less than at Fords on the continent. The trucks are now exported to the continent and Fords make an even bigger profit.

*Does racism exist at Fords?*

**Brian** About 90 per cent of the line workers are West Indian or Asian and they tend to stay

# Voices from the shopfloor



Working on the line in a motor plant is a soul-destroying job, and the unions have failed to win adequate pay or conditions to compensate. *John Carnegie* talked to a group of militants in the Ford truck plant at Langley, near Slough, Bucks, about the frustrations of the production line, and what the shop-floor workers are doing about them.

on the line, whereas the white workers tend to get moved into softer jobs.

**James** Some of the foremen are openly racist. One even boasts of being in the National Front and goes out of his way to get an all white gang.

*There's been a lot written about sabotage at Dagenham. Does it take place at Langley?*

**Brian** Yes. A good example was last year in the really hot weather there was no cooling, no drinks or anything, so we decided to take a 15-minute tea break in the afternoon. Management had found out via their blue-eyed boys that we planned to have the break, so they speeded up the line. When we realised what was happening we stopped and had our break. Even though we were ahead of the work, management said they were stopping 15-minutes pay. There was a row and the lads wouldn't go back to work. They got the convenor in to get us back to work and we started again, having lost two hours pay in the meantime. The next day on the cab drop there was this new bloke and he was in trouble. It's one of the hardest jobs. Normally the lads would go and help him but nobody moved. Finally a whole truck was not disconnected from the hoist by a devious manoeuvre involving some of the men and the whole truck was hoisted up into the air. After this, the foreman started running around begging us to work normally and the money that had been docked was repaid. The next day we got cold drinks and fans were put in.

**Tom** Another example was on the night shift. Certain sections can, if they work quickly, get the night's production over and finished by about 3 am. Then they can sleep until clocking-off time. Well, they got this new night manager who was a bit of a trouble-maker and he went round and kicked the lads and made

them get up. The next night five complete cabs were knocked over and ruined. He didn't do it again.

*You give the impression you're pretty hostile to the convenor. How do you feel about him?*

**Tom** He's a company man. They provide him with a car. He is just another manager. The only time we see him is when he's trying to get us back to work.

*What kind of politics does he follow?*

**James** Very old fashioned unionism mixed with right wing Labour Party attitudes. He's no longer correct for the situation at Fords.

**Brian** The union branch meetings take place at 7.30 in the evening. As everybody lives miles away, they can't get to them. We organised transport for a group of about 40 people and went down to the branch meeting. They had never seen so many people at a meeting. During that meeting we passed a vote of no confidence in the convenor and deputy convenor.

**Tom** They still haven't had the guts to resign. Then they accused us of manipulating the meeting by bringing these union members to it. Don't get us wrong. We're not against the union. We just want it to represent us like it's supposed to. Now it seems totally corrupt.

*Can you say something about the recent disputes at Ford?*

**Brian** We were laid off at half-an-hours notice without pay. It had begun when a guy was suspended in the body plant because he was not working the Ford way. It's typical of Ford and the way they fight the workers all the time. His section came out in support. The paint, trimming and assembly shop (PTA) was laid off. When they were back after three days they went on strike. We had a mass meeting and decided to put a picket on the gate. The convenor and the stewards were upset because

of this picket. Because the Convenor saw himself as looking after the interests of the men still working, and as we were outside the gates, he had ceased to represent us. The lads were outside the gates trying to stop the lorries getting in and the company making a profit while we were being treated like casual labour. So there was a confrontation. The Convenor told the lorry drivers to go in as the strike was unofficial. While we were saying that we were officially laid off so would they respect our pickets.

**Tom** Most did. A BRS steward came down and when he found out what was going on he phoned up the firm and stopped them from sending any more trucks down.

**Brian** This dispute brought to a head the contradictions between the lineworkers and the non-line workers. Also between the ordinary line workers and the repair workers. The repair workers tend to get laid off a week later. The action seemed to be endangering their wages. This is because Ford pays 80 per cent of the wage for lay-off pay if the dispute is external to the company, but nothing if it is internal. The dispute dragged on and only two stewards were left. A hard core of 30 of us then formed FLAC.

*What do you think of the wage limits?*

**Tom** Going on strike for 15 per cent increases does not seem worthwhile. Why strike for a 2 per cent cut? If we go on strike it's got to be for something worthwhile.

**Brian** It seems to be part of the CP's policy for propping up the Labour government. That's why the claim's so small. Originally it was for a 15 per cent minimum increase. Along the bureaucracy the minimum has disappeared.

*Can you say something about the effects of working at Ford's on the consciousness of workers?*

**Tom** I was a card-carrying member of the Conservative Party when I came to Fords, but we don't talk about that now.

**Brian** At times of struggle it's possible to build something like FLAC to talk about all sorts of ideas. For instance, we talked about Northern Ireland, racism, etc. There's a theory about the working class that they're stupid, and if you tell them something often enough and persistently enough they'll do it. If we controlled the TV for a time and bombarded them with lefty propaganda they would see the error of their ways and do something about it. I don't hold with this at all... Working for Ford's gives a real sense of oppression, of helplessness at times. But in times of struggle consciousness shoots up. When you turn away a truck you feel really great.

*Don't you find it hard to keep up this level of consciousness? I mean, you're always being moved, and people are always leaving.*

**Tom** It's one big fight, and it leaves you feeling that something's got to be done. You screw yourself down and go in determined to change things. People are just starting to do that now. They've seen what FLAC has done, and said, why didn't we do that? We didn't think that would work. Things are beginning to work, beginning to change people, and they're becoming more militant now. Which is completely unheard of at Langley. Take Joe, a steward, a member of the WRP; he used to be thought of as a left-wing steward. Now he's thought of as more right than left.

*What type of people work at Fords?*

**Tom** You can put Ford workers into three categories: militants, don't-cares, and Mister

Foreman's blue-eyed boys. The way the jobs are planned, some are a hell of a lot easier, so if you're nice to Mister Foreman he'll give you a nice little number. Say you're on nights, you can get finished early and have a kip. The other people just have to plod on, day in, day out: a complete non-existence.

*Do you make much connection with the don't-cares?*

**Brian** You do sometimes. One bloke, Des, he'd just come out from a year in the Army nick at Colchester. I was training him on a job, which is a bastard job, and he was making light of it. He was sullen, hard-working, and wouldn't have anything to do with anybody, a real foreman's body. He was beginning to change a bit, and then he had an operation and found it harder to do. In the lay-off struggle he completely changed and became one of the best militants, on the picket line, and since then struggling against the foreman over conditions and over safety.

Then we would be having discussions over Northern Ireland. He was really good. Even about racism, and he's one of the most racist bokes, in the plant. He had a row with the foreman. He reported the foreman to the steward and then the management. The other white bokes who were his mates wouldn't stick up for him. The only bloke who would was a West Indian. He was really surprised about that.

**Tom** He's changed his attitude now.

**Brian** Yes, but he's still a racist.

**Tom** Well he can't help that. In some cases it's ingrained. Generally, if your parents are racist you're a racist.

**Brian** He's good though. You argue all the time but some people are beyond the pale. They're just there to work. They work hard. They do whatever the foreman says. Sometimes they don't even have to be told what to do. It's so ingrained into their heads. They're really into the work ethic.

*Where do they come from?*

**Tom** A lot come out of the army.

## End of the road for Chrysler?

With the help of a government grant of £163 million, the tottering car giant, Chrysler, seemed to step back from the brink of disaster. Its multinational operation was in such a mess that its European car ranges were competing against each other and labour militancy at its Scottish Linwood plant would have made it only too happy to pull out of Britain. But Government money has only bought time and the problems still remain. Chrysler UK is an awkward subsidiary without any definite markets to sell in.

A recently-published study of Chrysler UK by Steve Young and Neil Hood claims that the company will be unable to achieve anything other than short-term success. Their conclusion is much the same as the House of Commons Trade and Industry Sub-Committee which believes that Chrysler UK will go into liquidation in the 1980's after government funds dry up.

The main problem is its market share, which slumped to only 4.6% last year and shows little sign of increasing dramatically in the coming year. Young and Hood calculate that Chrysler UK will need to take 10% of the British car market by the end of next year and export over 20% of its product to Europe.

As Peter Griffiths, deputy managing director of Chrysler UK put it in a recent interview:



**Brian** These people, you can see them. They're a character type, extreme authoritarianism, fear of authority, fear of any rebellion, and very very racist.

*What about the don't cares?*

**Brian** There aren't many you could really say don't care. These people, when it really comes down to it, go one way or another. It's a question of which way they are going to go. A polarising issue like a strike, people are for a strike or not.

*But there are shades in between, when it is not a strike. Where they could put up their hands but don't. Who have an idea, maybe, but don't join in.*

**Brian** I suppose a lot of the Indians are like that. But all the same they do have some really good militants among them.

**Tom** That fellow Singh, he came up in the mornings with his kids, and he's very work-conscious. He had to go home in the afternoon to open his shop.

**Brian** Yes, it's an amazing thing about Fords. There's a lot of selling going on. Some days it's like a bloody bazaar. The amount that goes on is incredible. People selling watches, chickens, lumps of meat, peanuts, anything cheap. Then there's a lot with businesses on the side, like Singh. It really affects their consciousness as well, they're aspiring petty bourgeoisie.

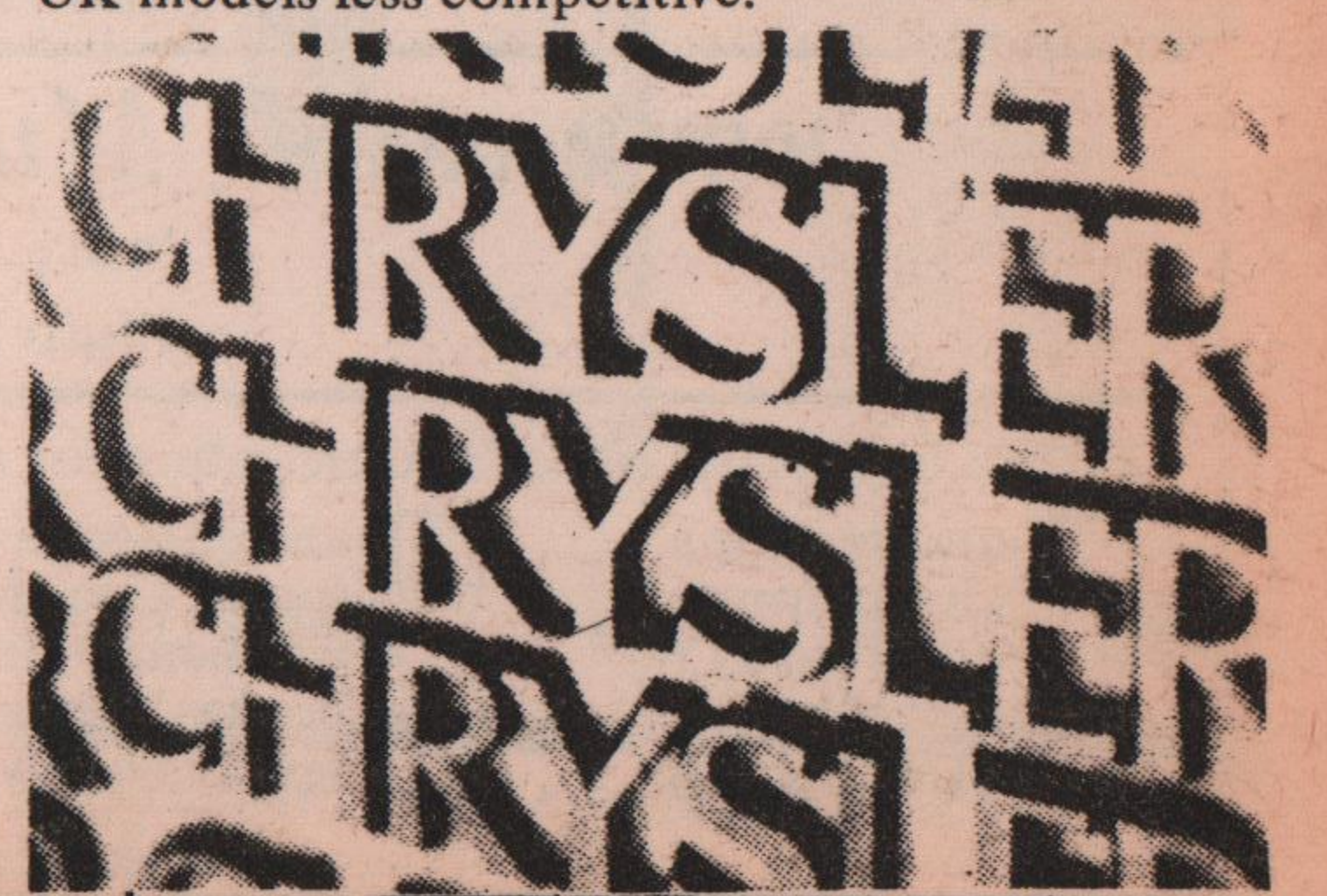
*Businesses like what?*

**Brian** One bloke left to start a computer dating business. He'd been a really good militant before that, really, fucking up the foreman.

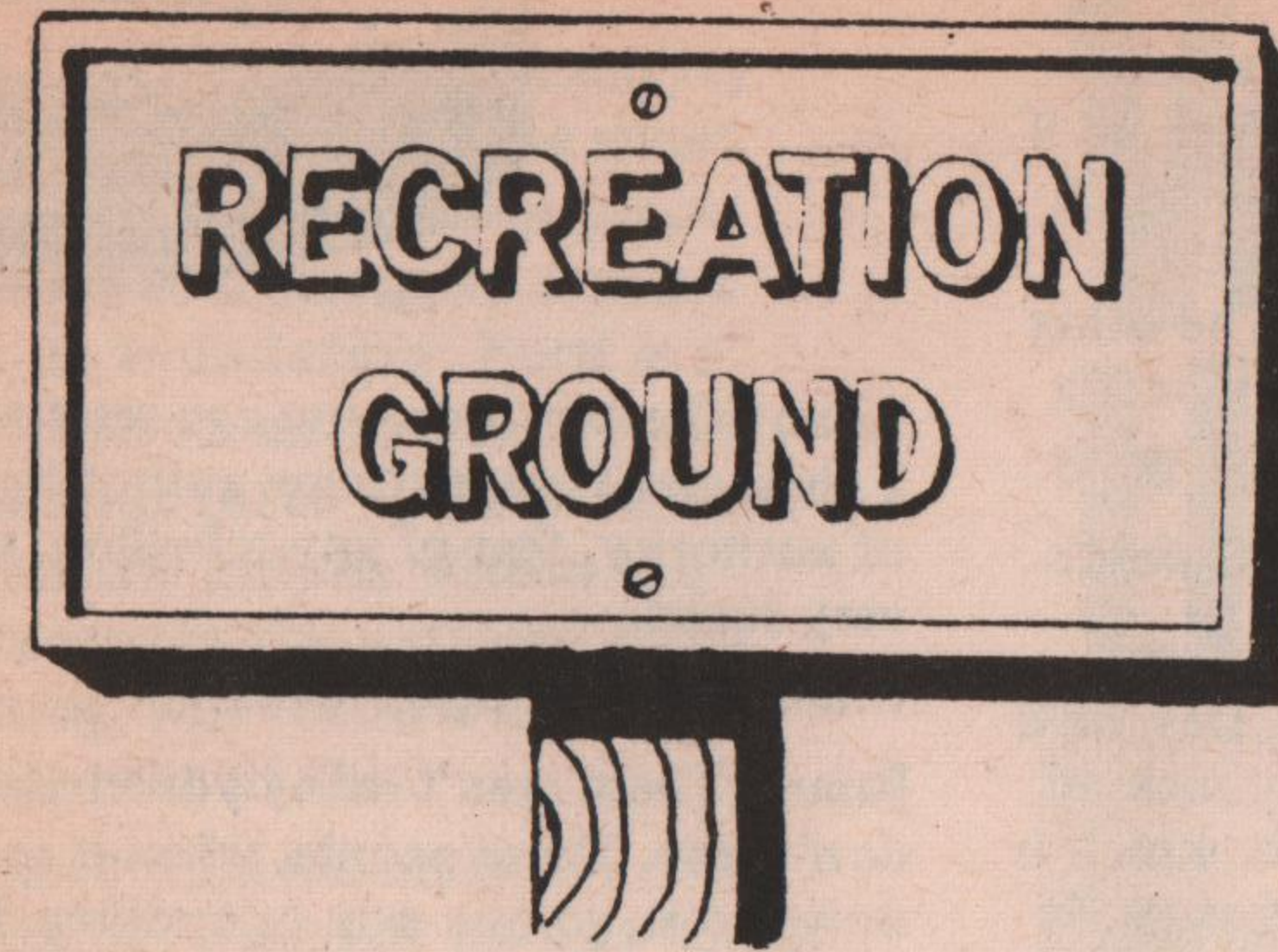
**Tom** I have my own little business, window cleaning and a candle-selling business. I find it hard to survive on Ford wages.

*What money do they pay you?*

**Brian** About £42 out of £60 gross, for 40 hours.







## BLACK AND BLUE

An anti-racist play with music performed by a multi-racial cast dealing particularly with workplace problems and examining the fight against racism and fascism. Emphasis is placed on mobilising people for that fight and dealing with the confusions which exist within the anti-fascist movement at present. Mainly intended for labour movement and anti-fascist organisations. The show will be touring nationally until March 1978 and anyone interested in booking it should contact the above as soon as possible. Our fees are negotiable and we can advise you about local subsidies. The show lasts about one hour, followed by a discussion.

Contact : Dave James

**RECREATION GROUND  
THEATRE COMPANY**

**01-722.7334**

Belt and Braces Roadshow Company  
and the Journeyman Press  
Present .....

## England expects

by : Gavin Richards

Journeyman Roadplay No. 1 £1.20

"Political Theatre at its best" *Time Out*  
"Displays a high standard of acting, script  
writing and production" *Guardian*

Illustrated with photographs from the production  
and containing lyrics from the songs currently  
available on the Belt and Braces LP.

*England Expects* is the first in a series of play-  
scripts to be published jointly with the theatre  
groups who have been performing them. The  
second will be *Vinegar Tom* by Caryl Churchill,  
published with *The Monstrous Regiment*.

The Journeyman Press, 97 Ferme Park Road  
Crouch End, London N 8 9 SA



## Theatre

# Red theatre - watch this space

THEATRE IS ONE of the cultural areas in which the left has made most impact. Starting with this issue *The Leveller* will, in co-operation with the Socialist Theatre Group, be running a monthly listing of locations, dates and performances by left theatre groups throughout the country. All information and news is welcome.



7:84 Company in Lay Off

FOR OVER five years a number of small socialist theatre companies have been touring the length and breadth of the United Kingdom presenting shows in the most "unlikely" places to audiences of trade-unionists, socialists, working men and women as well as to "theatre-goers". Now there are more than twenty permanent professional groups performing to about as many people as the National Theatre does. Their shows go largely unnoticed by the national press and media. *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black Black Oil* by 7:84 Scotland in 1973, and *Fanshen* by Joint Stock in 1975, both of which were later televised, are the stunning exceptions to this rule.

Despite this blanket of silence, and despite the minimal subsidy from the Arts Council (between £250,000-£500,000 in total, or about 10% of the Arts Council subsidy to the National Theatre), more groups tour and present new shows each year, and each year more audiences see and enjoy these shows.

Socialist theatre is not new either to Britain or to the stage anywhere in the world. Indeed, many of the major developments in twentieth century theatre have been pioneered by socialists and have reflected the rise of working class movements and the development of socialist theory. A list of the most influential, exciting and innovative writers would include Shaw, Gorki, Mayakovsky, Brecht, O'Casey, Joan Littlewood, Weiss, John Arden, Dario Fo—all socialists.

These theatre workers and many others have helped to break down the theatrical conventions of *what* is shown on stage, from what *perspective* it is shown, and *how* it is presented.

The socialist theatre companies which have grown up since the early 1970s in the UK have followed in this tradition. Individual shows from these companies have, over the last few years, been among the best and most exciting in British theatre. Examples are numerous: Red Ladder's *A Woman's Work is Never Done*; Belt & Braces's *England Expects*; Foco Novo's *The Nine Days and the Sattley Gates*; 7:84 England's

*Fish in the Sea*; North West Spanner's *Just A Cog*—and many more. Interestingly, the only other theatre shows which could challenge this supremacy are plays (produced at Nottingham Playhouse, Liverpool Everyman, the National Theatre, Royal Court and other well-known theatres) which are also socialist, e.g. Trevor Griffiths's *The Comedians*, Howard Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness*.

There is, however, a striking difference between these latter plays and the work of the touring socialist theatre companies. For these companies are also trying to break through the conventions and practices of where theatre is presented and, more importantly, to whom. About 95% of the population of the UK never go inside a theatre. Most of the working class regard the theatre as "not for the likes of us", "not our entertainment".

But by performing in community halls, trades councils, pubs, schools, clubs and on the streets, for trade unions, left wing, labour movement and community groups, these companies are aiming at developing a new type of theatre: a theatre which is of and for the working class, and to which the working class go. The percentage of working class in their audiences is probably not, as yet, high; but their efforts to perform to these audiences stand in brilliant contrast to the pious murmurings of the National Theatre etc. who wish to "attract everyone". And their shows reflect this closer contact in the greater relevance, directness and discipline which the best of their shows exemplify.

The emphasis of the companies has been, of necessity, on the practice of socialist theatre. Criticism and analysis have tended to be neglected. This has been due mainly to lack of time and money, but also to other factors.

First, because of the nature of the work every company spends most of its time touring and performing. There is little time for seeing other groups' shows and discussing them.

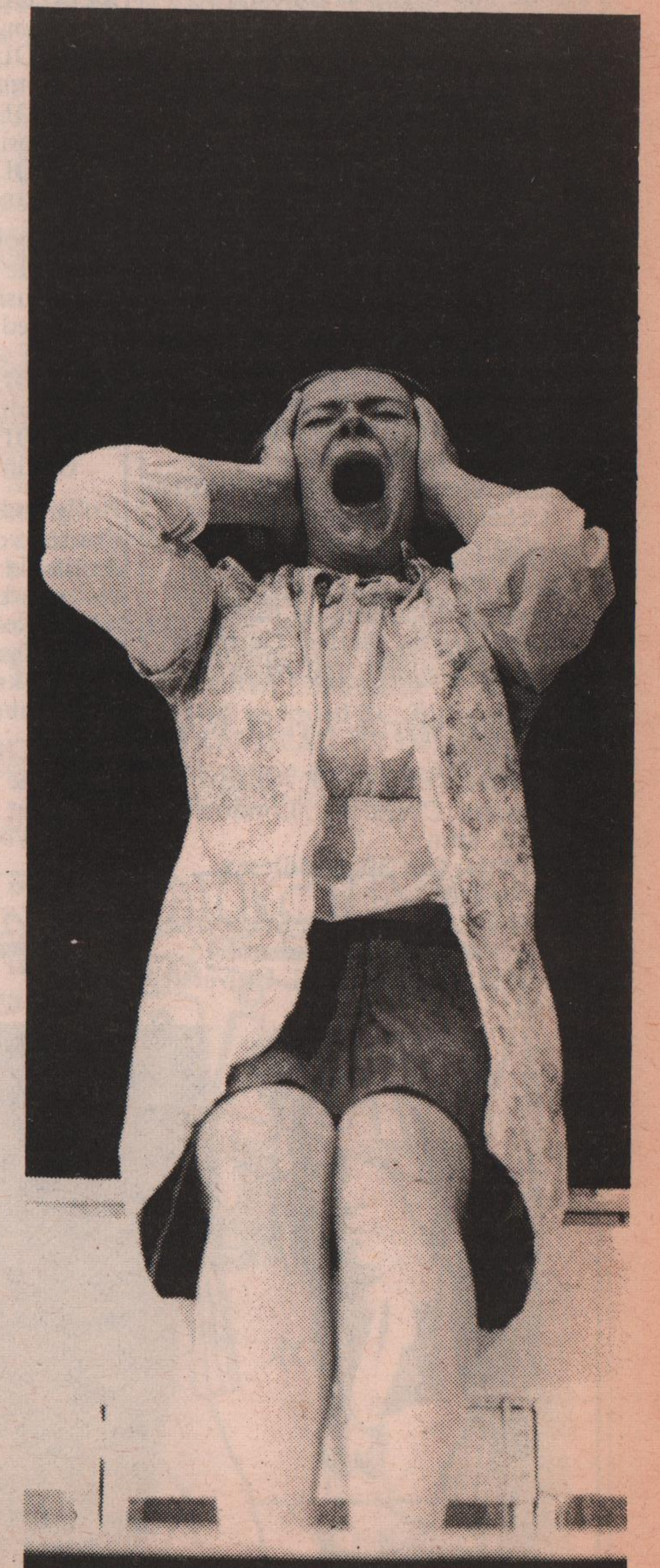
Second, the roots of socialist theatre are heterogenous. Some groups have sprung directly

from political action, others were founded by theatre workers constricted by the conditions in repertory or West End theatre. This has led to different perspectives on whether the "politics" is more important than the "theatre".

Third, because the Arts Council subsidises the vast majority of groups, a sense of competition is engendered which places the groups in the position of "small businessmen" (this, of course, becomes particularly acute when money is tight as now). It leads to questioning the effects of subsidy on the companies' work, though the £50,000 or so granted to the better subsidised companies is peanuts compared to the National Theatre's £2.9 million.

Lastly, although the companies have attempted to come together over issues such as the Arts Council, cuts in theatre, or the rebuilding of Unity Theatre, there has been no forum where the shows and issues involved can be critically discussed in a positive way. The danger of the movement dissipating its energies is always present.

While the diversity and independence of the companies has to be protected and encouraged, there is now a need to strengthen the movement through theoretical discussion of the type and form of intervention the companies are seeking to make. Much has been achieved: the base already created needs building on.



Red Ladder : from A Woman's Work is Never Done

From October 1977

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'poetic powers flash through the dialogue in every sequence' *The Times*

**GARYL CHURCHILL**

### *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire*

'magnificent play . . . avoids any trite political traps' *Plays and Players*

and *Traps* 'an intriguing and ambitious work' *The Listener*

**TREVOR GRIFFITHS**  
version of

### *The Cherry Orchard* by **ANTON CHEKHOV**

(from a translation by Helen Rappaport)  
'the most idiomatic and speakable English Chekhov I have experienced' *Financial Times*

**JOHN McGRATH**

### *Mum's the Word* (first performed as *Yobbo Nowt*)

'not . . . even the highest Tory could fail to be moved by its warmth, its variety' *Sunday Times*  
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# Socialist theatre listings

## GAY SWEATSHOP

Gay Sweatshop consists of two artistically autonomous groups sharing the same administration—one for women's issues and one for men's. Men and women working together isn't precluded but they believe there's little likelihood of one play examining in depth two, sometimes totally dissimilar, experiences. The company started in 1975 and since then has produced a large number of shows. From Sept 19—Oct 1 it will be touring in Holland. Contact address: 10 Marius Mansions, Marius Rd., London SW1 (01-579 9486/673 5992).

## Care & Control

Based on lesbian mothers' experiences struggling for custody of their children. The situations in the play are taken from life. Gay Sweatshop explores the fight that lesbian mothers are putting up, not only for the sake of representing the struggle, but to advance it. Future public gigs as follows:

- LIVERPOOL: Oct 2. Liberty Hall. The Odd Spot, Bold Street, Liverpool 1. Non-members 60p. Ring 01-708 7270 (day) to check venue.
- LEEDS: Oct 6. Big Flame.
- BRADFORD: Oct 7. University, Theatre in the Mill. 8pm.
- LEEDS: Oct 8. University.
- YORK: Oct 9. Women's Centre, 32 Parliament St.
- NORWICH: Oct 15. Arts Centre, St. Benedict St. 8pm.
- PLYMOUTH: Oct 27. Arts Centre.
- BRISTOL: Oct 28—29. Arts Centre. 7.30pm.
- ESSEX: Oct 31—Nov 1. University Colchester. 7.30pm.

## As Time Goes By

A history of the Gay Rights movement, focussing on three specific periods, Weimar Germany, Victorian England, and America in the 60s.

- LONDON: Sept 26—Oct 15. ICA, The Mall.
- LONDON: Oct 18—19. Albany Empire, Creek Rd., London SE8. 8pm.
- LONDON: Oct 20. Middlesex Poly S.U.
- LONDON: Oct 21—22. Stage One Arts Workshop. London E15.
- BIRMINGHAM: Oct 26. University S.U.

## AVON TOURING THEATRE COMPANY.

Avon Touring is a co-operative doing new shows about topical/local issues to the Bristol community in particular and the South West in general. This area ("the graveyard of trade unionism") is not full of working people's so the company aims to take a fairly broad look at a specific issue (like racialism or the cuts) and play shows to community centres and similar. No lights, minimal scenery and negotiable fees. Main problem is getting bookings, so if you want a show contact them at McArthur Warehouse, Gas Ferry Rd., Bristol BS1 6UN (0242-20247). All Avon Touring Shows—all last 1-1½ hours with music.

## Face Value

Available from now. About racialism (black, white, Jew, Arab, English, Irish) and who profits from it. A musical revue. Future public gigs as follows:

- BRISTOL: Sept 28. Bamboo Club. 11pm.
- BRISTOL: Sept 30. Baptist Mills Community Centre. 8pm.
- BRISTOL: Oct 26. University Union. 8pm.
- BRISTOL: Oct 28. University Union. 8pm.

## Deadwood

Available from Oct 19. A story with music about the cuts, presented at the request of SCPS union. Future public gigs as follows:

- BRISTOL: Oct 25. University Union. 8pm.
- BRISTOL: Oct 27. University Union. 8pm.

## Nolly and the Cider Drinking Contest

Available from Dec 1 for pubs, clubs and socials. A riotous play, where Nolly and his teetotal girlfriend Cyn, meet Spam Hairs the local yokel poet, the Pink Elephant and Mr Leece Poleeth.

## Youth Club Show

Available from 1 February 1978. Is this what punk will be next year? For all young audiences.

*Vinegar Tom by Monstrous Regiment.*

## BELT & BRACES

Belt and Braces have been on an extensive tour of Sweden over August, September and the best part of October. They will soon be back in England with their new play. Also available from Belt and Braces: a new album by the Band and ENGLAND EXPECTS... published with Journeyman Press. Contact address: 22 Vicars Rd., London NW5 (01-485 2872).

**A Day in the Life of the World** Belt and Braces' new play is a rock musical which covers recession, nuclear power, OPEC and the international arms build up. The story is told in pastiche Gilbert & Sullivan style, using folk songs and acting techniques which range from Shakespeare to James Bond. Future public gigs as follows: MANCHESTER: Oct 25 to 29. Library Theatre.

## Avon Touring Theatre Company



## 7.84 THEATRE COMPANY

The company will be touring from mid Sept to Dec 10 with its two new shows. Contact address: 58 Queen St., Edinburgh 2 (031-226 4300).

## Trembling Giant

Once upon a time, many years ago, an average-sized person called George grew to be a Giant... 7.84's version of this simple fairy tale is told as a band show with over 20 new songs and scenes of one syllable. A musical event? A comic fairy tale? Or a long-term perspective on the Social Contract? Perhaps all three. Future public gigs as follows: EDINBURGH: Sept 29. Heriot Watt Union. 7.30pm. GLASGOW: Oct 1. Strathclyde University. 7.30pm. EDINBURGH: Oct 4. Moray Rd., College of Education. 7.30pm. EAST KILBRIDE: Oct 5&6. Civic Centre. 7.30pm.

## His Master's Voice

A new rock musical which the company will start rehearsing after Oct 8. About the 'resistable rise of Tam Skelly', who is a punk.



Welfare State group performing

## FOCO NOVO

The company was started by a play of that name in 1972 which looked at US involvement in S. America. It worked intermittently as a production company and went on to do Brecht, Pomerance and Fassbinder, among others. In 1975-6 it performed 'The Nine Days and Saltley Gates' and in summer 1976 they commissioned Adrian Mitchell to write 'A Seventh Man' from the book by John Berger. Their play 'Tighten Your Belt' highlighted the situation of young workers in the age of cuts and redundancy. Currently they have two new plays and are planning a show on the Grunwick Dispute, working with the official Strike Committee, to open in London in November and to tour Labour Movement dates in December and January. Foco Novo invites bookings now, contact address 2 Nugent Terrace, London NW8 (01-289 3226/286 6502). Their dates are as follows:

## The Elephant Man

Based on the remarkable story of John Merrick, born in Leicester in 1863. Victorian circus freak with elephant skin challenges his deformities and emerges as culture loving.

- EXETER: Oct 4-6. St. Lukes College. 8pm.
- PLYMOUTH: Oct 7-8. College of St. Mark & St. John. 8pm.
- DERBY: Oct 13-15. Playhouse Studio. 8pm.
- LANCASTER: Oct 24-26. University. Nuffield Studio. 8pm.
- MANCHESTER: Oct 27-29. Leigh College. Contact Studio. 8pm.
- LONDON: Nov 1-26. Hampstead Theatre, Swiss Cottage.

## Withdrawal Symptoms

Commissioned for 1977/78. It will be about 'addiction', centring on a girl in 1977, the daughter of a wealthy business family.

## CP THEATRE CONFERENCE

Oval House. Sept 24-25. 10-5.30 Sat. 10-8 Sun. Speakers: Jan Chadwick, John McGrath, David Edgar, Jean Hart, Sue Todd, Trevor Griffiths, Sandy Craig, Cathy Hain, Malcolm Griffiths. Topics: Culture and Politics. Working Class Culture. Marxism and producing theatre. Fringe and political theatre. Future perspectives. Tickets £1.20 in advance from 545 Caledonian Rd., London N7. or £1.50 at the door. Food and creche available.

## MONSTROUS REGIMENT

The Monstrous Regiment was formed in 1975 to fight back against the treatment of women in the theatre and in society. The company is made up of actors, musicians, writers and directors, who came together to perform material specifically geared to a company that will never contain more men than women. Policy making and practical tasks are all shared. All productions are bookable, contact address Sue Beardon, 108a Essex Rd., London N1. (01-359 7027).

## Vinegar Tom

A new play about witchcraft written for the company by Caryl Churchill.

## Scum

Death, Destruction and Dirty Washing. The play shows the development of women laundry workers and their gradual involvement in the Paris Commune 1871.

## Kiss and Kill

A new production for 1977/8. It looks at domestic violence, its origins and its flashpoints. Why do we tolerate in the home what we would never tolerate in the streets? Future public gigs as follows:

- WINCHESTER, BASINGSTOKE, SALISBURY, SOUTHAMPTON, PORTSMOUTH, ALDERSHOT: Oct 3-8. A week of bookings for Southern Arts.
- BIRMINGHAM: Oct 11-15. Aston Arts Centre.
- HEMEL HEMPSTEAD. Oct 17. Old Ballroom.
- BOSTON: Oct 28-29. Blackfriars.

## Floorshow

A new cabaret musical show for clubs and small intimate venues. LONDON: Oct 21. S. Bank Poly. LONDON: Oct 22. Acklam Hall. PETERBOROUGH: Oct 26. Key Theatre.

## RECREATION GROUND

New show bookable through Dave Stratham, 31 Winchester Road, Swiss Cottage, London NW3 3NR (01-722 7334).

## Black and Blue

An anti-racist play with music performed by multi-racial cast, dealing particularly with workplace problems. Mainly intended for labour movement and anti-fascist organisations. Touring until March 1978. BRIGHTON: Oct 4. Students Union. 7.30pm.

## BROADSIDE MOBILE WORKERS THEATRE

The company has four shows available for Trade Unions, schools, community groups, women's groups etc. and it will be on tour in S. Wales from 10-16 Oct. Contact address 58 Holbein House, Holbein Place, London SW1 8NJ (01-450 6992).

The Working Women's Charter Show: A lively collage of songs and sketches exploring the ten demands of the charter; **Divide and Rule Britannia**: A short, punchy, anti-racist play; **Now You See It Now You Don't**: A circus-style look at inflation, unemployment and government cuts; **We have the Power of the Winds**: The struggle of the Portuguese people against fascism and for socialism.

## RED LADDER

- Would You Believe It. SCUNTHORPE: 16 Sep. Scunthorpe and District Working Mens Club. 7.30.
- LEEDS: 17 Sep. Leeds Polytechnic (Social Workers Conference)
- WIGAN: 22 Sep. Plattbridge Labour Club, near Wigan.
- ROCHDALE: 23 Sep. Bellfield Community School, Rochdale.
- NEWCASTLE: 27 Sep. Gatehead Boilermakers Club, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
- TYNEMOUTH: 28 Sep. Park Hotel, Tynemouth (for the Newcastle area of NUPE).
- SUNDERLAND: 29 Sep. East Community Centre, Hendon, Sunderland (provisional booking).
- DERBY: 3 Oct. Malcolm Wing, General Hospital, Derby (for NUPE).
- NOTTINGHAM: 5 Oct. Great Hall, Sherwood Hospital, Nottingham (for NUPE).
- STOKE: 14 Oct. Stoke Polytechnic Students Union.
- MANCHESTER: 15 Oct. Manchester University (for ASTMS) (provisional booking).
- BIRMINGHAM: 19 Oct. Birmingham University.
- BIRMINGHAM: 20 Oct. Fandwell Labour Party at the Rear Hotel, Fandwell, nr. Birmingham.
- BIRMINGHAM: 21 Oct. T&G Birmingham Engineering District Committee at the T&G Hall in Broad St., Birmingham.
- BIRKENHEAD: 22 Oct. Birkenhead (location not known at time of going to press).

## INTRODUCING:







# Agitprop

## Publications

**ALTERNATIVE PAPERS:** A full report of the alternative papers conference held in Bristol covering role and content, finance, law, editorial practice, and the trade union movement is available from *Bristol Voice*, 46 Richmond Road, Montpelier, Bristol 6.

**SCHOOLS OUT:** A paper designed for 16 year old school leavers. To be continued by students themselves. Dennis Healey has said of this magazine: "I am shocked and disgusted by the contents." Police have questioned those distributing it. A copy costs adults 20p from School Out, c/o 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds 2.

**CATCHING THEM YOUNG.** A two-volume examination of the ideologies children are exposed to at an impressionable age. Vol.1, Sex, Race and Class in Childrens' Fiction—£1.80. Vol.2, Political Ideas in Childrens' fiction—£1.80.

**LITTLE TOWERS.** An examination of the brutal death of Little Towers. Called *Killing—No Murder*, it is available for 10p (plus postage) from Little Towers Committee, 4 Pelaw Bank, Chester-le-Street, Durham.

**SURVIVAL GUIDE.** A school leavers' guide to survival published jointly by Glasgow and South Shields Claimants Unions. Gives useful and realistic advice on how to fight for benefits. Available from South Shields Claimants Union, Peoples Place, Derby Terrace, South Shields.

**WORKERS POWER.** A socialist report on the power plant and energy industries from the Energy Group of the Conference of Socialist Economists. Only 15p from most left bookshops.

**RELEASE:** Tenth anniversary of the new, improved *Release Newsletter* covering a wide range of subjects including drugs, abortion, squatting and medical treatment. Only 30p (plus postage) from Release Publications, 1 Elgin Ave., London W9.

**CARNIVAL:** A *Race Today* pamphlet on the history of Carnival in West London, scene of the now notorious "Notting Hill Riot". Politics, carnival and strategy are all in *The Road Make to Walk* on Carnival Day for only 50p from Race Today Publications, 74 Shakespeare Road, London SE24 0PT.

**ZERO.** Issue two out. A special 'Bring back the jubilee we haven't had enough' issue, including articles on Oz (What?), rape, Italian student uprisings and more. Copies cost 20p plus postage from Zero, c/o 182 Upper Street, London N1.

**WORKING IN A MIXED GROUP.** Feminist women writers describe their conflicts in attempting to fight patriarchy and patriarchal conditioning in a mixed sex group. They suggest a way forward for the gynandrous woman. From *Beyond Patriarchy* Publications, the first in a series produced by women to fight patriarchy. 30p. 31 Dalmeny Avenue, London N7.

**BATTERED WOMEN AND THE NEW LAW.** A joint NCCL/Inter-Action pamphlet on the new law affecting battered women. Introduction by Anna Coote and Tess Gill. Copies cost 60p from NCCL, 186 Kings Cross Road, London WC1.

**WOMENS STUDIES NEWSLETTER** A Workers Educational Association newsletter for Women's Studies Newsletter. Details from Carolyn Brown, Croft Cottage, 176 Hagley Road, Stourbridge DY8 2JN.

**YELLOW PAGES.** An alternative phone directory for all the groups and resources in Liverpool. Send SAE to *News from Nowhere*, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool 1.

**SOCIALIST VOICE.** American trotskyst theoretical magazine published by the League of the Revolutionary Party. Write for sample and subscription to *Socialist Voice*, 170 Broadway, Room 201, New York, NY 10038, USA.

**SPLITS.** Billed as the last word from the Revolutionary Communist Group on its recent split, *In Defence of the RCG* is the statements from two comrades who left, retracting their former criticisms. Only 10p from RCG Publications, 49 Raiton Road, London SE24 0LN.

**ICAT.** The Future Studies Centre in Leeds has published the full proceedings of their conference on "Industry, the Community and Appropriate Technology", held in April. Copies from Future Studies Centre, 15 Kelso Road, Leeds LS2 9PR.

**ADOPTION.** A booklet written by and for adoptees and their natural mothers. A historical essay that argues both are victims of an unjust double standard of sexual morality which has changed little since Victorian times. Copy costs 80p (inc. postage) from Jigsaw Publications, c/o 84 Oakfield Road, London N4 4LB.

**CANNING TOWN.** A case study of Tate & Lyle, Canning Town's largest employer, which shows what would happen to the area if the company closed its plant. A copy costs 40p (plus postage) from Canning Town CDP, 57 Barking Road, Canning Town, London E16.

**IRELAND.** Troops Out has produced a chronology of events in Northern Ireland from November 1976 to June 1977. Looks at events there under several subject headings including the British state strategy, resistance in the north, and the media. Copy costs 40p (plus postage) from Troops Out Publications, c/o 2a St. Pauls Road, London N1.

**NEWCASTLE.** For radical and alternative books and magazines, try going to Cradlewell Books, 235 Jesmond Road, Newcastle. Contact centre also for Tyneside Socialist Centre, Newcastle Womens Group, New Age Access (Alternative Technology, etc) and various theatre groups (Skin and Bones & Roadgang).

**NEW EDITION.** The Community Development Project—now disbanded by the government—has produced a revised and updated second edition of *The Poverty of the Improvement Programme*. Send 30p plus postage to CDPPEC, Brookside, Seaton Burn, Newcastle upon Tyne NE13 6EY.

**WAR PLAN.** A run-down of the powers and plans of local councils in the event of the breakdown of law and order. A *Mole Express* pamphlet costing 15p plus postage from *Mole Express*, 178 Oxford Road, Manchester 15.

**GYPSIES.** Information and publications list from The Gypsy Council, Romanestan Publications, 61 Blenheim Crescent, London W11.

**CLOSURE.** The National Community Development project is closing early next year after a series of conflicts with its sponsors, the Home Office, and a number of local authorities. Its publications are rapidly running out, so buy now while stocks last. Full list from Publications, Benwell CDP, 87 Adelaide Terrace, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE4 8BB.

## Events

**IRELAND CONFERENCE:** There will be an East Midlands Conference on Ireland at Leicester University on 12th November 1977. There will be speakers in the morning and afternoon workshops on Ireland and the labour movement, women and Ireland and the mass media and Ireland. Full details and credentials from Paul Winstone, 7 College St., Leicester.

**ANARCHIST WOMEN:** Be in touch with the anarchist women's network. Issue two of *Anarchist Feminist Newsletter* out. Copies 10p (plus postage) from Sophie Laws, 43 Grosvenor Terrace, Bootham, York.

**NORTH WEST:** Anarchist Federation which produces newsletter and has groups in Burnley, Blackburn, Colne, Preston, and Whalley. Details from 6 Stockley Ave., Harwood, Bolton, Lancs.

**ANARCHIST WORKERS' Association** monthly meetings at Centerprise Bookshop, Kingsland High Road, London E8. 29 September "Women and the Crisis"; 27 October "Russia 1917: Lessons for the Workers' Movement"; 24 November "Racism: the need for Black Organisation." All at 7.30pm

**LABOUR HISTORY MUSEUM.** Limehouse Town Hall, Commercial Road, London E 15. Meeting 3pm Sunday 2 October. "A Study of Irish History". Speaker: Terry McCarthy.

**LABOUR CAMPAIGN** for Gay Rights: meeting at the Labour Conference 4 October. 5.15pm Union Hall, Air Street, Brighton. Also benefit disco, 5 October, Queens Hotel, King Street. 9pm.

**BRITISH ROAD** to Socialism. Public meeting on the new draft, Battersea Low Town Hall, Lavender Hill, London SW 11. Friday 14 October 8pm. Admission 10p. Organised by Wandsworth CP.

## Film

**LIVERPOOL:** Ken Loach's film *Family Life* is showing at Liberty Hall on Oct 9th. It deals with the treatment of a disturbed girl by society, the health service and her family. Liberty Hall is at The Odd Spot, Bold Street, Liverpool. Moving soon, so ring 708 7270 to check venue.

**LIVERPOOL:** Douglas Trumbull's science fiction film *Silent Running* is showing at Liberty Hall on Oct. 30th. It deals with a post nuclear world totally defoliated and devastated. Liberty Hall is at The Odd Spot, see above.

**OTHER CINEMA:** Tottenham Street, London W1  
26-30 September *Pierrot Le Fou* at 4.30. 26-29 September *The Other Francisco* at 6.30. 26-29 September *Pierrot Le Fou* at 8.45. 30 September *Last Chants for a Slow Dance (Deadend)* at 6.30. 30 September/1 October *Pierrot Le Fou* at 9.00.

1 October *Battle for Chile Part 1* at 2.30, *Battle for Chile Part 2* at 4.30. October 2 *Pierrot Le Fou* at 3.30. October 2 Club Showing of *Little Boy* and *Los Ninos Abandonados* at 5.30. October 3-6 *Pierrot Le Fou* at 4.30 and 8.45. Club Showing at 6.30 of *Los Ninos Abandonados* and *Little Boy*.

## Music



**LONDON:** London Musicians Collective Weekend at Battersea Arts Centre, Lavender Hill, SW11, tel. 01-223 5356. Friday 23 Sept. 8pm, Saturday 24 Sept. 2.30pm, 8pm, Sunday 25 Sept. 2.30pm. Performances, workshops etc. Performers include John Stevens, Colin Wood, Roger Smith, Nigel Coombes, Hugh Davies, John Russell, Garry Todd, Steve Beresford, Ye Min, Robert Smith, heuristic music and Evans All-Weather Orchestra. Admission to each performance 80p, workshop 50p.

**BRADFORD:** Leon Rosselson performing at the Topic Folk Club, Star Hotel, Westgate, Bradford, on 30 Sept at 8pm.

**SOUTHPORT:** Roy Bailey and Leon Rosselson at Southport Arts Centre on 8 Oct at 8pm.

**LONDON:** Leon Rosselson at the Phoenix pub, 14 Palace Street, Victoria, London SW1 on 21 Oct at 8pm.

**GODALMING:** Leon Rosselson at Godalming Folk Club. To be confirmed.

**LIVERPOOL:** Mike Westbrook's Brass Band at Liberty Hall, Sunday 16 Oct at The Odd Spot, Bold St. Liverpool 1. 70p to members, £1 to non-members. To check venue ring 708 7270 (day) or 727 5906 (evening).

**LANCASTER:** Roy Bailey and Leon Rosselson at Dukes Theatre, Lancaster on 8 Oct. A late night performance starting at 10.30pm.

**LONDON:** Leon Rosselson at Imperial College Folk Club, Imperial College, Kensington on 10 Oct at 8pm.

**HULL:** Leon Rosselson to play on 12th Oct at Hull University. Ring union for details.

**READING:** Leon Rosselson at Reading Folk Club on 20 Oct. To be confirmed so check.

**WOMENS LIBERATION MUSIC PROJECT:** Contact via Women's Arts Alliance, 10 Cambridge Terrace Mews, Albany Street, London NW1. Tel.: 01-935 1841.

**MUSIC FOR SOCIALISM:** Write to 38 Hornsey Park Road, London N8 or ring 01-888 1161.

**LONDON MUSICIANS COLLECTIVE:** 86 Auden Place, Manley Street, London NW1. Tel.: 01-722-1164.

**MUSICS:** No.14 due out mid-Sept. No.13 has interview with Anthony Braxton plus 10 pages on the Music for Socialism festival from participants. From issue 14—single copy 35p + 10p post, subscription £2.80 for 6 issues from 48 Hillsborough Court, Mortimer Crescent, London NW6.

**SONGBOOK:** A new songbook from Red Notes with words and chords (no melodies) of 67+ songs to sing before, during and after the revolution, including Pie in the Sky, Equal Pay Blues and Waltzing Matilda. From most left bookshops. If not in stock, get them to order it from Publications Distribution Co-operative.

## Other

**SOCIALS:** Manchester Women's socials are held on the first Friday of every month in the Unicorn pub, Church Street, Manchester 1 (behind Piccadilly), 8-11pm.30p.

**LIBERTY HALL:** This is an alternative to commercial clubs in Liverpool which puts on events like the ones listed below. (See also music, film and theatre listing. Membership is £1.00 for six months. Contact membership secretary, c/o top flat, 7 Grove Park, Liverpool 8 or ring 708 7270 during the day.

**FREE SCHOOLS IN AN UNFREE SOCIETY:** A discussion at Liberty Hall about free schools. People from the (defunct) Scotland Road Free School, the Manchester Free School (which has been going five years and recently acquired new premises) and a community school in Liverpool (which has only just set up) will introduce a general discussion around these ideas.

**NEWS AS PROPAGANDA:** Steve Scott asks—Are we being brainwashed by the media? And Brian Whittaker will be using slides to illustrate his findings from a special study of Liverpool's press.

**BIRMINGHAM:** Libertarian socialists meet alternate Sundays at the Fox and Grapes, Freeman St. (next to Moor St. Station). Details from Bob Prew, 40c Trafalgar Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 8BH.



## Classifieds

**THE LEVELLER** is now running a proper classified ads column. To make it useful to people we are going to charge only 2p a word for insertions. But all insertions must be pre-paid.

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"HANDS OFF Ireland" No 2. Anti-imperialist bulletin includes: "Political Trials" by Jackie Kaye; "The PTA" by B. Rose-Smith; "The Loyalist Strike"; "Trade Unions in the North." 20p + 7p postage. Sub for four issues £1. Five copies for £1 - postfree. From RCG PUBLICATIONS Ltd (L), 49 Raiton Road, London SE24 0LN. VEGETARIAN WHOLEFOOD for conferences etc at non-ripoff prices. Please write to 155 Archway Road, London N6 or phone 01-348 1192 (Saturdays 12 - 6 pm).

**BROADSIDE MOBILE** Workers Theatre requires administrator (full time). Must be socialist. Long term commitment. Phone 01-450 6992 / 730 5396. Write to 58 Holbein House, Holbein Place, London SW1.

**THE RED FLAG** .Illustrated poster (24 x 18 ins) of socialism's song ( five verses ). £1 from Glossoprint ( L ), 62 Spire Hollin, Glossop, Derbyshire.

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