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Spring 1979

Number 5

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A mass movement of rebellion against Indian capital has arisen in the former Portuguese colony of Goa. *H O Nazareth*, recently returned from Goa, spells out the issues. A delegation to the Indian Prime Minister recently returned empty-handed (picture right).

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Colonel B Defence Fund: Reminder. We're asking contributors to write in and tell us what they want done with the money they sent in to the Defence Fund. Our present plans are to discuss the matter further with *Peace News* and then divide the money between the two collectives. We hope to use our part of it (it amounts to something over £1,000 for us) as a Development Fund. If you have any other suggestions please let us know.

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An independent monthly socialist magazine produced by the *Leveller* Collective. Owned by its Supporting Subscribers through the *Leveller* Magazine Ltd a society whose AGM controls the magazine. Articles, photographs, cartoons and letters are all very welcome. Collective meetings are open and we invite our readers' interest and participation in the development of the magazine. The next introductory meeting will be held at our office at 7.00pm on Tuesday April 17th.

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# Letters

On this page, readers respond to *The Leveller's* discussion of the family.

## Only one way out

WHILST IT is encouraging to see you devote seven pages to the all pervading institution of the Nuclear Family (*Leveller 23*), I find it hard to understand why you publish Tessa Weare's 'One of the ways out' which is surely just a variation on the theme of any liberated middle-class family.

I agree that 'our society makes it difficult to integrate kids into daily life' but surely this depressing structural routine is not a realistic or progressive way out.

In the whole seven pages why is there only the passing mention of another way out—the only progressive alternative to the nuclear family—communal living.

Communes (or communities as they would usually rather be called in the self-conscious and cynical 70's) attack the assumptions of the nuclear family in a wholly positive way—from its sexual hang ups to its economic isolationism. And the attitude of hostility towards Communal living even on a small scale, a few people and children living in the same house, says something about the power of the family ethic.

This hostility makes living communally more difficult to do—try asking for a group mortgage, or renting a home as a group.

The general attitude seems to be 'that it was alright for students' but as one gets older one needs more space/privacy/economic freedom/almost anything. Actually it seems that as people get older and richer they are less keen to put up with the 'hassle' of having other people around. This tendency becomes greater as the ethic of being able to 'do your own thing' becomes universal. This should not be the way for socialists.

Living singly, or as a single family unit supports the capitalist property ethic and holds little hope for socialism. What chance is there of people who find they cannot share their living space or kitchen with others on an equal basis being able to share the world's or even the country's wealth on an equal basis?

R.O. Faulkner  
London E6

## The family and the law

YOUR GUIDED tour to the legal image of the family contained a number of errors, I hope that the following information will correct the most glaring errors/omissions.

In the case of co-habitees, the paragraph on inheritance was dangerously misleading. If you are living with someone who is maintaining you financially immediately prior to his/her death, you can apply to the court for reasonable financial provision under a 1975 law [*The Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependents) Act*].

The following relate primarily to married persons:

1. Supplementary Benefit—if you are still married but living apart from your spouse, you can claim for yourself and any dependent children living with you—so a married woman claim.

2. HP and Mortgages—it is unlawful for a shop, etc. to require a woman (single or married) to provide a male guarantor, unless a similar condition is imposed on male customers. If the shop tries it on, you should kick up a fuss and you can take legal action under the *Sex Discrimination Act 1975*.

3. Violence—injunctions to restrain a spouse from molesting you and from violence, and in some cases to exclude him (her?) from the house, can also be obtained in divorce and separation proceedings.

The importance of the *Domestic Violence Act 1976* is that you can get an injunction without starting divorce or other proceedings.

4. Changing names—you can change your name simply by using the new name; a deed merely provides useful evidence of the change.

Ida Gudema  
London E8

## As directionless as ever

I BOUGHT February's issue of the *Leveller* mainly because of the centre spread on 'The Family' I have long believed, almost as an act of faith, that the nuclear family was not only stultifying and destructive of individuals (as your two case histories illustrate) but that its continued existence is a cornerstone (if not the cornerstone) of capitalist society.

However strongly I have felt these to be truths I have been unable to articulate them to my own or others' satisfaction. I had hoped that your 'seven pages of family entertainment' would firstly help me to crystallize my own thoughts on the destructive and negative influence of the family and secondly provide some thoughts on serious alternatives. Well, I was to be disappointed.

What were those seven pages

of entertainment? Two case histories which, although I might accept that the tragedy contained within them lay in the structural lunacy of the nuclear family, could easily have been used by any social worker or psychiatrist worth their superannuation to illustrate that the destructive effects were caused by wrong-minded individuals who a bit of counselling or electric shock would soon straighten out. Besides this there was a short piece about a couple who were attempting an alternative monogamous set up, some quotes and pix and some fairly easily obtainable 'fax'.

Why were there no descriptions/experiences of alternatives, e.g. communes, extended families. Why no mention of the role of the state through local authorities in reinforcing family patterns—have you noticed any council houses being built to hold more than 4 or 5 people? Why no mention, except by implication, of the role of our archaic tax system and the rules governing welfare benefits.

I'm afraid I'm still no further forward in my thinking about the family and its influence and role in present day society and, perhaps more importantly for me, still lack stimulus and information about alternatives. You may say that this is my problem, as indeed it is, but it may also be *The Leveller's* for if a publication such as yours is not to have an educative, informative and thought stimulating role but instead, a 'let's reinforce what we all know and believe' attitude then it won't have much of a future and worse still us 'naive' socialists will be as directionless as ever.

Patrick Bennett  
Leighton Buzzard

## We are the parents now

I'VE GOT a 6-month old daughter, and I want her to have the chance to grow up strong and loving, loved and free. For her sake and my own, I can't accept the conventional role of breadwinner/father/husband, just as her mother can't accept that of housewife/mother/wife. Finding the right alternatives won't be easy—practically or emotionally—and we need all the support, ideas and inspiration we can get. What a pity your feature on the family gave us so little!

Sally and John have had bad experiences. I sympathise, but were they saying anything about 'the family'? They were talking about individuals—their parents who couldn't understand or respect them. (I didn't see them trying very hard to understand their parents' feelings, either.)

Granted, this is no ordinary failed relationship, because the parents are in a position of power. A child can't simply pack

her bags and leave. But the issue isn't 'the family'—it's *any* relationship distorted by the dependence of one person on another. What we've got to do is work out how it could be any different.

After all, a newborn baby is absolutely dependent. Adults have to take responsibility for her. However responsive they are to her needs and desires, they still have to feed and care for her, and later stop her playing on main roads. She gradually assumes responsibility for her own life, but *exactly* when, *exactly* how?

Meanwhile, everything about those adults will affect her. If they are anxious, hurt or frustrated, she will suffer—and this applies whether they are married or unmarried, or a commune, or the nursery staff of a kibbutz.

It's easy to complain about our parents, but we are the parents now. It's our hang-ups, our sexual conditioning, our insecurities at stake. Blaming everything on that convenient abstraction 'the family' is not going to solve a thing.

By concentrating on the horror stories, you miss the reason why most people will still defend the family, right or wrong. For people of all classes, the family has often been the *only* place that gives them unconditional affection and acceptance—in contrast to a competitive, critical world of work. Unless our alternative lifestyles guarantee this warmth and safety, no-one is going to listen.

The one really positive and thoughtful article is Tessa's. She makes it clear that her way is not an easy answer, and she faces the real problems of living your alternatives. In one way, she and her partner are luckier than most. Part-time jobs are simply not available for most men, and most of those for women are low-status and low-paid.

I'd like to hear from men who've taken on housework and childcare—how they handle the puzzlement of neighbours and employers, as well as their own internalised voice of 'masculinity'. I'd like to see discussions about communal childcare; about attempts to integrate work and childcare like the Little Women cooperative in Sunderland; about how Swedish employers can live with paternity leave when British ones can't; and much much more.

Would any *Leveller* readers like to share their thinking about parenthood? To think you've disposed of the family on an 'aargh, who needs it?' level of argument is just insulting. It's time to move on from taking easy potshots at 'the family' to thinking seriously about what we've got to offer in its place.

Phil Gross  
256 Davidson Road  
Croydon

# Letters

## Gay lib — we haven't had it

ROBIN HOUSTON's letter, in which he accuses a *Leveller* writer of 'old-fashioned gay liberation' (*Leveller 23*), brought home to me the reason I often feel uncomfortable meeting activists from London—I'm still using last year's ideology!

Sadly, fashions take a long time to penetrate and I find it difficult reading all that stuff about left punk papers when most of the local kids (or is it 'youth' now) are into Northern Soul. I'm also a bit unsure about 'liberation'—is this out now? If so, what has taken its place? Could you tell me whether dungarees for men are (a) practical, or (b) proletarian, or (c) a rip-off of the feminist movement?

On a more serious note, could Robin send his unwanted old gay liberation up here as we haven't had it yet. And more than one or two people I know are asking when fighting for the right to work will be okay again.

Chris Smith  
Newcastle on Tyne 4

## DP contraceptive choice

LAST YEAR, after Dorothy Jones and Rose Shapiro wrote an article about the use of Depo-Provera, based in part on an interview that they had had with me (*Leveller 13*), I wrote a long letter in reply which attempted to point out the fallacies in that article and the misrepresentation of my viewpoint. This letter was not published, or even acknowledged in writing, despite the fact that a most damaging attack had been made on my professional competence and integrity, based on totally inadequate evidence.

Dorothy's article continues to misunderstand my position (*Leveller 22*) and to draw invalid conclusions from the article I wrote for *Fertility and Contraception*. I have not been 'transformed'; I have never thought that DP was a 'first choice' contraceptive, but that for women who have used other methods and found them unsatisfactory or unpleasant, that it is worth trying. I have always tried to inform women about all methods of contraception, and I still believe that for women over 35 for whom the oral contraceptive carries measurable risks of fatal thrombo-embolic disease, DP is safer.

As for the question of feminist pressure paying off, I think she overestimates their influence, and clearly has no idea about the

anxiety their campaign may cause in women who are established users of the method. The article I wrote did not show that doctors were using women as guinea pigs, but that they had been somewhat casual about the use of the method and had failed to inform women adequately.

I deplore this attitude to women (or indeed male) patients but it is pure sensationalism to suggest that doctors in the London Hospital were using 'working class' women as guinea pigs. One possible explanation of the higher incidence of Asian women given the injection at Whitechapel may have been that the doctors were racist. However, an equally plausible one on the scanty evidence available is that these women asked for the method because it suited them.

I believe that women have the right to choose which method of contraception they use, and that it is the duty of doctors to inform them of the side-effects to the best of their ability. I do not understand why the feminists are conducting a campaign which will reduce women's choice. They are free to say 'NO' to DP, but the feminists seem to think that they have the right to restrict the woman's freedom to say 'YES'

Wendy Savage  
London N1

## 410 days — no comment

I RECEIVED issue 23 of *The Leveller* and found it, as always, both interesting and informative. I particularly enjoyed the special feature on the family. Didn't see the issues dealing with Gartree—probably because it took me so long to inform you of my whereabouts after the riot—although I suspect security would have pounced on those particular issues anyway—prejudicial to the good order and discipline of the prison as the rule has it!

Have had no news of what punishments have been meted out by the various Boards of Visitors dealing with the matter—my own consisted of 56 days cellular confinement (now completed) and 410 days loss of remission—and am prevented from commenting on events in this letter by prison censorship rules.

Suffice it to say that however vehemently the Home Office denies it, it is my experience that drugs are used in dispersal prisons as a means of control—a fact admitted, I believe, in an issue of the prison medical officers' journal smuggled out of Parkhurst and reproduced in *The Times* newspaper. Certainly at Gartree complaints were made to prison

officials by inmates about this misuse of drugs and I'm afraid that the total lack of response to such complaints made trouble an inevitability sooner or later.

Guess that in this respect, as in many others, prison is a microcosm of society as a whole—although this analogy can be taken too far. Like prison, the social structure in which we find ourselves makes demands which we're just not able to absorb without damage to ourselves, and reaction of one form or another is inevitable. And there is interposed that universal panacea, the tranquilliser, by means of which we are adapted to those demands.

It's a case of people being adapted to fit structures rather than structures being created to fulfill human needs. Moreover, the tranquilliser doesn't have to be poured from a bottle—an equally deadly numbing effect arises from the lack of content in so much of our lives, which lack is concealed behind the superficial rush and bustle of everyday existence but which nevertheless eats into us.

Malcolm Simpkins  
152853, HM Prison  
Welford Road  
Leicester LE2 7AJ

## Yes without illusions

ON REFLECTION, it might have been better had you explained in your introduction to the devolution feature (*Leveller 23*) that my piece was in response to a request for 200 words on 'Popular Attitudes to Devolution'.

As it was presented, in your feature, it did appear as if the opinion expressed in my piece was my own, rather than my own assessment of the opinions of others. This mistaken impression could only be furthered by the unfortunate alteration by you of the third last sentence, in which the word 'me' appears in place of the word 'us'.

To round it all off—and no hard feelings by the way—even though my piece was unmistakably

ably in favour of a 'Yes' vote—a sort of 'Yes without illusions' (which the British Left should understand)—the way in which it was juxtaposed with Mr Freeman's article gave at least one cursory reader the idea that my piece was against a 'Yes' vote.

Norman Easton  
Aberdeen

## Temperate race hate

I ATTENDED the two-day trial of Robert Relf and Michael Cole at Oxford Crown Court recently, which resulted in the first ever conviction under the incitement to hatred section of the (amended) Race Relations Act.

Amongst other aspects of the proceedings, such as Cole's ability to lie, through his NF lawyers, to the court about his political past, racist remarks from all three counsel and the judge and the way the court was able to suppose the racial violence in Leamington Spa had never occurred, I would pick out as most important the definition of the offence by prosecution and judge.

It turns out there is no such offence as incitement to racial hatred. The only offence is that of doing this in language which is 'abusive or insulting'. Thus scientific sounding racism, expressed in temperate language, can incite as much race hate as it likes without being liable to any penalty from the state. Accordingly, Relf was acquitted in respect of the more soberly worded of the three leaflets in question. And of course 'freedom of speech' is preserved for racists and fascists.

Rip Bulkeley  
Oxford Anti-Nazi League

To give us more space for contributions, please keep your letters short. All letters may be edited for length.



"Return" by Jacek R Kowalski from Poland. 1st prize winner in the 1979 Baghdad International Poster Exhibition. The winning entries will be on exhibition in London from 28th March-17th April at the Iraqi Cultural Centre, 177 Tottenham Court Road.



James Lowery

## Anti Nazi League Out of the gloom into the summer

The Anti Nazi League is planning another Carnival for early summer. It will be held in East London's Victoria Park, site of the successful first Carnival last year, on Sunday May 27.

League spokesperson Peter Hain says the Carnival organisers face problems of success in looking for a name big enough to pull out an enormous crowd. "20,000 people would be the fulfilment of a lifetime's ambition for most organisations", he told *The Leveller* "but we'll have to do much better than that if we're going to follow last year's successes".

It's been a bumpy six months since the enormous upsurge which culminated in last September's Brockwell Park Carnival 2. The massive spontaneous support all over the country swamped the central core of seasoned activists and the winter has been spent fighting battles with the right and strengthening the sinews of the organisation itself. There has still been no national conference since last July, when delegates left it to the steering committee to take the League into the expected autumn election. When Callaghan postponed it, the League found itself all geared up with nowhere to go.

Instead the autumn brought a series of public battles. The 'Pull the Plugs' campaign to deny TV air-time to the National Front resulted in a crisis of conscience for many liberal supporters, while right-wing groups ranging from the Federation of Conservative Students to the National Association for Freedom lost no time in denouncing the SWP's influence within the League.

And some of the soggy and less active liberals like Michael Parkinson and Lord Willis seized on a lively issue of School Kids Against the Nazis' paper as a pretext for withdrawing their own minimal support as sponsors. They promised a broader-based campaign against racism of which there has been, predictably enough, no sign.

Perhaps more serious was the row which broke out with the Jewish Board of Deputies who do have a long record of supporting the fight against fascism through their Defence and Group Relations Department. Officially

non partisan the Board is inherently conservative—even if only with a small c—and strongly Zionist. The formulation 'Zionism equals racism' has led to campaigns on some campuses which, Board leaders believe, has spilled over into anti-Semitism. On top of that the belief of the left that racism is built into capitalism has meant a general political stance unacceptable to many of the Board's supporters in the Jewish community.

Both sides in that particular row have, after much anguished discussion, agreed to peaceful co-existence. SWP supporters, like ANL full-timer Paul Holborrow play down their anti-

## Official Secrets Reform Bill grinding to a halt

Clement Freud's Official Information Bill has now finished its Committee stage and is due for a Report Stage in the House of Commons on Friday April 6. It is unlikely that it will get much further.

In spite of being opposed by anyone at second reading, it faces a number of road-blocks. First by the Labour government, who are horrified at the thought of freedom of information. Secondly by the Conservative opposition who are even more horrified at the idea. Most significantly by the First Division Association of the civil service, who are in a powerful position to stop it. And finally by its lukewarm sponsors the Liberals, who could trade it against votes and get it through Parliament if they wanted to; they seem to have no intention of doing so.

zionism in ANL public meetings while Jacob Gerwitz, director of the Board's Defence and Group Relations department says: "we have a sincere feeling that the public argument wasn't very healthy. We accept that they are there to fight the Nazis. Our sole worry is the SWP control".

That control always was something of a myth, so spontaneous and overwhelming was the support the League built up. That SWP activists have been instrumental in creating part of the framework is undeniable yet while the party's sphere of influence has probably increased as a result, they haven't seen the results in recruitment according to National Secretary Simon Turner.

SWP membership figures stood still during the big ANL period and have only started to climb again during the current round of industrial struggle. ANL supporters have been recruited into SWP branches but Turner argues that "the whole of the left has done well" and there is now the possibility of a youth organisation like Rebel and Skan.

Hain argues that talk of organising working class youth has always been just rhetoric in the past: "but we've done it in ANL, partly because we just let them do their own thing and partly by meshing anti-racism into their culture like Spurs or punk. Organisation won't hold them. But their continuing commitment will."

Perhaps the most satisfying corollary of that is the information contained in the January issue of the Front's membership bulletin that new recruitment amongst the youth dried up almost completely last year.

Most important is the solid build-up of ANL support within the organised labour movement. The 200 person delegate conference of Miners Against the Nazis committed the NUM to distributing anti-fascist propaganda in the pits during the election and Hain points to the emergence of groups like Print Workers or Council Workers against the Nazis as evidence of labour support.

There is no room for complacency. The Front is attempting to organise within the unions, despite the rise of the ANL they do show a capacity to mobilise their supporters for a set-piece event and they are planning to stand 300 candidates in the coming election. But if the ANL has shown the capacity to ride the political storms of the winter, there's every reason to hope that it will emerge into next summer stronger than ever.

was how Merlyn Rees recently put it to a private lobby briefing.

The government tried in committee to amend the *title* of the Bill they had supported at second reading from a 'public right' of access to 'make further provision' for public access. In spite of a 1974 manifesto commitment to the principle of the Bill, it is now clear that Callaghan, Rees and most senior civil servants will do anything to prevent its passage through Parliament.

It only became part of the 1974 October manifesto because Roy Jenkins was Home Secretary at the time, visited the US with his political adviser Anthony Lester QC and came back impressed with the post-Watergate legislation on privacy and freedom of information in Congress. One of the immediate results of Callaghan's accession to the leadership was the end of all ideas of greater openness and a public right of access. A civil service go-slow set in; phrases which mentioned Official Secrets Acts reform became successively vaguer as each Queen's Speech came and went.

A wet and feeble White Paper was issued in July last year, with proposals to reform Section Two. It insisted this was a 'necessary precursor' to any legislation on Freedom of Information. It worried about cost. And it pontificated—most absurdly of all—that "constant and vigilant scrutiny by Parliament and ministers" might make it unnecessary here.

They would have left things at this point, had not Clement Freud won first place in the annual ballot for Private Members' Bills and picked this in an attempt to upstage the government on the issue. The government thereupon dispatched two Civil Service Department senior officials to Europe and the US to garner further arguments against the Bill (One of them, Mr Power, was not really CSD, but only lent to that rather young and incompetent department: a senior official in the Ministry of Defence, he has now, having made his report, returned to become an under-secretary in charge of naval affairs.)

Reports of the visit of Mr Power and Ms Caroline Morrison to Washington, reveal that their enthusiasm seemed to be directed to all the negative aspects of the Freedom of Information Act. The positive side of bureaucratic accountability to the public who pay them seems to have passed them by.

When the Freud Bill comes back to the House in April, the Government's response, it seems, will be vaguer still. A White Paper giving their version of how things work in the US, Sweden, and one or two other places, and a Green Paper suggesting alternatives about possible ways of bringing in freedom of information in Britain. In other words, 'why don't we forget all about it', or at any rate postpone things till 1984 and beyond.

It may not be quite so easy. A formidable back-bench coalition is growing up, backed equally by the Manifesto and Tribune groups on the Labour side and by the National Association for Freedom adherents on the Right; on paper they can beat both front benches if they want to. The government, however, control the timetable; and it is clear that they are not budging, unless the Liberals or the nationalists insist they shall.

One political deal, however, does seem to have emerged. The Bill is a deal, a compromise. We will make Sec 2 prosecutions easier, if you will accept a right of access to your documents. No deal, no reform of Section Two. Dick Crossman always judged the present wide, catch-all nature of Section Two a far better bastion of civil liberty than the sort of reform the Freud Bill suggests. So the government have a choice. They can accept the deal, or leave Section Two without teeth. So even if the Freud Bill fails, it won't be all bad.

## Wolverhampton Mystery thug at demo

WHO IS Alan Bould? Dave Stevens of Wolverhampton wants to know.

Stevens has recently been acquitted at Stafford Crown Court on six charges arising out of an incident on an anti-racist demonstration in Wolverhampton on March 11 last year.

The prosecution of Stevens, a leading member of the Wolverhampton Anti-Racist Committee, was a complete fit-up, and Bould played a key part.

The demonstration had been a peaceful one, until it came to the corner of Snow Hill and Cleveland Road, on the fringe of the town centre.

The streets were lined with a tight cordon of local police officers. But waiting at the corner was a detachment—three transit van-loads—of a "mobile special support unit", the Midlands equivalent of London's popular Special Patrol Group based at Thornhill Road Police Station, Handsworth, north Birmingham, 15 miles away.

These thirty officers, under the command of Inspector Derek Bedford, had not been following the march, but had been cruising around the side streets looking for trouble. For some reason they got the idea that something was going to happen at Snow Hill.

It did. Somehow, Bould ran unchecked through the massed ranks of the cordon and made for Stevens, who was in the front row of the march, and was, indeed, the official police liaison steward. Stevens fell, broke his glasses, and tried to scramble to his feet to appeal for calm through his bullhorn. But he was swamped by a scrum of the Birmingham heavies, arrested, and charged with breach of the peace, assault on four police officers, and actual bodily harm on Inspector Bedford.

Four other comrades, who attempted to grab Bould, were also arrested. One was charged with breach of the peace and subsequently discharged; one with assault on the police and breach of the peace, being acquitted on the first and fined £50 on the second; a third with breach of the peace—"case dismissed"; the fourth has absconded.

But the prosecution of Stevens went ahead regardless. At his committal the police said they knew nothing about the provocation. They had been aware of a disturbance on the march, but not what caused it.

Later they wrote to Stevens' lawyers to say that Bould had indeed been charged, under section five of the Public Order Act (breach of the peace). He had appeared before Wolverhampton magistrates on April 20 last year, pleaded guilty and been fined £50.

Stevens was acquitted after his four-day trial because of a remarkable piece of evidence—a video tape made by a local group. This persuaded the jury to disbelieve no fewer than eight of the Handsworth officers, who not only told the court virtually identical stories of Stevens' violence and abuse, but conceded that they had "sat down together to compare notes".

The video showed an extraordinary scene. There was the solid line of bobbies lining the streets. The first sign of activity was not from Bould, but from Sergeant Shuck, in charge of one of the Handsworth groups, dashing across the camera, towards the head of the march, beckoning his men to follow. Then Bould comes careering in.

Perhaps Shuck, with his special training, had seen Bould coming, out of camera shot. In which case, why did none of the Wolverhampton bobbies forming the cordon? For they never moved. Not even when all these assaults and actual bodily harms were being inflicted on their comrades; they just stood there.

Alan Bould is a Wolverhampton man, though he has no known racist connections. In an area where fascist groups are as strong as anywhere in the country, anti-fascists know nothing about him. The court record of his conviction does not list an occupation, which is unusual. West Midlands Police will say nothing about him.



BLACK YOUTH have been in occupation of their club in Brixton's Railton Road since February 8: they have organised against attempts by church authorities to close down 'Sheperds', a club which has served the local community since 1964.

The occupation started almost immediately when some youth changed the locks back and declared the club an independent body: since then some 500 people have been using the place every week for the normal range of activities. At night between 20 and 30 people stay on in permanent occupation.

# Shorts

CRIME

## Anderton: Clean image scotched

CHRISTMAS SELF indulgence left something worse than a nasty hangover for Manchester's moralising Chief Constable, James Anderton, and provided more than a tonic for his opponents.

That city's radical fortnightly *New Manchester Review* revealed in the New Year that the prissy Mr Anderton — who makes no secret of his wish to succeed McNee at the Yard — had accepted a seasonal case of Scotch from the local Iranian consul.

The *Review* doorstep the consul, Sorbonne-educated career diplomat Dr Ebrahim Jahannema, and extracted from him confirmation that he had sent liquor to Anderton and several of his senior officers.

The fun began when Anderton was forced to admit that he had not returned the whisky. He had satisfied his conscience (but not the rules he lays down for his own force) by writing out a cheque to a police charity. And it got better when he further had to confess to being unaware that his subordinates had also been on the Shah's Christmas gift list.

The internal investigation which he then ordered, to track down those other officers, is being conducted by one of his own senior officers. Mr Anderton is not being investigated.

Such is Mr Anderton's mesmeric effect on the media that when the tale had been processed through the good taste net it emerged, as in the *Manchester Evening News*, as "A police charity has benefited from the Chief Constable's generosity".

But what hasn't attracted any 'responsible' comment was the curious timing of the consul's gifts of Crawford's 3-star de luxe whisky.

For the gifts had been delivered to police HQ in the consular limousine a few days after Manchester police had arrested ten Iranian students and charged them with criminal

damage following an occupation of the luxurious consulate office in Manchester's Booth Street. During the brief sit-in, pictures of the Shah were torn up and slogans sprayed on the walls.

So, at least a dozen members of the Greater Manchester Police, including the Chief Constable, accepted expensive gifts from the Shah's representative while engaged in preparing a case against his political opponents. Which justified the *Review's* headline "A case for the prosecution".

The case of whisky for Anderton and the individual bottles for his colleagues didn't achieve much. A sympathetic magistrate merely bound the ten over. Following the internal police probe, disciplinary papers have now been served on several junior officers. But several other ranking officers who have not been detected, together with Mr Anderton, appear to have got off scotch-free.

Andrew Jennings

## IRELAND

### Mason clamps down on press

IT'S BEEN a lively few weeks in Belfast for news outlets and news persons. Most important, the excesses of Northern Ireland gaudier Roy Mason proved too much even for the Belfast judiciary when on 21 February all charges against the twelve members of Provisional Sinn Fein most concerned with publishing the sturdy weekly *Republican News* were dramatically dropped.

The twelve were charged way back in June last year (see *Leveller* 16) following a raid by 330 RUC members, backed up by units of the Parachute Regiment, aimed at confiscating some 30,000 copies of a *RN* special on the Long Kesh H Blocks.

The move was effectively a bid by Mr Mason to smash the most strident newspaper critical of his regime — a clear-cut "Free press issue" that Fleet Street managed to ignore.

Mason's iron fist worked at first, but soon, almost by guerrilla publishing tactics, *RN* was back and on the streets every week to direct its poison verbals against Stormont Castle and its, hopefully, temporary occupants. The twelve men had been in custody since those raids and only last month did the Belfast court declare

the charges against them were based on "insufficient evidence".

In the meantime, *RN* had merged with its counterpart in the Republic, *An Phoblacht*, to surmount the printing difficulties. The new paper appears vastly more influenced by the more radical and internationalist approach of its Northern half.

The editor, Danny Morrison, declared after the surprise court move last month: "This represents a major personal defeat for Mason and the British Government's attempts to 'criminalise' Irish Republicanism; what we experienced was the bankruptcy of a political prosecution."

Similar legal good sense seems about to prevail on the Official Secrets Act business in Belfast last month. Two journalists — one with the Press Association and the other the Northern editor of the *Cork Examiner* — were threatened with prosecution under the Act for possessing "a secret police file" on the young man, Johnny Boyle, shot dead by two SAS members who now face murder charges.

It now appears the Act will not be used, as the matter in question hovers more around the flamboyance of the relevant PA report, but Belfast journalists in general have been made suddenly aware of a new State weapon. It can only be hoped this will not influence their reporting.

And one ghost from the Northern Ireland journalism scene has returned to haunt its former colleagues, employers and British Army contacts. Kevin Dowling worked from Belfast for the *Sunday Mirror* from 1970-74 before leaving for France. He has a novel out this month (March) called "Interface: Ireland" which is a cut above the rash of "Ulster thrillers" and merits a read.

Interviewed about his four years there, Dowling said this month there had been a "persistent suppression of the truth by the British news media and the British Army... What I remember most about the period was the number of uncomfortable news stories I covered which were not printed, but which turned out to be true."

He added: "We had the 'happy story syndrome' with news editors saying 'find us a happy story'. Their mentality was that Northern Ireland was not a civil war at all; it was an unfortunate disagreement between rival mafiosi. All they wanted was happy Paddies."

Dowling should appreciate a pamphlet about to be born entitled "The First Casualty", and written by the Free Speech on Ireland Campaign. It documents most fully the track record of the British news media on reporting Northern Ireland since 1969, and presents a sorry picture.

David Martin

### The Duke who stole a parliamentary seat

LEST IT slip into the permanent record that the appallingly rich and recently dead fifth Duke of Westminster served as an elected Westminster Unionist MP in 1955 for the Fermanagh-South Tyrone seat, the record should be put straight.

The elections in that seat and the mid-Ulster one at the time were both won by Sinn Féin gentlemen — Fermanagh elected Philip Clarke by 261 votes and mid-Ulster chose Tom Mitchell. Inconveniently, both lads were unable to claim their seats — they were both serving ten year stretches in Crumlin Road jail for their parts in a 1954 Omagh military barracks raid.

Mitchell's seat was declared vacant by the House of Commons and another election ordered. Mitchell won again, despite restrictions on his personal canvassing, but the Mother of Parliaments was not to be thwarted. The third election saw a nationalist candidate splitting the anti-unionist vote, and Mitchell lost out.

Wideboy Lt. Col. Robert Grosvenor — with his £500 million estate as Westminster's Duke — then pulled a fast one. He launched an election petition and a special court was set up to examine the unavoidably absent Philip Clarke's victory — the first time such an archaic court had been seen in Ireland for some one hundred years. Grosvenor claimed that Clarke, then 22, was ineligible because of his prison sentence.

Clarke hit back from Crumlin Road, but was over-ruled and the court declared that Grosvenor, without any tiresome formalities like getting votes, was henceforth the eligible MP for the seat.

As the sharpie who was soon to own such property as the American Embassy and Claridge's Hotel in London, entered the Commons, one un-named Labour MP very rudely shouted at him that whatever he did represent, it was certainly not the people of Fermanagh-South Tyrone.

He had the nerve to stay as MP until 1964.

## RADIO

### Capital keeps quiet on profits

WHAT IS Capital Radio trying to hide? The company's report for its last financial year, which ended on 30th September, was published about two weeks ago, and has been circulated to the station's 20 or so shareholders. But they refuse to send out copies of the report, or tell people what their figures were for the last year. And a spokesperson for the Independent Broadcasting Authority, the statutory body set up in 1973 to supervise commercial television and radio, told *The Leveller*, "This sounds very odd, but they are an independent company and it's up to them who they send it to".

Capital Radio is a private limited company, and by law is only obliged to send copies of its report to its shareholders and to Companies House. But its secrecy is unusual among the commercial local radio stations. They all share the same financial year, and news of other companies' turnover and profits has been appearing in the trade press for the past two months. When *The Leveller* rang Capital to ask about its financial results, Managing Director John Whitney's personal assistant eventually told us, "We can't reveal the figures. It's a policy decision by the Chairman (actor and

DJ Michael Aspel gets a commercial break.



## Briefly...

RONAN BENNETT and Stewart Carr, the two defendants in the Persons Unknown case who are still in prison, now face the prospect of remaining there at least until the end of the year — even though they have not yet been found guilty of anything.

Lawyers acting for one of the defendants checked with Old Bailey administrators recently and were told that the earliest date the trial could be held was 'November or December': given the way these things work out that could stretch into 1980.

Both men have now been 'de-categorised': that is, they are no longer regarded as 'top security' prisoners. But the freedom to mix with others and not be monitored by closed circuit TV is accompanied by other forms of harassment: Ronan is not allowed his typewriter 'in case someone steals it'. And a copy of the Amnesty International report on brutality in Northern Ireland was returned to sender, Iris Mills, presumably for being 'provocative'.

Taff Ladd had to wait a further two months for his release on bail even though magistrates formally granted it before Christmas. His eventual release at the end of February only came after police intimidation of those who had offered to stand bail for him.

☆☆☆

A QUIET, ordinary night last month at the Tuesday night session run by the Manchester Musicians' Collective at the Band on the Wall. Manchester Mekong came to the end of their set and then announced their special guests 'The Liggers'. Electric! Three women, one of them still at school, took the stage for only their fourth public performance and stormed through three numbers to the absolute delight of the audience.

They are crude, noisy, off-key and absolutely fantastic. But the pub manager abruptly brought them to an end by turning on the lights right in the middle of their last number. And how alarming that one of the bar-

director Richard Attenborough), the Managing Director and the Company Secretary. You'll just have to wait until they're in Companies House".

"It's always difficult discussing money here" said one of the station's Press Officers. And company secretary Keith Giemre commented in an unguarded moment, "It's embarrassing to talk about profits because it creates problems with the unions".

A look at the available figures explains why. In the financial year 1975/76 it made a profit of £672,000 on a turnover of £4,001,000, and in 1976/7 its net advertising revenue was £4.8m — with revenue from Capital promotions on top of that.

## UNIONS

### Steward backs down on low pay

YOU MIGHT have thought that the Minister of Health David Ennals was a legitimate target for industrial action when he went into the Westminster Hospital recently. So, apparently, did the hospital's NUPE branch, until, much to everyone's surprise, NUPE steward Jamie Morris sent Ennals a red flower — and recommended at a stewards' meeting that NUPE accept an offer of 9% plus arbitration next August.

But the NUPE branch at Westminster

men then went and unchained the fire doors at the end of the evening. Do the comrades on the Musicians' Collective know that the management chain the fire doors while the public are in the place?

☆☆☆

DEREK JACKSON, the new director of the Freedom Association (formerly NAFF) resigned from a promising career in military intelligence to take up the job. He started as a Second Lieutenant in the Intelligence corps, rising through the ranks to become an acting captain with the Paras in 1968. After completing a degree course, he is thought to have done undercover work in Northern Ireland, and prior to his resignation he was tipped for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel after a short course at the Camberly Staff College.

☆☆☆

THERE'S a promising little job on offer at the moment — the government is looking for a new Group Director at the Home Defence College, Easingwold, Yorks, at a salary of between £6,790 and £7,550. Budding applicants would need to be well-versed in the problems of "adopting peacetime services to war and major peacetime emergencies". Among their main tasks will be "advising and assisting local authorities, military and other services in home defence training and exercises". Lefties need not apply.

☆☆☆

WHAT WERE police officers claiming to be from the Anti-Terrorist Squad doing round at the house of conservative Dennis Howerd, President of the Motorcycle Action Group? Well, they turned up after an interview with Howerd, in which he'd made allegations of brutality against the Special Patrol Group, had appeared in the radical biker's magazine *On Yer Bike*. But they only had a couple of routine enquiries to make — about who had done the interview, and why. Political police in Britain? Of course not.

Hospital is very strong, built up by organised action on issues like that of pay beds in NHS hospitals. Morris himself is a hard working trade unionist, and when action on low pay started in January, he was one of the first to suggest the hospital's NUPE members do something. So what is going on?

Morris has ambitions in the Labour Party. At present he is only a Labour councillor in Tower Hamlets, and so he is vulnerable to party pressure. This happened recently when he was persuaded to accept the suspension of some domestics who refused to work on private wards. Then, his decision was made after meetings with NUPE General Secretary Alan Fisher and Health Minister David Ennals, as well as a phone call from Callaghan.

The branch was demoralised by the union's frequent change of tactics, and by its lack of consultation with them. And most could not afford to stay out on strike with union strike pay of only £5 a week. Short selective strikes would have worked better.

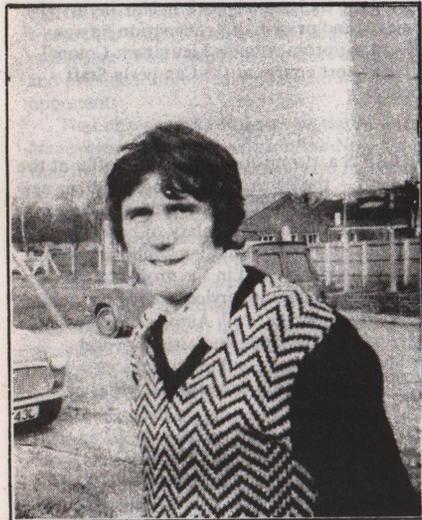
At a recent NUPE divisional council meeting, Morris defended Fisher when most of the stewards were calling on him to resign, and his decision to recommend that his branch should accept the employer's offer was made despite a union ballot in favour of continuing industrial action against low pay. The branch meeting that accepted that recommendation was attended by less than half of the membership, and NUPE porters at St. Stephens Hospital, part of the Westminster group, have continued their go-slow.

Top cop James Anderton: The Mancunian Candidate.



## State Repression

# Higgins- A brief freedom



John Higgins

Some wallah in the Home Office had worked fast. Within hours of the High Court decision, an expulsion order was being prepared. John Higgins is a native of Belfast and the Home Secretary Mr Merlyn Rees was apparently convinced the safety of the nation was dependent upon Higgins being in Belfast not Britain, and post-haste.

Higgins was an important figure in Irish politics in Britain because he was the first prominent Provisional Sinn Fein member to break with the usual pattern of being a Southern-Irish born veteran of the 1956-62 IRA campaign; the first to realise the importance of rooting republican politics in the British labour and trade union movements; the first to realise the news media was to be used, manipulated and not simply scorned; and the first to inject healthy doses of left-wing thinking into Provisional Sinn Fein.

He became national organiser in Britain in 1975 after the Frank Stagg death on hunger strike in Wakefield prison debacle. Higgins was in Wakefield for that period, and he visibly despaired of the way the then PSF leadership handled the affair.

He soon had his chance to get PSF moving and had it launched in a totally new way, when the British police, realising they faced a new ball game, arranged to 'fit him up'.

His chosen instrument was John Banks, the mercenary organiser, who, together with a 'former' policeman Mike McKee, entrapped Higgins and three associates in a phoney arms deal.

On May 17 1976, John Higgins, Eddie Caughey, another Sinn Fein organiser, and two businessmen, Gerald Smiley and James Davidson, were arrested together with Banks and McKee. They were held initially under the Prevention of Terrorism Act but Banks and McKee were soon released. They turned up as prosecution witnesses when the other four were brought to trial at the Old Bailey in March 1977.

The story that emerged then was never more than an approximation of the truth and was hotly contested by Higgins' lawyers. For Banks said that he had been in contact with Higgins about a deal for the sale of 1,000 M1 Carbines for use in Northern Ireland. They would have cost £35,000 and come from Stanley Taylor, an associate of Banks and small-time loser with business interests in the Caribbean. [See *Leveller* 6]

Banks said that he immediately told the Special Branch about the deal and strung along with the others in order to get them arrested. But extensive enquiries both by journalists and the defence lawyers showed that the arms never left their warehouse in Norfolk, Virginia, and that Taylor was never in a position to sell them.

John Higgins had one hour's taste of freedom on Friday March 9. His appeal against sentence that morning in the London High Court was successful: it reduced the years enough to permit him complete freedom.

He left the dank Parkhurst Prison on the Isle of Wight and got on the boat for the mainland to meet his wife, Maureen.

He met instead two Special Branch police officers and, instead of heading for Luton, his three children and surprised friends, he was taken straight to Southampton police station. He was, he was told, being held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. His pleadings that he could hardly have had much to do with terrorism from his prison cell were to no avail.

## 'Banks had been put into the deal by his old mate in Special Branch'

All four men were also charged with attempting to obtain half a dozen radios for use in terrorist activities in Northern Ireland. Higgins never denied that he'd been talking to Smiley and Davison about the radios but he said he was after some walkie-talkies for use in

Belfast should there ever be another pogrom against Catholics like there had been in 1969.

Banks had in fact been put into the deal by his old mate in Special Branch, Inspector Ray Tucker, the man who is supposed to keep an

## The defence denied all along that there was ever any talk of arms

eye on mercenary activities in this country. It was Tucker who arranged for Banks' men to get through customs at Heathrow without passports on their way to Angola: ever since then the two men have had a cosy relationship. And the Higgins frame-up was a quid-pro-quo from Banks for all his help in the past. Ironically on the very day they were arrested Higgins is supposed to have told Banks he was worried that he was being 'set up'—as indeed he was.

The defence denied all along that there was ever any talk of arms and the lack of even a single shot-gun in evidence pointed very much in that direction. Nevertheless Higgins' comrades on Sinn Fein's Dublin committee were reported to be angry with Higgins that he'd even talked to Banks in the first place.

The first reaction from PSF activists in London upon learning Higgins was free, was some concern at inevitably imminent changes. The organisation had slithered lamentably in his absence, reduced to merely collecting shrinking sums of money for supporting relatives of republicans in British jails. The better ones have left, and the Special Branch/Anti-Terrorist Squad, preferring the older, orthodox, often bungling kind of Irishmen to feature in PSF, were quickly determined to prevent (at source) the Return of Higgins.

The PTA has been misused again, and Higgins' solicitor Brian Rose-Smith's own warning amply re-inforced.

On exclusion orders, such as the one served on John Higgins, he wrote in his new book on the PTA, "Policing the Police", that they are: "contrary to what the Government stated, simply a device to get rid of people whom the authorities suspect to be involved in terrorism but against whom there is insufficient evidence to obtain a conviction in a court of law."

"In short, the whole process is a bogus procedure to circumvent the normal judicial process."

Mr. Rose-Smith concluded about the PTA, an Act all British people must feel shame for whilst it stays on the statute book; "What the Act has undoubtedly done is to suppress legitimate political activity. It has also established a number of dangerous precedents in the extraordinary powers granted to the police which might well become accepted as the norm with their consequent extension to 'ordinary' crimes."

He added; "With the passing of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, (British) colonial chickens have come home to roost and, like the oppressive measures used in those erstwhile colonies of Britain, it will solve nothing. In the end, the solution will arise when Britain has withdrawn from Ireland, so permitting the Irish people to determine their own future."

Higgins, by now back in Belfast, would presumably say 'amen' to that.

## Northern Ireland

# Inside a Belfast courthouse

It was just another day in another Diplock Court. You almost certainly didn't even notice the item, buried as it was at the bottom of page seven in your newspaper. The main court news was the N.I. screws calling off their "strike". No one was interested in No 769-78, Regina v McGarrigle, McGillicuddy and Patterson in the Coroner's Court Crumlin Road courthouse, Belfast. No one that is except the prisoners, two fifteen year old schoolboys, a seventeen year old, who looks as if he were thirteen, and their bewildered relatives.

Republican News

We sat there waiting for the verdict. For the relatives, who had each travelled the 90 miles from Strabane every morning for the past two weeks, it was a tense moment. For the court officials, screws and police, it was just boring routine. A court official came in, smiled sweetly and recited "I wandered lonely as a cloud" to test each of the microphones. Then she curtsied, joked that the collection plate would be passed around later and left. Bizarre. Unreal. RUC men congratulated the screws on getting a pay rise and swapped jokes with the Special Branch men who kept looking in to try to suss out what on earth we were doing "wasting our time" watching this charade.

It was the 10th November 1978. At 10.50 am six large and bulky young screws brought in the three frightened and bewildered schoolchildren. They were all handcuffed. They didn't really look like desperate terrorists, about to break free and take over the small courtroom. 10.55 am. His honour, Judge Babington enters and starts his summing up. There is no jury of course. This is a "Diplock Court."

At 6.05 pm on the evening of 8th January 1978 the police in Strabane received an anonymous phone call to the effect that bombs had been planted in the vicinity of Smith's Mill, near the town centre. At 6.10 pm that Sunday evening one bomb exploded, doing some £2,000 worth of damage. Nobody was about and there were no casualties. The next day, for some undisclosed reason the police arrested two fifteen year old schoolboys, Kieran McGillicuddy and Danny McGarrigle and took them to Strand Road barracks in Derry. Their parents accompanied them and after perfunctory questioning they were released the same day. Two months later another Strabane youth, called, McKay, was arrested and questioned about the bombing.

He denied all knowledge of it but, according to the RUC, "confessed" that he had been sworn into the "Fee-anna" (as Judge Babington put it) in Lifford. It was "suggested" to him that he would be unable to accompany his parent on their planned European holiday next week unless he "coughed up a few names of Fianna boys." According to Kieran McGillicuddy, who says he was confronted with McKay, whom he knew, in Strand Road police station, "he named me, Danny McGarrigle and Gerry Patterson."

At any rate the three boys were brought separately to Strand Road from Strabane on the morning of 14th March 1978, and accused of acting as lookouts at the bombing and being members of "a proscribed organisation, to wit na Fianna Eireann." Their parents were not allowed to accompany them and they were refused access to a lawyer or doctor until after some twenty hours they each signed statements admitting their guilt.

Each boy alleged, separately, that during their interrogations they had been punched, beaten, had their hair pulled, made to do push-ups, forced to stand against the wall in the now familiar "stoika" position and made to crouch for long periods in "imaginary seats". The boys are frail and slightly built. Patterson,



although 17 is under 5ft and could easily pass for thirteen or even younger. They all claim that they were told "they would get more of the same thing or worse" if they didn't confess to something, and that, after signing the proffered pieces of paper, "if they said anything about their treatment to the doctor they would get a real going over."

Detective Constables Walsh and Gawley, who had done most of the questioning, both, hardly surprisingly, denied maltreating the boys. Large and impressive in the dock they solemnly swore that the three had all suddenly (and separately) decided to confess "presumably because their consciences were bothering them." That they didn't complain to the first doctor but did to their own doctors was "because they were trying to wriggle out of it." They denied the parents' claims that when, after two days, they had been permitted to see their children, in police presence, the boys had been "white, shaking and on the verge of tears" or that they had each told their parents that they "had had a doing".

Patterson certainly hadn't "been kicked in the balls and had his head held under the tap." No, they never maltreated suspects. It just didn't happen. (It should perhaps be noted that since 1971 Her Majesty's tax payers have had to shell out over £1,500,000 in compensation to people who have been beaten or tortured or "maltreated" by members of the security forces, and yet despite this, not one single member of the RUC or British Army has ever spent one night in jail for meting out this "maltreatment".)

In his summing up Judge Babington made it quite clear where his sympathies lay. He dismissed the boys' allegations as "fabrications". The parents and relatives who had visited the boys "had not impressed him as truthful witnesses." Similarly the seven boys who all swore that they had been with the accused on that Sunday afternoon "could not be trusted." The defence lawyer, who had pointed out that according to the boys' statements as presented by the police, they would have been acting as "lookouts" so far away from the scene of the explosion that they couldn't possibly have warned the person who did plant the bomb if anyone had come on the scene, "had a point, but not a totally convincing one."

Nor did he find it in any way strange that the boys are supposed to have admitted acting as lookout at 4 pm for a bomb which exploded at 6.10 pm and which, according to police forensic experts had had a ONE hour timer on it. He was impressed by the fact that the entire membership of Strabane District Council, obviously mindful of the fate of Willie Gallagher, himself a victim of Strand Road barracks, had written to him requesting clemency and with the character evidence given for the boys by a youth leader, nonetheless he was quite satisfied that they had not been maltreated in any way and were guilty of the crimes as charged.

Judge Babington went on to issue a stern warning to the parents of Strabane. Keep your children away from Lifford! It was a pernicious place where young people could obviously fall into bad company. To prevent these young men, who had all just spent 8 months on remand in Crumlin Road jail although two were under 17, from meeting bad company he would sentence them each to four years. McGillicuddy and McGarrigle to a detention centre, no remission, the diminutive Patterson to prison.

The prisoners, who were inarticulate and bewildered, didn't really seem to understand what was happening. The relatives were stunned. The boys were led away in handcuffs. The court was adjourned until Monday and another case. There is nothing particularly unusual or surprising about the case. It is unlikely that there will be protests to "Free the Strabane Three"

Like 85% of all cases heard before a Diplock Court the accused were convicted solely on an alleged confession, without any corroborative evidence. Like 90% of those who appear before such courts the judge has convicted them.

Judge Babington is a busy man. He is also a strong man on the "law and order" issue. Back in 1971, when MP for North Down, he said "It is now clear that the NI Civil Rights Association and the IRA have exactly the same aim in mind. If the internees were released we would be faced with a whole new set of demands." Alas, interment has ended, but still, you can always remand men for up to three years without bringing them to trial. But why worry? Isn't "normalcy" returning? Aren't the "books" being cleared in the RUC offices? Like I said, it was just another day in just another Diplock Court.

John McGuffin



# There's no place like home

Squatters celebrated the tenth anniversary of the current squatting movement last month. Or rather they didn't — squatting is in such a weak state at the moment that the anniversary passed unnoticed.

Ten years ago, a group of housing 'activists' established a squat in Ilford, East London. The owners, Redbridge Council, tried unsuccessfully to evict with the help of hired thugs — an act which created a blaze of publicity and thus ensured that the squatters' action was imitated throughout the country. The present squatting movement, the third this century following those after each of the two world wars, had begun.

It is an appropriate time to assess the political significance of the movement in the past ten years, and to explain the confusions around squatting. It has never really been taken up by the left as a significant issue.

Squatters are all things to all

people. To the *Daily Telegraph*, they are a direct threat 'to society's survival'; in the labour movement, they are often made out to be social security scroungers; to large sections of the left, they are considered to be apolitical hippies; and, thanks to the media, a large section of the general public are worried that they'll lose their homes to squatters when they go on holiday.

A political assessment is not made easier by the conflicting and surprising responses of local councils of different political hues. The Tories are hostile to the public sector of housing and, perversely, have a tacit regard for squatters who, by taking on state bureaucracies, exhibit the kind of in-

dividual enterprise which is at the heart of right wing thinking. On occasion they have made enormous concessions to squatters.

In 1970, for example, the GLC became the first local authority to grant a licence (permission to stay) to squatters and in 1977, Horace Cutler's GLC implemented an 'amnesty' in which 5,000 squatters were given licences and offers of tenancies. Shortly after Cutler announced this piece of benevolence Wandsworth's Labour council, at the time reputedly the most left in the country, maintained a hard line against their squatters: their policy of eviction and no rehousing led to the first use by the police of the new anti squatting law, the Criminal Law Act 1977 (commonly known as the criminal trespass law).

It is not possible to generalise on the attitude of the establishment political parties to squatting from this, as on occasion, Labour councils

like Lambeth and Camden have given in to squatters' demands whilst Tory councils like Harrow and Croydon have been eager to have squatters arrested.

At central government level, the issue is clearer: neither has welcomed squatters. The Tories dreamed up the Criminal Law Act proposals and Labour implemented them, albeit in a diluted form. The law does not make squatting illegal. It merely makes it more difficult to defend squats from eviction: by making it legal for owners to enter and throw squatters' belongings out when the squatters are at work or away; and by making it illegal to 'resist a bailiff' executing a possession order against squatters.

It also creates other offences around the issue of trespass which are designed to give squatters a rougher time than they had previously. But squatting has con-

tinued in spite of the implementation of this law.

This unity of opposition from central government should give the squatting movement heart in its efforts to be taken seriously. Squatting is a form of direct action which hits hard at the bourgeois heart. Taking over someone else's house, even though it is unused, is a direct challenge to capitalist property relations. Certainly you'd soon find yourself in the nick if you tried to do it with cars or washing machines. But squatting also fills a very basic need — getting a roof over your head. It is this double function which has led to much confusion.

Unquestionably most people squat to have a place to live but it is the people who squat for political reasons, or who are prepared to defend their squat through taking political action, that form the core of the movement. Without them — and this is the situation towards which we are now gradually heading — there will be no movement, just scattered and unorganised squatters.

Italian visitors with experience of squatting in their own country are astounded that unorganised squatters are given enough protection by the law to enable them to stay in their houses. In Italy all squats are highly sophisticated and co-ordinated actions, normally organised by a specific left faction. In Britain, the ruling class's well tried policy of repressive tolerance is at work. Since unorganised squatters pose little threat to the *status quo* either at a local or national level, they are largely ignored.

Of course, they do have occasional run-ins with the law but in general the 'authorities' recognise that it would be more hassle to do anything about them in finding rehousing than to leave them alone until their time is up when the house is needed. In other areas, squatting is contained by gutting of houses, threats of removal from the waiting list, service cut-offs and so on. In short, they make squatting difficult but not illegal.

Although the unorganised and isolated squatters are by far the majority, it is the organised groups living in compact communities — Tolmers Village, St Agnes Place, Hebden Bridge, Elgin Avenue, Huntley Street — that have attracted publicity, scored victories and elicited nervous editorials in the *Daily Telegraph*. At times the victories have been particularly sweet: thwarting property speculators, preventing the demolition of good houses, changing insane plans, and obtaining rehousing.

Squatters on occasion have been very strong at this level, forging links with community and labour movement groups and raising the issue of single person homelessness. Squatters have had a profound impact on certain areas. But on a national basis, it is difficult to see many concrete achievements. Certainly they have raised consciousness on the question of leaving houses empty and their actions have been one factor behind

the move away from large scale redevelopments towards rehabilitation and the construction of smaller estates.

It has however, proved difficult to co-ordinate various local squatting campaigns on a national or even London-wide basis or to create an effective federation through which squatters could exert pressure and present a coherent image. This was most apparent in 1975 when squatters were powerless to respond to a seemingly concerted attack in the media.

The attack, which was started by an untruthful letter in *The Times* alleging that a house had been squatted whilst the occupier was on holiday, and that the police had refused to intervene, lasted a month. It coincided with the Law Commission's discussions on possible changes in the law and was clearly influential in the making of certain recommendations. The media attack contained all the usual jibes at squatters scrounging and taking other people's homes, and reached its peak with a piece in the *People* which started: "An Englishman's home used to be his castle. But now squatters can take over..."

There have been several attempts at central co-ordination ranging from the Ron Bailey-inspired Family Squatting Advisory Service to the London Squatters Union (formed in 1977). None of these achieved any tangible success except in their support for actions at a local level (e.g. the LSU inspired the Huntley Street squat,) and in the provision of advice and information (e.g. the *Squatters Handbook*.) It is clear that at this level squatting has failed to make an impact.

It has not, for example, penetrated throughout England and Wales (it's illegal in Scotland but very prevalent in Northern Ireland); there are still vast numbers of empty houses and no requisitioning law on the statute books; local authorities refuse to make use of their empty property; there are still 50,000 homeless families, let alone single people; housing remains an issue around which it is very difficult to organise; and so on.

At the risk of appearing simplistic, I see one core reason for the lack of effectiveness of squatting at a national level. The one slogan which has united all squatters, 'Housing for all' is one that can

only be fought for at a national level. At a local level it is meaningless, as is demonstrated by the situation in Lambeth now where the local council, although strongly left wing and sympathetic to squatters, has said that eventually it will have to evict them without rehousing. The reason for this contradiction, according to Lambeth, is that eventually they'll run out of houses in which to rehouse squatters and that central government will not provide any more finance for housing.

All fine and worthy, but where does that leave Lambeth's squatters? They have to translate their local demand into a national issue. The only way they could do this effectively is with the help of the labour movement, the organised left and non-aligned socialists. The lack of overall interest from these sectors in squatting and housing issues has led to the isolation and impotence of the movement. The left has taken up the issue of squatting in a limited way when there have been big events such as the Huntley Street eviction in August 1978 when 650 police and four bulldozers were used to evict 100 squatters. And many individuals on the left have squatted at one time. But they have either been involved only in local activities or they have quickly become involved in other issues.

Who would think, for example, that the *Leveller* has been housed in a squat for the past two years? Its coverage of the subject in the magazine has been minimal and members of its collective have been conspicuous by their absence at, say, London Squatters' Union meetings. By which I am not attacking the *Leveller*, but merely making the point that the left has disregarded squatting and seen it as a peripheral issue.

Support from the left is not the Nirvana of politics, as many campaigns have found to their cost. But it does provide a solid base of support from which to build. There are a number of reasons for the failure of the left to come across with the goods: a slight distaste of squatting with its no-rent anarchist possibilities; the strongly rooted idea that only labour movement struggles are important; the double function of squatting explained above; the difficulties of organising squatters; the bad media image; and possibly, most important, the all-consuming

nature of squatting effectively.

If you are really going to fight it out and sit behind barricades, squatting becomes a deep commitment and a very personal one. It's your home and your belongings you're defending and many people on the left are reluctant to make such a commitment or to take direct action which could lead to arrest. The squatters' propaganda is true: not many people choose to squat if they really have an alternative.

The Campaign Against a Criminal Trespass Law has demonstrated that squatting does have wider potential. Because the criminal trespass law proposals affected workers' and student occupations, CACTL took the issue into the labour movement. Although CACTL lost the battle to prevent the law being put on the statute book, it has continued to obtain wide support from trades unions, trades councils, student bodies and local Labour parties as well as community and squatting groups. CACTL has broadened the issue out to fight against other proposed new laws in an excellent new pamphlet entitled *Whose Law and Order* and their contact with the squatting movement is now fairly remote, not least because that movement hardly exists.

Which brings us back to where we started. The squatting movement is probably now weaker than at any time in the last ten years. Where squatters haven't been bought off with rehousing, they've been battered by the legal attacks and the media lies or they've saved up for that mortgage deposit. The change in orientation by local authorities away from large scale redevelopment has meant that the natural unit of the movement, the local group, has been unable to form. Squatting needs an empty street or a block of flats as a basis for organisation.

Add this to the general decline in political activity since the defeat of the Heath government, and you get some understanding of the decline. The paradox of the simultaneous existence of empty houses and homeless people does not lead automatically to squatting. Otherwise where were the squatters of 1956 and 1966 to go with those of 1946 and 1976? There weren't any and there may well be none in 1986 unless the value of squatting as a political activity is recognised.

Christian Wolmar



# Spying on your friends

It was another embarrassment for American intelligence: headlines all over Italy and widely reported throughout the world. On February 13, 1979 the Italian government expelled an American Embassy official for espionage, the first such expulsion in Italy in living memory. Such drastic action, taken publicly, is almost unprecedented among NATO allies. It raises many intriguing questions, not least of which is whether the US government is systematically spying on its NATO allies. Philip Agee reports.

In September 1978 the Madrid magazine *Triunfo* published a "Top Secret" US Army document entitled *Supplement B to Army Field Manual 30-31 (Stability Operations)*. The document was an instruction on how US military intelligence units operating in "friendly" countries should infiltrate the military and security services of the "friendly" government in order to collect secret information which could be used to provoke the host government into taking a desired course of action. The document also described how to infiltrate insurgent and radical groups in order to stage provocations, with violence if necessary, to bring on repression by host governments against communists and other leftists.

During the months that followed the document appeared in publications throughout most of Western Europe, despite US government efforts to suppress it. In Rome, for example, the US Embassy tried unsuccessfully to stop publication by *L'Europeo* by telling its publisher that making the document public would be "inopportune". In the US the document was published in the January 1979 issue of *Covert Action Information Bulletin* (CAIB).

In mid-January unidentified "American officials" told reporters that the Top Secret document was part of a world-wide Soviet KGB disinformation campaign designed to damage US relations with its European and Far Eastern allies. The Pentagon said the document was a forgery. And the Intelligence Committee of the US House of Representatives said it was investigating this and other forgeries designed to discredit American intelligence activities.

Little did the plot-pushers know that at that very moment in Rome an American military intelligence operation was under way to penetrate the security apparatus of a NATO ally. Dominic Perrone, an Italian-American whose Italian carried a heavy Brooklyn accent, was the central figure.

Working from his Military Liaison Office in the US Embassy, Perrone was gathering sensitive information from six Italian security and intelligence officials on the inner workings, effectiveness and leadership of the Italian government's anti-terrorism campaign. The information he got was highly sensitive because it consisted of the opinions of his Italian counterparts that the anti-terrorism operations were a shambles, indeed practically hopeless.

This definitely was not the kind of information on Soviet military matters that one would expect Perrone to receive in the normal work of a liaison officer exchanging intelligence with a "friendly" NATO service. In fact, Perrone was infiltrating the Italian security services precisely in the manner prescribed in the "forged" Army Field Manual Supplement.

In late January Perrone wrote a 4000-word report to the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency with copies to other US military intelligence units in Italy and West Germany. Among the recipients in Washington were the CIA, the Department of State, and the National Security Agency.

But in Washington secrets are still kept like weather reports. In early February, just a week after Perrone's report hit analysts' desks there, someone in Washington dropped a copy in the mail to the Rome daily *La Repubblica*. On February 13, following translation and efforts to verify its authenticity, *La Repubblica* pub-

lished it. The same day the Italian government ordered Perrone to leave the country within 24 hours.

The case made headlines the following day in every Italian paper and was carried by the international wire services and even reported by the BBC world service. But such is the ephemeral nature of crisis reporting that no full analysis of the report appeared outside Italy. Yet many interesting questions arise from a close reading of the report, a photocopy of which was given to CAIB for review and distribution.

First of all, is the report authentic, or could it be another "KGB forgery"? The US Embassy in Rome, the Department of State in Washington, and the Pentagon all as much as admitted that the report is genuine by refusing to deny its authenticity - in fact they refused all comment because they "never comment on intelligence matters." Then too, Perrone himself could have denied that he wrote the report, but he didn't. Moreover, a review by CAIB staff with intelligence experience led to the conclusion that the report is indeed genuine, particularly because of the very recent date of the information (leaving hardly enough time to concoct a forgery) and the considerable data that could be verified independently.

The Perrone report is a scathing criticism of the Italian government's anti-terrorist operations which are described as "totally ineffective", "in violation of the law", "in chaos", and "led by unqualified persons". While this is the consensus of Perrone's Italian military and carabinieri (national police) sources, he leaves no doubt that the Embassy Military Liaison Office agrees.

The report carries a "2" evaluation of its information content which in US intelligence usage means "probably true", while the sources' credibility evaluation is "B", meaning "usually reliable". Moreover, Perrone emphasizes in a special comment the sensitivity of both the information and the sources' positions. This is the reason Perrone attached to the report, in addition to the "Secret" security classification, the NOFORN sensitivity indicator which excludes the report from the normal intelligence exchange programs between the US and friendly governments such as the NATO allies.

NOFORN means "no foreign dissemination", i.e. the report may be seen by US officials only. The report is divided into two major sections: first, a discussion of the workings of the Italian intelligence and security services, and secondly, descriptions of the personalities and work habits of the three carabinieri generals in charge of anti-terrorist operations.

Perrone's central theme is the failure of Major General Giulio Grassini to set up effectively the new anti-terrorist agency established in late 1977 by the Italian parliament. This organization, the Intelligence and Democratic Security Service (SISDE - Servizio Per Le Informazioni E Per La Sicurezza Democratica) was to have centralized in one agency all the anti-terrorist operations then conducted by the various military and police services.

However, according to a report prepared in December 1978 for Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti by his Executive Committee for Intelligence and Security Services, SISDE at the end of its first year of operations was "not functioning according to the law; had not been carrying out its assigned mission; had not been able to develop a viable structure and was still



in the process of organizing; was being led by unqualified persons who ignored the professionally qualified personnel" and "had to be considered almost totally ineffective".

One has to ask, on reading such heavy criticism of the Italian security services and their leaders, whether Perrone's sources might be biased through professional jealousies, embittered by failures, or simply incompetent themselves. Perhaps Perrone gave them too much credibility in assigning the "probably true" and "usually reliable" indicators. It could be, except that US intelligence practice reserves assigning "usually reliable" to a source (in this case all six sources have this rating) until the source has been tested over a period of six months to a year. (The rating is on a scale from "A" meaning "always reliable" to "F" meaning "reliability cannot be judged".)

In any case Perrone describes the sources as officers of the military intelligence service (SISMI) and the Carabinieri Corps from junior grade to General or Admiral rank, working in different positions that involve "close contacts with Major General Grassini and SISDE". It seems they ought to know.

The report reveals that the Military Liaison Office in Rome has used these or other sources for similar reporting in the past and here we come again to the supposedly forged US Army intelligence manual. Perrone notes in his

opening summary that the report corresponds to the information requirements of six paragraphs of a directive issued for intelligence collection. Clearly US military intelligence has imposed a continuing requirement for the Embassy's Military Liaison Office to obtain the kind of information contained in Perrone's report. In fact, Perrone also wrote that this report "complements and updates information contained in (three other intelligence reports filed in 1978)."

Is this a classic spy operation with Perrone paying money to his sources and cloaking the operation with all the paraphernalia of clandestine operations? Probably not, although the heading of the report contains a "Project Number" which in the CIA's practice is usually, an accounting device for control of funds. More likely, Perrone came to know his sources through normal liaison contact for exchange of intelligence on NATO's adversaries, gradually obtained their confidence, and eventually coaxed them through skillful persuasion into revealing sensitive information on their own services that ought to be kept "in the family".

In any case the CIA's practice throughout the world, and one would expect the military to operate in the same way, is to use "service-to-service" official liaison contacts as an avenue to penetrate the "sister" services. The goal is to protect the CIA's unilateral operations (i.e.

activities unknown by the host government or services) from discovery and penetration, or to have other services perform services for the CIA, such as telephone tapping, and to monitor the capabilities and morale of the local services. Whether or not the Top Secret US Army intelligence manual is a forgery, the Perrone report shows that US military intelligence is operating in keeping with the manual's instructions, and without doubt its operations are consistent with the CIA's practices.

Finally, one cannot overlook the question of why this secret report was given to *La Repubblica*. One can imagine Perrone's shock, along with that of others in the US Embassy in Rome, to discover that it took just two weeks for the report to go from his desk in the Embassy to Washington for distribution and then back to Rome for the newspapers.

To answer why the document was leaked, one must ask what result publication will most likely have. No doubt relations between American and Italian services will be strained. In other countries "sister" services of the CIA and US military intelligence services will have still another reason to withhold or reduce liaison and collaboration with the American services. For some five years successive Directors of the CIA have complained of this problem in denouncing leaks and revelations from Congressional investigations.

The Perrone report also had repercussions in Italian politics. Both Communists and Christian Democrats denounced Perrone's activities, and the case surely would aggravate acting Prime Minister Andreotti's difficulties in forming a new government with the Communist Party - which has already begun to agitate for a new investigation into the government's handling of the Moro investigation. Such prejudice to the US's main political allies in Italy (whom the CIA has financed with tens of millions of dollars since World War 2) would seem to rule out the possibility that the report was leaked intentionally in order to spur the anti-terrorist campaign to greater effectiveness.

In the end, dissention in Washington may be the most plausible explanation for the leak. The case could only add embarrassment and discredit to the increasingly shaky position of Stansfield Turner, the CIA Director, who in the end must assume responsibility for the Perrone "flap". For he is responsible for all American intelligence services, including the military, not just for the CIA.

As in the case of President Carter's recent hand-written criticism of the CIA's intelligence failures in evaluating the Shah's stability in Iran, which was probably leaked by a high CIA official seeking to undermine Turner, the Perrone report would have a similar effect in Washington. Turner seems to have created so much dissention within the American intelligence community that his own people seek ways to embarrass him and force his resignation.

Whatever the truth behind this affair may be, one result is certain. Dominic Perrone, who promised another report on the internal structure of SISDE, will file no more from Rome. And his Italian sources are unlikely to continue exposing their dirty laundry for their NATO "ally".

(Photocopies of the full report may be obtained from Covert Action Information Bulletin, P.O. Box 50272, Washington DC 20004.)

# Fighting Indian Capital

In a single year, 1514, the Portuguese, with the help of the king of Vijayanagar, conquered, lost and reconquered Goa from the King of Bijapur, and set about Christianising it. In December 1961, after a four-hour scuffle (the brevity of which gave a boost to the independence movements in Portugal's African colonies), the Portuguese were thrown out by the Indian Army and the Western world affected to be outraged. By then, white gleaming churches in Portuguese colonial style dominated the Goan landscape and the lives of half the population. Ancient Hindu temples, more secluded, having survived the inquisitorial zeal of earlier centuries, remained the focal point for the castes and deities of the other half of the population.

The Portuguese had kept Goa a "free port", and discouraged industry, apart from the mining and exporting of manganese ore. Most transport bumped along on dusty red-mud roads. Electricity was restricted to the main towns. Many Goans, mostly Catholics, significantly schooled with English as the medium of instruction, emigrated in search of work—to Indian cities, or to East Africa where they became bank clerks and civil servants. (These days they go to the Gulf, or to Australia and Canada.) The less educated went to sea. And Goan villages became reminiscent of Goldsmith's Sweet Auburn—half-deserted. The people who remained survived on handouts from relatives abroad, on agriculture and fishing, on trading and on smuggling foreign goods and currency across the border into the vast Indian hinterland.

Whether Hindu or Catholic, Goans remained religious, and politically apathetic—even the independence struggle against the Portuguese had been carried on only by a few hundred *satyagrahis* (non-violent protesters). The Indians introduced elections, and established an administration under the direct control of the Central Government in New Delhi. Colleges of higher education were organised, roads were tarred, villages electrified, bridges built and plans made to industrialise Goa. Indian business magnates pounced.

The first Chief Minister, Dr Bandodkar, was quite popular. When he died, the dynastic tendency that crops up in much of Third World politics ensured that his daughter, Sashikala

A mass movement of peasants, fisherfolk, students and unemployed has emerged in the former Portuguese colony of Goa. H.O. Nazareth reports on political mobilisation in a country the west only knows as a "mecca for hippies, freaks and wintering tourists".

Kakodkar, succeeded him. A skilful manipulator, she set sections of the opposition against each other and concentrated on amassing a fortune. The lack of alternative leadership; her father's reputation; big business support; the fact that the majority of people living in Goa were Hindus like herself; and the sheer political inexperience of the people have kept her in power. Mrs Kakodkar has also put the blame for many of her own dirty tricks on New Delhi.

On 5 June 1973, Goa's first major industrial complex—manufacturing fertilisers—began operations. It was welcomed. But within months the effluents it puked into the sea had killed off large shoals of fish, threatening the livelihood of Goa's 60,000 fisherfolk. In response to complaints, tests were carried out, but no remedial action taken. The poisons began to pollute the River Zuari, affecting agriculture, killing livestock and spoiling drinking water. Mrs Kakodkar did nothing.

By February 1975, a Movement against Pollution had emerged. A chain hunger strike was organised. And on 31 March, over 2,000 people marched to the factory gates demanding closure of the factory, compensation for pollution victims, and provision of drinking water. By 19 April, after many confrontations in which priests joined in—something unprecedented—the courts were compelled to issue an order closing down the factory with immediate effect. The factory was reopened three months later, only after major changes in



processing the effluents reduced the toxic content. Further changes were forced upon the factory, and still more are being negotiated at present.

This minor victory had great consequences. In the interests of exports mechanised fishing boats had been introduced in the mid-sixties. They had been bought second-hand from the USA, Japan, Britain, Mexico and Norway.

The UN/FAO had recommended trawlers for deep-sea fishing. The World Bank had provided loans. New Delhi, via the local administration, had offered huge subsidies to big business to buy them. But they were ill-equipped for deep-sea fishing, and the owners contented themselves with purse-seining off-shore, disrupting fish breeding grounds, wrecking the locals' fishing nets, and depriving them of their catch. Since the trawlers were only interested in shrimp for export to Japan and USA, other fish that they caught were dumped, dead, back into the sea. Exports rose phenomenally. So did the price of fish. In 1974 a Fisheries Law was passed: "No person shall fish with the help of mechanised fishing craft in inland waters which includes the sea along the coast up to a depth of 5 fathoms." No penalties were stipulated. The trawlers didn't take a blind bit of notice.

The fishing community, which had been in the forefront of the pollution confrontation, stopped complaining and started organising. In November 1975, during Indira Gandhi's notorious Emergency, they began a political campaign. With the help of a few sympathetic teachers, engineers and priests, they organised marches, sit-ins, hunger-strikes; got arrested in thousands for nonviolent protests; eventually fought the police.

When the Janata party came to power, people expected the situation to improve. It did not. As one fisherman put it, "If we attack a trawler violating the law, they arrest us, but nobody arrests the trawler for violations." All Mrs Kakodkar did was to try and rescind the 1974 Fisheries Law, but the court held her attempt *ultra vires*. Not that that changed anything.

The Goenchea Ramponkaranchu Ekvott (Goan Beach-Seiners Union), recognising that the situation was the same in other coastal states, like Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnatak, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, initiated contacts with other fishing communities. They formed the National Forum for Catamaran and Country Boat Fisherfolk's rights. The 5.5 million Indians that live off fishing have since burnt down over 100 trawlers off Kerala and another 100 off Tamil Nadu. Goan fisherfolk have physically hauled trawlers on to rocks and are planning to disrupt the supply of diesel oil

used by the 400 trawlers off Goa. But they expect to have to organise a lot more before they can force the 12,000 trawler fleet around the Indian coast to fish in deeper waters.

Meanwhile, big business interests are trying to corner the wholesale market in fish and vegetables. The fisherfolk, who still supply more than 75% of India's fish, and small producers of vegetables, are therefore also attempting to set up their own marketing and retailing cooperatives. And although the central government professes to support and promote traditional crafts and small industries, the business lobby's power has reduced the policy to lip-service. The press has responded sympathetically to their plight but the fisherfolk realise that only through their own actions will they achieve anything.

The policies of India's Prime Minister, Moraji Desai, by alienating the Goan population, has increased support for the fishing community. He refuses to give official status to the local language, Konkani, which is spoken in a number of dialects all along the Konkani coast. Ignoring Goa's unique history, he favours a merger of Goa with one of the two neighbouring states, Maharashtra or Karnatak. And when he suggested national prohibition, Goa's toddy-tappers began coordinating their activities with the fisherfolk.

The militant mood has spread further. For years, students have been making representations for half-fares, without success. In January this year, they took to the streets, stopping most transport all over Goa for several days. For the first time in Goa's history, its biggest town, Margao, was closed down—shops, offices and all—by student action forcing Mrs Kakodkar to give in. The students also allege that her



Fishing community delegation meeting PM Maraji Desai in Delhi

husband, who controls transport licensing—mostly run by private enterprise—takes a cut each week from every bus and lorry owner, over and above the tidy sum he rakes in for issuing a licence for a vehicle in the first place.

An Unemployed Goans' Association has also been launched. Together, the four groups mentioned represent almost 30% of the Goan population, and have begun to develop grass roots organisations to fight Mrs Kakodkar's

Maharshtrawadi Gomantak Party in the 1982 elections.

In 1975, a fisherwoman declared, "If we go on a fast, they arrest us. But if we starve, nobody cares..." In trying to change that, the fishing community has dispersed political apathy. And their national organisation is now also attempting to build links with counterparts in similar plight in Britain, West Africa and Latin America.



Beach-lkdjkl hauling in their catch



Trawler hauled on to the rocks by Goan fisherfolk



Fishing community delegation meeting PM Maraji Desai in Delhi



**RAPE**

# "Every man benefits from the actions of every rapist"

Women are more than half the human race and yet there is very little organised resistance to the worldwide system of oppression and exploitation of women that is male supremacy. Maintaining women in a condition of non-resistance requires the exercise of force in many different ways and on many different levels. Women are carefully trained to consider their condition 'natural' and themselves unworthy and incapable of resistance.

Ideological control is exercised through education, the media, the social services, humour and the popular song and is backed up by economic constraints and legal disabilities. This complex and sophisticated system necessary for the oppression of women rests, as does every other system, on the threat and use of brute force.

The capitalist ruling class can call out the army or the police to deal with protest and the use of force will be represented as legitimate. In the case of the oppression of women every man can choose to use force against women in his own interests and in the interests of every other member of the ruling class that is men. His right to use force will be sanctioned by law, e.g. under the law no man can be accused of raping his wife, or by blaming the woman - e.g. "she was a nagging wife", "she asked for it". This seems so 'natural' that the political function of the many and varied kinds of force and threat of force that are used against women is seldom recognised or discussed.

## The facts of Rape

All men are potential rapists. Not just the mentally disturbed. When 250,000 women were raped in Bangladesh by Pakistani soldiers it was not the work of a few psychopaths. When women in Vietnam were raped as a matter of course and had bayonets and hand grenades stuck up their vaginas by American soldiers, this was done by 'dutiful' sons, 'romantic'

lovers, 'loving' husbands, 'responsible' fathers, and the boy next door. The military authorities of every nation give approval, tacit or avowed in training sessions, to each soldier's pleasure in the mutilation of women. Behaviour which might be socially embarrassing if carried out too enthusiastically at home, in wartime is a reward and morale booster for their own side and is supposed to demoralise the enemy.

Rape is not the result of compelling sexual urges on the part of the male. Many rapists are impotent and unable to penetrate the woman they attack. Many who manage penetration cannot ejaculate. This is because rape is actually about the forcible, often violent, humiliation of women. It is from the exercise of power that rapists gain satisfaction.

Women of all ages, from babies to elderly women, of all colours, social classes and occupations get raped. An American study of the sexual abuse of children gives the example of an 18 month old female child who was taken to the doctor by her mother with a fissure in her anus. The doctor said not to worry it would soon clear up. Two days later she was dead, asphyxiated by the penis of her 19 year old babysitter. Slightly older children are routinely abused by their fathers. The enormous cover-up job done on the subject of incest by doctors, social services, sanctions what is actually going on. The average age for the onset of incest for female victims (men sometimes abuse their boy children too) is 8 years old.

## Learning to fear rape

The fear of rape is instilled through the experience of sexual abuse in childhood: from indecent exposure and fondling to child rape. All reported offenders against children are male. Female victims outnumber males ten to one. If they do not experience sexual interference children are repeatedly warned not to talk to strange men. This is not much protection since the vast majority of child victims are abused by men they know. It does help make female children generally timid and afraid of their environment.

The fear of rape is absorbed through newspaper reports not just of rape, but of women being savagely attacked or murdered. Every woman knows that she may at any time, be assaulted by a man for no other reason than that she is a woman and he wishes to damage her. Some men may be attacked by groups of men because of their skin colour or sexual orientation. All women must be afraid of every individual man. He may attack her because she is black or a lesbian, but usually simply because she is a woman.

## The political function of rape

Every man benefits from the actions of every rapist. It is in the interests of every man that women should be more afraid. That the self-confidence and independence of women are undermined so they do not resist and fight back against their oppression. From this oppression every man, not just the ruling group of men, gains great advantages, economic, psychological and sexual. The existence of jokes about rape, pornography which exists to provide material for rape fantasy, and reports in the media about rape all serve to inflate the confidence of men directly as they diminish that of women.

The immediate effect of the fear of rape is to ensure that all public places, at all times but particularly at night, are the domain of men and no-go areas for women. Even by day, with a child in a pram, on the way to the shops (surely a legitimate activity!) a woman will get hassled in the street. Women are supposed to walk out only in the company of men, at certain times and in certain places.

Women live in a colonised territory where they may walk in the street not as of right but on sufferance. Lest we forget this, the policing actions of men: flashing, muttering obscenities, kerb crawling, following us, are there to remind us. The beauty of the system, for the male ruling class, is that women are trained to feel guilt when attacked, not anger, and to wonder what they did to provoke their punishment.

Off the streets women are not safe either. In their own homes they may be the victims of rape, flashing and voyeurs (peeping Toms) and obscene telephone calls. The threatening phone caller steals satisfaction from a woman's confusion and fear. The woman learns that her 'home' is part of the world of men she inhabits and works in on sufferance.

## What fuels male violence?

### - Hatred of women.

Male violence is not carried out just to keep women in line, though that is always its effect. Men gain pleasure from expressing their hatred of women. All men are misogynists, to some extent or another. Evidence is men's conversation, jokes, stories by which they form bonds with one another by putting women down. Evidence is the multi-million pound pornography industry.

Every man has received some pleasure at some time from the degradation of women in porn. Their hatred may be more or less overt, more or less conscious, but it is one of the foundations of their ego formation. Their personalities are built on their superiority as men relative to women. Thus the hatred is built in and like a slow-release drug capsule it fuels politically effective aggression towards women throughout their lives.

## The spectrum of sexual terrorism

Rape must be seen as part of the spectrum of sexual terrorism that serves to control women. We must not fall into the trap of seeing rape as uniquely shocking. This would suit the psychologists and criminologists who are anxious to remove from the statute book such 'minor offences' as voyeurism and exhibitionism, arguing that they are not dangerous to women. It is important that these acts be seen as offences under the law. It is difficult enough now for women to feel they have the right to be angry, and not guilty or ashamed of their fear. To decriminalise these offences would totally reinforce the confidence trick already carried out on women that such acts are the work of harmless misfits. They are forms of sexual terrorism.

The spectrum of violence by men towards women, all aspects of which serve the twin purpose of male gratification and political control of women, includes: wife-beating, sexual abuse of children, frotteurism (rubbing the penis against part of a woman's body - common at Wimbledon tennis matches and in the tube), voyeurism (often reconnoitring for a rape victim), obscene remarks, pornography, touching up, Boston strangler and Bradford ripper, wife-murder, obscene telephone calls, father/daughter incest and rape.

Cases of sexual terrorism are not random isolated instances of a few sadistic men brutalising helpless victims any more than were lynchings and beatings of black people in the southern states of the U.S.A. Rather, sexual terrorism against women is an effective, sanctioned policy of the male ruling class to keep women in a state of subjection. Male violence against women is as vicious and effective a weapon of political control as tanks in Prague or the British army in Northern Ireland. But it goes on all the time, no truces, no moratoriums.

Sheila Jeffreys

**RAPE**

# "Rape can't just be seen in biological terms"

The issues of rape and male violence against women are relatively new for the women's movement. Abortion rights and nursery facilities have long preoccupied us; a sense of guilt creeps upon me that it is only recently that rape has ranked as an issue of crucial importance. Why should it have been so ignored? Rape has figured much too prominently throughout the history of patriarchy. And once raised and incorporated as the seventh demand of the Women's Liberation Movement last year, the debate raged bitterly on its interpretation and implications.

The women's movement has always fought its battles on two planes, the personal and the political. On a personal level, the issues of sexual politics have always been close to our hearts, and we have struggled to have them accepted as bona fide political issues on the left. The second dimension of struggle - women's rights - has been more readily acceptable. When Radical and Revolutionary feminists took up the issue of male violence, socialist feminists were confronted with a subject that cut across the personal and the political and that made us examine the link between our feminism and our socialism. It couldn't be ignored; the evidence around us in Women's Aid refuges was too conclusive.

Revolutionary feminists raised two important questions: male violence (with the implication that men are a violent species), and the political control over women that this violence brings. The problem for socialist feminists is that revolutionary feminist theory leads to biological determinism. Men are what they are because they were born little boys. The logic of their position is that political control over women will continue until women reverse the pecking order and seize political control over men. What is passed over is capitalism, that all-pervading economic force which shapes our destinies, like it or not.

As a socialist feminist, I have no argument with the statement that rape means male power over women, but I place my emphasis on the word power. Rape does not simply occur because of the fact that men have the sexual instrument to effect penetration; it can't just be seen in biological terms. Rape is really about the strong beating the weak: it's capitalism combined with patriarchy that gives men that strength, that power which women have to break in the struggle to eliminate rape.

Male authority is asserted through the act of rape and then reinforced throughout the capitalist system. A woman is first assaulted by a man, then insult is added to injury by the police, the doctor, the courts and the media. It's not so much that society lauds the actual act of rape, but make no mistake about it, the power to rape is held over us all the time.

The prevailing ideology is that women have to succumb to male power. How many tedious courtroom hours have been spent trying to ascertain whether the woman really did resist the rapist's attack right the way through? After all, we are all supposed to be in love with men and their powerful image. If, when we feel our lives are in danger, we don't put up a fight, then



society's implication is that we really loved every minute of it, whereas the man is buttressed and protected by capitalist ideology. Many of our fathers are horrified by the idea of rape, but this protectiveness towards wives and daughters has little to do with our fight for autonomy.

A theoretical analysis of rape, however, is only half the battle. The problem of how to combat rape looms ahead. Because it has its root in both capitalism and patriarchy, the logic of any real combat is revolution. Revolution not of women over men, but workers over capitalists. To rest my laurels there does nothing to help women in the here and now, but when I consider the various reformist tactics available in the struggle against rape, the conflicts between my socialism and my feminism become glaringly obvious.

Some reforms I accept, others I reject: the seeming schizophrenia of socialist feminism appears inescapable. One day I find myself jumping for joy at the Hull Prison riot and denouncing the prison system, the next day I find myself supporting the demonstration denouncing the guardsman's acquittal for rape and calling for a stiff prison sentence. I regain my sanity by remembering that this isn't our contradiction, but society's. I justify my apparently confused position by saying that I am asking for society's recognition of the degree of the crime of rape. If society judges the seriousness of a crime by the prison sentence it imposes, then rape ought to rank high.

I still remain torn in two. On the one hand I support reform of court procedure in rape trials - anonymity for the victim and no reference to her sexual past. But on the question of police reform, I am not so sure. How can a socialist believe in police reform? How can I believe that the police force can be professionalised and sensitized for the issue of rape in isolation? Police rape squads would use rape as yet another pretext for arresting blacks. In a society where the police force are the guardians of capitalism, I lose sight of the socialism of my beliefs in calling on police help for feminism.

One alternative that has been put forward is that of women's self-defence squads. At first they seem very attractive, but in the long term they require a high degree of co-ordination and womanpower. To be really effective, one needs local leafletting campaigns as well as a group of women to call on when rape has taken place. They system would break down or fall into disrepute if only a very small group of women were prepared to give a long term commitment to the project. Beating up a rapist can be very self satisfying, but as a permanent solution it smacks of revenge for revenge's sake. More importantly, taking justice into our own hands requires more complex and established local women's structures than exist at present.

The dilemma presents itself wherever you turn. Rehabilitation of rapists is a humane demand, devoid of the problems associated with calling for longer prison sentences. But if you rehabilitate a rapist in present-day society, you will hopefully produce a normal man. Rape can, however, be seen as a logical extension of what 'normal' men do already, so we're back to square one. Rape is not eliminated, but kept at bay.

In the long term socialist feminist energies against rape can have effect. By combatting existing ideology as regards rape, we can begin to break through this form of oppression of women. Our tactics and slogans must be carefully chosen. The popular revolutionary feminist slogan, "All men are potential rapists" may have a basis in fact but it admits of no potential for change in men, which as socialist feminists must be our aim. Rape will be fought primarily through women's action, and a slogan which is so alienating to many women is a false starter.

Demonstrations are a focal point for attack on rape. In Italy feminists have used this form to tremendous effect. Apart from the impact on the public and the state, demonstrations serve to show women's solidarity and strength, and are a contrast to the stereotype of the passive woman which the ideology of male violence would have us adhere to.

Changing society and sexist ideology can begin today. Recent police figures of crime in London show that reported rapes are up by 50 per cent. Pressure to gain anonymity for rape victims in court and its implementation in law may be having its effect: certainly more women are coming forward to report rapes. Ultimately only by taking our courage in our hands and fighting publicly will we win.

Dorothy Jones

# RAPE

## Do we want rape squads?

Four years ago a group of women got together to discuss rape. Out of their discussions came the London Rape Crisis Centre. They saw their role both as providing the kind of sympathetic help and practical advice raped women need, and as publicising factual information about rape in order to counter the myths and false assumptions surrounding it.

Recently they submitted a report to the Metropolitan Police Commissioner calling for the setting up of centralised rape squads. Tessa Weare went to talk to them about the Centre and their reasons for this demand.

### What kind of help do you give raped women?

We provide practical information and advice: about pregnancy tests, VD tests, police and legal procedure, or claiming criminal injuries compensation. We accompany women to police stations, courts, hospitals and clinics. If the woman is pregnant we will talk to her about abortion, adoption or the problems involved in keeping her child, and refer her to a pregnancy/abortion counsellor.

Rape is a terrifying and painful experience, it causes long term emotional effects such as nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, nausea, loss of appetite, fear of people and places, fear of being alone, a particular fear of all men. These effects can go on for months or even years.

Raped women frequently meet with hostility from friends and family, and that response from people they trusted just causes them more distress. It means it takes them even longer to cope. In counselling we can help them by talking about the reactions of people around them. But most importantly we talk about any guilt or blame they themselves feel.

### What kind of women have contacted you?

Over the last three years we've been contacted by 844 women and girls who've been raped and sexually assaulted. All ages, varied cultural backgrounds. About 80% of our counselling is done over the phone, which is good for the woman because then she's the one with anonymity and control. But it's sometimes very nerve-racking for us, knowing she can ring off at any time, and hoping she won't.

Women phone at very different stages after being raped. Very few phone within hours. Women phone as a result of having met with hostile treatment from police, doctors, family. We've had calls from women who thought they were coping and then suddenly discover they are pregnant and need to talk about it. We've had calls from women three months to a year afterwards who thought they had got over the rape, but find they are still suffering its effects.

We've had calls from women who've given birth as a result of a rape and are finding difficulty in developing a relationship with the child, because he or she serves as a constant reminder. We've had calls like this some four to five years after the child was born, as well as calls from women who were raped ten or even twenty years ago and have never told anybody.

What are your relationships with public bodies: doctors, social workers, police and so on?

With the exception of the police we have good relationships with other agencies. A large percentage of women we are contacted by have been referred to us. But as far as the police are concerned: in 1976 Sir Robert Mark, then Metropolitan Police Commissioner, issued a directive to all Metropolitan Police stations not to refer women to the Rape Crisis Centre. In 1978 Sir David McNee reiterated that directive.

And what do you see as your relationship to the women's movement?

The Rape Crisis Centre would never have been set up without the women's movement. We see ourselves as being part of the movement and the fight against rape as being absolutely central to the struggle of women.

Rape is not something that only happens to a certain type of woman. All studies done on rapists have shown that all but 2.5% are 'normal' men, i.e. not psychologically disturbed. Rape happens because we live in a society where man is seen as the initiator and woman as consentor, aggressive and passive, predator and prey, wolf and chick. Given that pattern of relationships between men and women, rape is a logical extension of this.

In your report you talk of an extremely hostile attitude to rape victims from certain members of the police force. Why do you think this is?

In a rape case the woman is the witness to the crime and that's precisely how the police view her, often completely ignoring the fact that she's also the victim of a terrifying attack.

Given the fact that police have no training about how to deal with a woman who has been raped and no information about the facts, patterns and effects of rape, they have the same false assumptions as the rest of society.

What we do know is that in training police are told that the majority of women reporting rape will be making false allegations and they should beware of women who are pregnant, who are late getting home or who have had a row with their boyfriends.

A study in Toronto in 1976 showed that women who were divorced or separated, students, on welfare, prostitutes, housewives, women raped by men they knew or who appeared calm at the time of reporting, were far less likely to be believed by the police.

In your report you call for centralised rape squads for the Metropolitan area, staffed by officers who have chosen to work on the squad, who are given thorough training about the facts of rape, and on how to gain the information they need, taking into account the woman's emotional state. You also call for forensic specialists to do all examinations. Given the

### What is Rape?

The law states that rape is:

"The unlawful carnal knowledge of a female by force or fraud against her will." (Carnal knowledge means penetration of the labia [outer lips] by the penis to any degree - full penetration and ejaculation need not take place in order to prove rape). (Harris's Criminal Law, Sweet and Maxwell, 1973).

### It can involve

Intimidation with threats or weapons

Beating, choking, knifing

Sexual and mental humiliation

Urination, defecation or spitting on the victim

present attitudes of the police why do you think these things, if they were implemented, would make any difference?

Obviously we can't guarantee that our recommendations would make any difference to the police. Organisational changes are useless without changes in attitude. But the experience of the US rape squads is that they do seem to change the attitudes of the officers concerned. For instance in New York the so-called "false allegations" have dropped from 15 1/2% to 4 1/2%, which is the same as for any other crime. Officers are being more sympathetic to women.

We would like the Met. Police to look at the American model. There rape counsellors are involved in the training of police officers. They also take advantage of the wealth of material written about rape.

From the point of view of the police, if a woman doesn't feel a lot of hostility, doesn't feel intimidated, she is more likely to give them more details and be a much more effective witness.

Although setting up centralised rape squads will not stop rape and will not help women who've decided not to report, it may make the passage of women who do report to police easier.

One of the major criticisms of the idea of setting up rape squads is that the police could use the excuse of investigations to harass black or socialist men, that it will not necessarily mean a greater number of arrests for rape, but only greater powers for the police.

We are very aware of this criticism. The point is that the police don't need the excuse of a rape squad to question black or radical men, they can do it now. Women who report to the police go through nine months to a year of police and legal procedure and do so because they want to see their rapist convicted. There is nothing more distressing for a woman to have gone through all that to see her assailant acquitted. Obviously prison sentences don't stop men from raping again, nor do they deter men from raping. What is important is that there is a recognition that rape is a serious crime and a crime that is committed frequently. For that reason what we are concerned about is conviction rates not sentences.

At the moment it is estimated that one in ten women who are raped report to the police and of the cases that are reported only 30% result in conviction. That means that over 90% of men who rape are NOT convicted.

I think that something else that should be mentioned is that women who have been raped by black men or left wing men have been under great pressure from friends not to report to the police. As women we are supposed to protect the man that has raped us.

### Forced oral sex

Multiple rape by one or more assailants

Injury to genitals, e.g. bottles, sticks pushed up vagina etc.

### If You Are Raped It Is Likely That: (Rape Crisis Centre statistics)

the assailant will either be an acquaintance, friend or relation (47%)

you will be raped either in your home (30%) or the assailant's home (17%)

the rape will be accompanied by other forms of sexual assault/abuse and the use of weapons (30%)

it will have been planned (63%)

# RAPE

## Force and fantasy

"When I finally glanced up she was staring at me, as if hardly able to believe what was happening. I gripped her thigh more firmly, but not so hard she couldn't have sprung out of reach. Her muscles tensed up at my touch as if she was about to spring. Then suddenly, miraculously, she relaxed and smiled, a smile that opened a golden gateway to me. 'My! You have some nerve', she said, with a glance not far short of surprised admiration."

No need to continue that quote from an item in *Forum's* postbag... you know what will happen in that male letter-writer's fantasy. Women resist for so long, not because they don't want the sex, but because they can only get the hots for someone who will coercively seduce them. What they want is long, hard penetration. "I lost count of the number of times she came..." - not surprising, given



Submissive sexuality.....what girls learn

that she was in receipt of such irresistible thrusts.

It's only a short step from this description of seduction to rape. Many men imagine that women fantasise about rape, in similar terms to the above quotation. It's partly to do with the fact that men can't visualise women's sexuality operating without a male presence, even if it only inhabits the realms of the imagination. So, when we are on our own wanking, men think we imagine being gang-banged, and if we are lesbians, they assume that one of us wears a dildo.

And because she supposedly imagined it when playing about with the shower spray on a Saturday afternoon, she 'asked for it' and therefore enjoyed being raped at the party on Saturday night. But I don't need to discredit that myth when writing in *The Leveller*. You will know by now that rape is a terrifyingly violent and degrading experience, and that women live in constant fear of it happening to them.

I was raped when I was sixteen. I'd been going out with the man for a couple of months, and decided that I didn't want to any more. I told him, he argued, and I got ready to leave. When I went out to get my coat he stood behind the door in readiness to grab me as I came back in. He held me down with his forearms pressing hard down on my throat and fucked me. Afterwards, as I sat in tears and shaking, he told me that he had done it to prove how much he loved me, and that he knew that one more screw would change my mind. It hadn't, but frightened and upset as I was, I couldn't help feeling some admiration for his Lawrentian power, and pride in the apparent fact that I was so desirable he had been driven wild.

That event marks for me a strange ambivalence to the whole area of coercive sex, which has made many women believe that rape is in some way their fault. That ambivalence can be found in every aspect of what girls learn about their own sexuality. Those of us who spent our adolescence involved in heterosexuality will remember that there was no sexual imagery, or accepted practice, that gave us the chance to

be active initiators. We had to wait to be chatted-up, wait to be seduced. There were drawn-out moments of wondering whether or not he was going to undo our bras - hoping he would, but also fully programmed into knowing that we shouldn't let him.

Desirability was the quality most of my friends aimed at when they were fourteen. We all had a strong sense of our own sexuality, but we knew no way of being able to express it other than being more or less forced, and we were required to put most of our energy into servicing the boy. The best we could hope for was to be 'turned on' to the point where we could do enough involuntary writhing to satisfy him. The only thing we could imagine was being on the receiving end.

So when it comes to fantasy, it's not surprising that we continue to re-create that same passivity... after all, most of us hadn't the chance to develop much else. We are in the double bind of having sexual imagery that is often dependent on the kind of stereotypes that we abhor and fight against when they appear in the outside world. Men repeatedly tell us that what goes on in our heads means that we want to be raped, and we have been undermined enough to believe them.

A woman I spoke to found that the only fantasy that turned her on when she masturbated, she found totally unsound. In it she saw herself as an Allen Jones-type female creation - suspenders, seamed stockings and the rest. Down on all fours, she watches herself being mercilessly penetrated. She is both the object and the creator of the fantasy, and much of the excitement is derived from being the voyeur. But she is as serious a feminist as the next, and she has no doubt that hung in the ICA, these kind of images are offensive and degrading to women. She has never acted it out in reality, and is pretty sure she would hate it. The crucial difference is that when she imagines it, every detail is in her control. She can change the scenario, or stop it at will. Few women being violently attacked can do that.

Many women find it difficult to admit that they have this sort of fantasy. If they do, men will triumphantly accuse them of really wanting rape. Women will say that they have sold out, and that they are perpetrating their own oppression. It's no wonder that a lot of us are not capable of fantasising at all, when too often we lead ourselves into such a morass of confusion. But our greatest self-oppression lies not in having dreams of being sexually objectified, but in behaving as if we think that in these dreams we are condoning sexual assault.

In an article I read a few years ago, the lesbian who wrote it said that it was a far worse experience for a gay woman to be raped than it would be for a heterosexual - as if rape was just a rather nasty aspect of heterosexuality and therefore not so bad for straight women. It's just as bad, of course. Nevertheless, you can't separate the fact of rape from the exertion of male power in 'normal' heterosexual relations. In a world where that kind of power was non-existent, fantasy for women would no longer be just about coercion and passivity. As it is, the material of our sexual imaginations has been looted, and we have gone on to reject what we are left with. It's no answer to forbid ourselves the pleasure we get from the images we already have.

Developing our own sexual imagery is a way of regaining control over a half-strangled sexual identity. What we fantasise we must choose for ourselves. We must begin by asserting that if we imagine ourselves as sex objects, or like the experience of someone else enjoying us, it has nothing to do with rape. The contradictions may be there, but they will not be resolved by self-censorship.

Rose Shapiro

### Useful addresses

Rape Crisis Centres are willing to talk to any woman or girl who has been sexually assaulted. Their service is free and confidential and they will never put women in contact with the press. London P.O. Box 42, London N6 5BU. 24 hour emergency phone - 01-340 6145. Office no. - 01-340 6913.

Bristol  
Bristol 22760 Monday and Wednesday 6-7 pm.  
Nottingham  
Nottingham 411475, Friday only 10 pm-3 am.  
Glasgow  
Glasgow 3312811, Monday to Friday 6 pm-10 pm.

Edinburgh - Edinburgh 5569437, Monday to Friday 6 pm-10 pm. Sat 2 pm-10 pm.  
Women's Aid Federation - lists of local battered women's refuges. 374 Grays Inn Rd, London WC1.

Addresses of women's groups and socialist feminist groups can be obtained from

WIRES (Women's Information, Referral and Enquiry Service), 32a Parliament Street, York (0904 35471)

A Woman's Place, 42 Earlham St, London WC2.  
Spare Rib, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1 (Tel 01-253 9792).

Women's Voice, 6 Cotton Gardens, London E2.

Women Against Rape  
38, Mount Pleasant  
London WC1 01 837 7509

"We wouldn't be a band if

I first saw Crass at *The Leveller* benefit in Manchester. It was a rainy night and the place wasn't packed, but when they came on they shook the audience. They had a weird, almost fascist symbol as a backdrop and they dressed in matching, black, military jump-suits. They didn't plug their latest single between numbers and they played almost non-stop at a frantic pace that left you almost breathless.

After about three numbers, the worried student promoter came up to me and said: "What do you know about this band? I think you've booked a fascist band". No chance. I remembered that they'd said they were "heavy punk, not entertainment". You either loved them or hated them but they definitely had something.

Since then they've built up a following and cut their first album with Small Wonder Records. It is a collection of material the band had about a year ago. It's taken most of that time to find somebody to press it.

One company after another refused to press it because of the words of the songs. Finally, they arranged for it to be pressed in Ireland. But after hearing the words of one track, 'Asylum', a blistering attack on Christianity, the shop steward there threatened to call a strike if the firm had to press the record. So Crass decided to leave the first track empty and renamed it 'The Sound of Free Speech'.

The band live together in a beautiful, rented farmhouse in North Weald, which is some of the first countryside you hit as you come out of London, heading towards Ongar by tube. There are eight of them, three women and five men. They've lived there for over ten years but don't believe the past is relevant to what they're doing now. They don't like being labelled or handing labels out.

But since I find it difficult to sort out my world without file-carding everything, I'll take the risk. They were involved in setting up the first Stonehenge festival and would probably have remained the nicest bunch of anarcho-pacifist hippies you could hope to meet, had punk not arrived. They loved the idea that everyone could start their own band and did just that: "Our first gig was playing for the squatters in Huntley Street. We were going to play four numbers but got turned off after the third."

In the beginning, they got pissed all the time because they were very frightened of playing. And on one memorable night, they played the Roxy and got kicked out. About a year ago, they decided to play more seriously and gave a lot more thought to how they presented themselves.

The house they live in is a base for several projects besides the band, including a paper called *International Anthem*, posters and graffiti (Fight war, not wars). With their new-found following they have the idea, even as they get better known, of remaining as a support band. To play alongside unknowns "just to fuck that whole system." Recently they played a second *Leveller* benefit. Later we talked to them about why they wear funny gear and say nasty things about Christ and about the meaning of life generally. What follows is bits of that.

CRASS



021984

CROSS  
about Christ,  
MAD  
about macho,  
RUDE  
about rock.

Why did you choose your present stage act? The black gear and that weird symbol?

Our whole appearance is designed to be a barrage of contradictions. We try and challenge people on every ground we can. The appearance is fascist. We wear black. The symbol which hangs behind us looks like a mish-mash of different flags.

The contradictions are with what we are and what we're singing about. We look macho and we're not macho.

The audience don't get a neat little package they can swallow down and walk away from. We want to make people question why they go and see a band and enjoy watching a guy wanking on a guitar or lots of bulging crotches. This sort of thing is easy to upstage because the kids aren't happy with what they're getting. They want more. We wouldn't be a band if there weren't jerk-off bands.

We set out to question established myths like the family, religion, the police and the state. I believe institutions are myths. We aim to create as powerful questions as possible to formal ideas. All we're saying is question the available reality. We act to disarm reality... But how far can you go by just asking questions? We're saying to people look for alternatives. What are you doing down there being an audience?

Don't you think there's a danger of people misunderstanding what you're trying to do and just liking the music and the way you put it across?

... we're playing a dangerous set of contradictions. There's one or two songs we've put into our set recently like 'Big Man', which could very easily substantiate a myth. The sort of risk one's taking is that people will identify with it and not actually realise the parody and cynicism of that particular song. We don't use the word 'cunt' in any of our other songs but that song's got it in. It's using the whole macho, Yorkie ad, truck-driver thing, stated as it is stated. One does run on a very dangerous level but unless one's prepared to stand out then one's intimidated all the time into liberalism. You can't actually hear the words when you play, so how do people know what you're about?

Well, you can hear bits of the songs and you can form a general impression...

I don't always think that's a disadvantage. We've had British Movement skinheads come up to us afterwards. They were sold on the energy of what we're doing. Then they're open to our ideas. They started out with the idea of doing us over and then started to talk to us. There's a certain advantage in not hearing all the words. People don't switch off.

We know as a band we're likely to incite certain reactions which are certainly the ones we wouldn't want. As a group, we're peaceful, pacifistic people. Yet when we go out we're confronted by a series of exceedingly violent reactions. It's being prepared to stand up and do it and being available to take the consequences afterwards.

Has it ever got to the point where you don't think you can cope?

No, it hasn't. I found the atmosphere at *The Leveller* gig the most electric we've done. It was absolutely fizzling. I've never felt so nervous about playing or so aware of exactly what we were playing with.

Why was that, do you think?  
I think the very strange and interesting mix of

there weren't jerk-off bands."

cultures. I've never seen such a fantastic cross-section in such a small place. As usual, the racial mix wasn't there. It never has been, even when people like RAR put on black bands. And also the sexual mix wasn't there. Although the balance is altering. There was a time when the audience was always going to be 70 per cent men. It does seem slowly to be changing.

Also, there was the Poison Girls who we've played with a lot. They came across very differently from usual. And we had our own tape and film in between the bands. Usually there's other bands playing and the atmosphere gets dissipated.

It gets more dangerous as the audience gets bigger.

There followed a long discussion about skins, the National Front and fighting racism.

Skins only identify with the National Front because it legitimises their particular form of fun. That's all it is. Going around whacking people. They don't mind if they're a member of Abbey Road skins or National Front skins. It's if you can defuse that...

That's what the National Front has invested so much energy in doing. Collecting a lot of people like that. It's that simple. It isn't a great big, heavy political deal.

You start fighting racism by having a little more understanding of why the local skin gang all start wearing nazi insignia. Like the guy who's just turned up here does. I don't like it.

But that's not where to start. They aren't automatically the enemy. Any more than anyone who chooses to join the police force or the army or any of those things is. I have no respect for anyone who does that. But there's the automatic assumption and then the dismissal of them. Anyone who wears an army uniform, I think you bastard, why are you doing that. But then I stop myself and say, well that's a human being.

Why do you attack Christianity? Surely it's better to let it die a natural death?

The patriarchal element of christianity is very important. It legitimises so much. That's the angle it's attacked from, not its Victorian past. There's an assumption that christianity doesn't exist because you don't see it in your circle; it's also inside you.

There's the sexism of Christianity. There's what god symbolises - the father, the family - and where women stand in all that. It affects everything within law and the privileges the law gives. It's the legitimising of the hierarchical society at the cost of 50 per cent of society.

One has to be very careful in attacking sexism and Christianity, you're not actually attacking men.

The band are not all youthful punks so it seemed fair game to ask, as some have, whether they were just late 70s hippies?

I'd regard myself as an early 50s beatnik if they're going to start throwing that around. I'm

proud to have been a hippy and I'm proud to have been a bohemian and I'll be proud to be whatever society will label anarchy. I'll be the next stupid, fucking name they put to it.

I have to admit I did feel a bit of a grandad when we played the Roxy but that was where it was happening.

I really respect what John Cage has done for musical anarchy. But the chances of getting to anything more than a very elitist audience are very slim. Punk is the form we've chosen and it's very accessible.

Where does the money come from for all your projects, the band and the house?

Through doing part-time work. We live very much hand-to-mouth. For example, what we got from doing your gig on Thursday will pay until Monday. It's quite expensive to run the place because there's a lot of mouths to feed here. All the money is pooled. One of the reasons that we aren't really interested in doing commercial gigs is that there just doesn't seem any point. Finance is of little relevance. We need to live, that's all.

We got a lift back with a couple of guys from the non-political fanzine *In The City* who'd searched out Crass to talk to on the same afternoon. They couldn't stop talking about them all the way back. So maybe all those questions do lead somewhere...

Russell Southwood  
Tony Nicholls

The band that got kicked out of the Roxy



Tony Jones



Walk past any multiple chain store or retailer and copies of the paperback version of John Le Carre's *Honourable Schoolboy* are bound to be on prominent display. The supreme spy novelist's latest achievement — a heady, finely-crafted mix of heroin, politics, spies and post-colonial machination — is a runaway bestseller. But what are the political assumptions on which Le Carre's success is based? *John Townsend*, an avid reader, examines the career of The Man Who Invented Smiley.



# Carré on spying

David Cornwell started his career in military intelligence. Fluent in German, he was first sent to Vienna, and then to Berlin, both cold war battle-grounds of the 50s. After this he went to Oxford where he gained a first in Modern Languages. From here, he joined what is euphemistically called "the Foreign Office" — British Intelligence's MI6.

His civilian intelligence career lasted three years, during which time he served in Bonn and Hamburg. Getting increasingly restless with what he calls "institutional life", he changed his name and wrote his first book, *Call for the Dead*. It was not until he had finished his third book, *The Spy Who Came In From The Cold*, that sales rocketed and he felt he had enough money to leave his job.

When he left, the Foreign Office seriously considered prosecuting him under the Official Secrets Act. It may have been fiction but it all came a little too close to home. Perhaps it was this threat that has kept him silent on the subject of his own career. In the only major television interview he has given in this country, on *The Book Programme*, he called himself a "former diplomat" and revealed little of his own experience and the resonance it gives his writing. In contrast to the carefully circumscribed standards of British openness was an interview he gave to *Time* magazine, (the US edition) in which he talked a little about his past.

But the threatened Foreign Office prosecution was hardly surprising. Too much of the fiction did come too close to the truth. Connie Sachs — the legendary MI6 archivist, who knows so many Russian spies she is nicknamed "Mother Russia" — actually existed in real life. The abortive mission into East Germany — the basis of his bleakest novel, *The Looking Glass War* — was certainly modelled on the sabotage missions launched from West Germany during the 50s.

Even his choice of names is tantalising. He claims he chose Le Carre as a pseudonym because he saw it on a London shop window, although the shop is unlisted in any telephone directory. "Perhaps it's a lie I've come to believe." Coincidentally, a former spymaster and author of books on the subject is a certain Maurice Le Carre. His major character — George Smiley — who ends up as Control, the boss of MI6, is rumoured to have taken his name from David Smiley, an intelligence link-man who worked in North Yemen and Oman in the late sixties.

The strength of much of his best writing comes from an almost repressed, cynical outrage at the hypocritical wheeler-dealing of the secret worlds of diplomacy and intelligence. In what he claims was his "most liberal period" he wrote *A Small Town In Germany*. Based in the British Embassy in Bonn where he worked, the book looks at how the British suppressed the evidence of past Nazi involvement of a popular right-wing politician — Karfield — to try and win an alliance with him against the Russians:

"Cut-price friends! They're the only kind we can afford! They're the only kind we've got the guts to make! We're a proud nation, Bradfield! You can get Karfield for twenty-five per cent off now, can't you! Never mind if he hates us. He'll come round! People change! And he thinks about us all the time! That's an encouraging start! A little push now and he'll run forever."

"Either you're in or you're out. Either you're involved or you're not." Bradfield hesitated. "Or would you rather be Swiss?" During this period of self-doubt, he even signed a petition favouring political asylum in Britain for American deserters. But more recently he has returned to the monolithic anti-communism of his characters.

Le Carre is a more than average spy thriller writer because he mines a rich vein of ore — the slow decline of England from a world power to offshore island. At the height of its reputation after the war, British Intelligence could put together an invasion of Albania (our very own Bay of Pigs) and choose the top military man to lead the counter-coup which bought the Shah back to power in the 50s. But all that was before Kim Philby and the grand betrayal; the revelation that while Britain was on the slide, its intelligence service was rendered useless by a traitor at its very heart. And it is this double trauma for the establishment which forms the basis of his best book so far — *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier Spy*.

Based loosely on the Philby case, the book charts the hunting of "the mole" in MI6. To do this, George Smiley has to re-examine the careers and pasts of a whole series of his old work acquaintances to sort the dupes from the Russian agent. In doing so, he provides thumbnail sketches of the motivations of a whole generation of the ruling class as they move from ruling half the world to tawdry retirement.

The simple footsoldiers like Jim Prideaux, with his misplaced sense of loyalty, who

doesn't expect to think too much; the smooth ministers in charge, like Miles Sercombe, linked to George Smiley by "family connections", always anxious to know "how much porcelain will break at the end of the day?"; the cynical careerists like the undercover left-wing Professor, Roy Bland who says: "As a good socialist I'm going for the money. As a good capitalist, I'm sticking with the revolution, because if you can't beat it, spy on it."; and finally Bill Haydon, the traitor, the brilliant spy who everyone loved and eventually hated for having loved him so much.

Most of Le Carre's stories come from the real world. They are not about chasing "Maguffins", as Hitchcock described that clumsy writer's vehicle, which sends characters whirling around looking for something like atomic plans or a missing person. Le Carre's spies tell you more about east-west rivalry than the gung-ho cold war warriors of the James Bond ilk.

Only in his latest book, *The Honourable Schoolboy*, does the plot begin to look more unlikely. It is about the springing of a Chinese defector and takes you on a guided tour of war-torn South-East Asia in the last rounds of the Americans' war there. Somehow the convivial clubbiness of his characters is lost as they stumble through the exotic locations.

The most telling part of the book is the two hand card-trick which finally gives the defector to the Americans and the intrigue in the cabinet over how this is arranged; a special relationship with an old ally with whom we have swapped places.

His ability to plot surprises is not just sheer invention. Unlike detective thrillers, which introduce new bits of evidence at will, the swift and subtle changes in emphasis and meaning take place over the same established truth. It is, as one of his characters remarks, a case of "Learn the facts, then try on stories like clothes." Every detail is minutely plotted from the earliest page so that if you reread them you realise what you missed. It's a guessing game of enormous proportions with an endless stream of interlocking characters.

Because of class loyalties and the Official Secrets Act, no spy has ever told his or her story. Other than books on Philby, only the officially inspired or crafted exploits of the cold war have been told from the inside. Since we have no Philip Agee in Britain, perhaps David Cornwell is the best we can expect.

# Local Radio: Looking for an Opening

Early in April, the Independent Broadcasting Authority will announce who has been awarded the franchises to run the country's latest commercial radio stations in Cardiff and Coventry. Community groups are involved in both bids.

Cardiff Broadcasting, a company whose major shareholder — constitutionally — is the Cardiff Broadcasting Trust, which represents local people and organisations, has applied for the Cardiff franchise in its own right. In Coventry, a Local Radio Charitable Trust intends to buy shares in the company which wins the franchise.

Both groups are a response to the same problem. The 1977 Annan Report on Broadcasting, the government White Paper that followed it, and the IBA have all stressed the need for greater local involvement in local radio.

So community groups in both Cardiff and Coventry found themselves being canvassed for support by other groups applying for the franchise who wanted to add some local weight to their application. As a circular sent out by the Cardiff Broadcasting co-ordinating group in January, a month after the IBA had invited applications, said, "If our strength is needed to win the licence for a commercial group, surely we can put that strength to better use on our own behalf and organise ourselves to run our own station." Ian Hunt, acting secretary of the Coventry Charitable Trust, commented, "Although we were approached by several of the groups who were applying for the franchise, we thought it was better not to be tied to any particular commercial consortia, in case that bid for the franchise failed".

The Cardiff scheme is clearly more far-reaching, and indeed it's the first time that a franchise application has come from a community controlled group. Cardiff Broadcasting and Cardiff Broadcasting Trust, the two components of the scheme, are separate from each other but linked. Cardiff Broadcasting runs the radio station, while the purpose of the Trust is to involve listeners with the station and broadcasters with the listeners. Half the board is composed of directors appointed by the trust, while half represent the station's financial backers. But while all the money is being put up by the financial interests, the trust will receive 50% of any dividends.

It's estimated that you need at least £350,000 to start even a small station like Cardiff Broadcasting, given the IBA's tough financial and technical requirements.

Money has been raised from private capital, trade unions, and co-operatives. Cardiff Broadcasting's backers are all local and they've all agreed to work within the structure of the company, even though it means effectively that they only get half dividends.

Although the image of commercial radio is one of rapacious capital making huge profits, it's only an image that's true of the large stations like Capital, Radio Clyde, Liverpool's Radio City, and Birmingham's BRMB. Although all the commercial radio stations are now making profits, those of the small groups remain modest.

Individuals and groups within the listening area of the station will be eligible to be members of the trust. Mike Engelhard sees the trust as a way of involving the listeners in the station. Public response has been enthusiastic. At one public meeting 70 people were shut out of a full hall.

"We've taken up a challenge made by the Annan Committee and the White Paper," said Cardiff Broadcasting Administrator Mike Engelhard. "We do think that we have opened up a debate that is important to broadcasting".

The Coventry Trust hopes to buy at least 1% of the shares of the station, and pressure the station into fulfilling its local obligations. Its interests would extend to working as a clearing house for public service announcements, and training people so that they were able to make access programmes.

But Mr Hunt said, "It's not our business to tell the editor what his job is. We just want to make sure that local groups can get access when they need it."

The IBA is keen to promote local, community radio — it's said to be embarrassed by the fact that the commercial local radio network is seen to be rather more commercial than local, so maybe Cardiff Broadcasting will get the franchise.

And Cardiff and Coventry are only the first of nine new IBA stations to be announced. Peterborough and Gloucester/Cheltenham will be announced for applications soon.

Andy Curry



"We should be under no illusions about the state of the working class movement at the present time. It is militant and organised but socialist consciousness is not widespread, nor likely to emerge on a mass scale in a near future." Defeatist thinking, too dangerous to even contemplate, or a recipe for reformism? None of these, argues Geoff Hodgson in a spirited defence of the Alternative Economic Strategy. A prospective Labour Party candidate at Withington in Manchester, Geoff is a marxist firmly committed to the fight for socialism within the bounds of the Labour Party.

# Alternative Economic Strategy

It appears that the Callaghan Government is now drowning in the consequences of its own right-wing policies. In particular, its restrictive, paternalistic and inegalitarian attitude towards pay, and especially the situation of the low-paid, has led to a justified revolt on the wages front. As a result the familiar media issues of strikes, pickets, unions, ballots and bankrupted businesses will dominate the forthcoming General Election.

Regrettably, an issue of more direct relationship to the socialist transformation of our society will be eclipsed by the debate on "how we should control the trade unions". That issue is the underlying conflict of principle between those that see the private-enterprise market economy as the best system for providing an optimal, efficient and ultimately humane allocation of resources, and those, on the other hand, who wish to move towards some sort of democratic and planned socialist society in which the working class, not big business, holds economic and political power.

Callaghan, and the majority of his Cabinet, have no desire to make a determined move towards socialism. His policies consist of an amalgam of Wilsonian pragmatism and deference towards capital, designed ultimately not to move in any particular direction but to preserve power. These policies regularly obtain the support of the majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

But within this deplorable situation there are elements and forces which, if harnessed and directed in the appropriate direction, can put socialism on the agenda in the 1980s. One of the major political achievements of the 1970s in Britain is that the Left has put forward an alternative political and economic policy to the right-wing Labour Government, and reaffirmed support for those radical policies right through Labour's period of office. Labour Party conferences and the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party have repeatedly pushed the Alternative Economic Strategy ever since it became official Labour Party policy in the conference of 1973.

It is important to draw a distinction between the policy of the Parliamentary Labour Party and the Labour Government, on the one hand, and the policy of the Labour Party, as determined

The Alternative Economic Strategy was originally passed into the Labour Party programme in 1973 and has been confirmed at subsequent party conferences. Its main components include :-

- \*\* Compulsory planning agreements over levels of investment between government, unions and firms.
- \*\* Strong National Enterprise Board.
- \*\* Public ownership of financial institutions (ie banks, insurance companies)
- \*\* Price Controls
- \*\* Import Controls
- \*\* Ending Sterling's role as a reserve currency.
- \*\* Expanding the economy.
- \*\* Defence cuts.
- \*\* Increases in public expenditure on social items.
- \*\* Wealth tax.
- \*\* Industrial Democracy

by its Annual Conference, on the other. There are many on the left who fail to observe this distinction. For example Labour Party candidates in the future election should stand on the policy of the Labour Party. This includes opposition to cuts in public expenditure (a policy agreed upon at the 1977 Conference) and opposition to the 5 per cent pay limit (1978 Conference). No doubt, however, a majority of candidates will break discipline on this issue and try and defend the abysmal record of the Callaghan Government.

In these circumstances the Left is provided with an important lever within the Labour Party. By giving critical support to the Alternative Economic Strategy and other official Labour Party policies, the machinery of the Party can be pushed against the anti-socialist Right within the Party and Parliament. The Labour Party can thus be transformed into a real alternative to the Tories.

Regrettably a large number of people on the Left have not observed or used this point of leverage. In particular, numerous groups on the far-left have decided not to support the Alternative Economic Strategy. Not only have they failed to use the contradiction between Party and Government in the official Labour Movement, but also their arguments against that strategy have in most cases been fallacious.

It must be admitted that there are severe defects in the Alternative Economic Strategy. The most important is that it does not give sufficient attention to the likely situation when the capitalist class employs wholesale resistance to a Government attempting to implement

such a strategy. On this point the far-left are quite right to remind us of the experience of the Allende Government in Chile. However, that is not sufficient reason for breaking with the real social movement in the unions and the Labour Party.

Let us examine the far-left arguments against the Strategy. The first argument is that it is reformist and must be rejected for that reason. Reformism, first, must be defined, as terms of abuse often lose all connection with their original meaning and simply become empty insults. Reformism is a strategy which concentrates attention on Parliamentary institutions and neglects the need for energetic mass mobilisation in the transition to socialism. Clearly, if that is the definition, the reformist cap fits the majority of advocates and supporters of the Strategy. Furthermore, the Strategy itself does not deal with the valid criticisms of the reformist perspective, nor adjust its goals in the light of the need for a mass mobilisation against the bastions of power in capitalist society.

But should revolutionaries never support a reformist strategy? It would be a mistake to judge the Alternative Economic Strategy simply by the adequacy of its inherent ideas, or by the ideas of those that support it. Instead we should measure and evaluate the material force that the Strategy represents. If the Alternative Economic Strategy was backed by a mass popular movement then that movement would assume its own dynamic and structures and push the leaders of the traditional Labour Left well beyond the bounds of the Alternative Economic Strategy. It is necessary to expose the limitations of that Strategy in practice, not simply in terms of ideas. That is why Lenin, Trotsky and other Marxists generally gave support to reformist strategies if they were backed by large elements within the working class, and the latter had not yet reached revolutionary socialist consciousness.

Some have argued, as if in response, that if a large mass movement did exist then the Strategy would be irrelevant, as this movement should clearly not limit itself to the limited programme within

the Strategy. The fault in this argument is that it ignores how to move from the current situation to the creation of the large mass movement. The fact is that the Alternative Economic Strategy is one of the few points of leverage available to the Left. The outcome of the battle within and outside the Labour Party between supporters and opponents of the Strategy will materially effect the chances of creating such a mass movement in the 1980s. Before you move from B to C you have to move from A to B.

There is more than one reason why we should consider the events in Chile. Should the revolutionary socialist left have supported the programme of the Popular Unity Government in 1970-3, despite its reformist character and the constitutionalist illusions of Allende? The answer must be yes. Popular Unity represented a mass movement capable, with the active support of the working class, of delivering real and substantial reforms, and, most importantly, creating the material preconditions for a socialist transformation. To fail to give Popular Unity support would not only have been wrong but also would have meant political isolation and organisational suicide. The Alternative Economic Strategy must be given critical support for the same reason.

A frequent target for criticism from the Right and far-left is the proposal, within the Strategy, for import controls. In my view many advocates of the Strategy give too much importance to this element, and

advocate a package of controls and restrictions in line with Old-Style Protectionism. However, it is wrong to assume that import controls automatically entail the restriction of imports. It is a demand for more state control of trade and should be supported for the same reasons that nationalisation of industry is supported under capitalism. Furthermore, foreign trade policy, under a situation of import controls, could mean more trade with progressive and underdeveloped nations and less with the reactionary world. In failing to support the extension of state control of trade under capitalism the far-left are giving effective support to the supremacy of the market in that area. And the market never did favour underdeveloped nations in their struggle against economic imperialism.

The far-left were less precise in their arguments when they opposed the original draft of the Industry Bill in 1974-5, which included elements of the Alternative Economic Strategy. Red Weekly, for example, ran the headline "Benn's Bankrupt Bill", and rejected it as a "prop for capitalism". They failed to see that it was important to maintain a united front with the Labour Left on this issue, in an attempt to resist the dilution and emasculation of the Bill by the combined forces of the Labour Right, the Liberals, the Tories and the media. Instead, they allied, in effect, with the Right, and the Bill lost most of its radical core.

In contrast, many on the far-left have

seen the importance of the workers' initiatives at such places as Lucas Aerospace and Vickers in their struggle for not only jobs but for socially useful work. However, they have not observed the clear connection between these initiatives and the Alternative Economic Strategy. It is doubtful if such a sophisticated initiative would have appeared if it were not for the presence of a sustained struggle within the Labour Movement for the Alternative Economic Strategy. In fact, most of the workers' leaders at Vickers and Lucas give explicit support to that Strategy and conceive of their alternative plans for production as being fused with it.

We should be under no illusions about the state of the working class movement at the present time. It is militant and organised but socialist consciousness is not widespread, nor likely to emerge on a mass scale in the near future. In the struggle to change this state of affairs, and move in a progressive direction, we are forced to recognise the existing relationship of forces. We are compelled to utilise the tattered banners and slogans that are already established. The Alternative Economic Strategy is one of these. It should be given critical but energetic support. That, indeed, is one of the lessons of the current period.

These ideas will be expanded in a pamphlet shortly to be published by Independent Labour Publications.

## On "being realistic" about incomes policy: a reply

We are writing in response to Dave Purdy's article (Leveler 23 Pay Policies and Sacred Cows). It is important to recognise that the views he expresses have little currency within the Communist Party and to consider some criticisms.

Dave Purdy asserts: "The social and economic reforms carried through during the war and under the first majority Labour governments from 1945 to 1951 are consistently underestimated by the contemporary left. Yet they transformed British society."

He never raises the question of how that transformation relates to a socialist transformation of British society.

He calls the institutions produced by this transformation "state collectivist" without explaining or justifying the term. This term obscures several crucial issues:

- 1) "the nationalisation of the economic infrastructure" (for example coal and railways) also provides a subsidised service on which capital depends;
- 2) the implied equation government intervention = socialism is undiluted Thatcherism;
- 3) the undemocratic nature of the employer/employee and consumer/service relations in state enterprises such as the National Health Service reflect and reproduce capitalist relations in the rest of society.

Dave Purdy goes on to describe the process of consultation of the trade unions by the government. Again, without the least argument, he assumes that the existence of this consultation is in itself a sufficiently valuable thing to socialists to justify their acceptance of pay restraint. After all if we don't "agree" to pay

restraint, we run the "political risk" of getting it anyway through monetarist policies.

The "argument" of the article is no more than a repetition of the current Labour government's attempts to achieve consensus. "Socialist policy must adjust to changes in social reality." Unfortunately Dave Purdy has abandoned any search for a socialist strategy which would seek to change social reality.

In the absence of an explicit strategy let's attempt to deduce, where, in the words of your introduction, does Dave Purdy "leave socialists?"

He cites approvingly the persistence of the TUC leadership in seeking a wage deal with the government, despite resolutions passed at Congress opposing such a policy. (What about the elsewhere much-vaunted democracy?)

Dave Purdy doesn't mention the struggle of public service workers for a £60 minimum wage, nor how this relates to the fight against the cuts in government spending which are leading to the rapid deterioration of the health and social services.

He also ignores the present massive right wing attack on the labour movement which is being conducted through the press, parliament and the courts.

For Dave Purdy any consultation of the trade unions by government is an element of an embryonic socialism. It could not undermine the existence of that other element—the welfare state (or for that matter the position of the labour movement). Because the welfare state is part of "social reality" (here today, here forever) it cannot be undermined.

His lack of a strategic understanding of politics is revealed clearly in his depiction

of wage militancy as "consumerist... with its privatized, individualistic, irresponsible and passive vision of the good life" and as therefore completely opposed to the concerns of the feminist, environmental and claimants' movements. On what side of this separation does he place equal pay struggles, or the struggle of Asian women at Grunwicks?

On the other hand, the feminist critique of male dominance in the labour movement is reduced to a pacifism. No account is taken of the feminist confrontation of sexism—for instance in the Reclaim the Night marches through the male enclaves of Soho. Similarly, the arguments of claimants for adequate social security and services become transformed at Dave Purdy's hands into a moral opposition to the market.

The whole article is marked by a complete absence of any concept of struggle. It is unfortunate that Dave Purdy's contribution to the continuing debate about the relation between progressive movements and class struggle in building socialism should lead him to such an unhelpful position. We feel this is because he has no confidence in the ability of a social movement to change things.

Surely, we are being urged yet again: "be realistic". Ever since Marxism first attempted to overturn the "realism" of bourgeois ideology, there have been those sincere socialists who have claimed that you can be socialist within the terms of bourgeois theory. On the evidence of this article, we still have no reason to believe them.

Eileen Phillips  
London N16  
Peter Esam  
London SE1

Rob Cowan



# Women's liberation, socialism and the 'Men's Movement'

The national Men Against Sexism conference in Manchester on 6th-8th April, will see an important debate between socialist and other anti-sexist men. In this contribution, *Andy Chevallier* says the struggle against patriarchy and the struggle against capitalism must be linked.

THERE ARE men's groups everywhere. It has become something of a truism to point out that the armed forces, boards of directors, the public bar in your local, and trade union executives, are all men's groups; that we have quite enough of them already; and that one more type of male grouping is one more weapon in the arsenal of our patriarchal capitalist society.

Men, as this truism runs, are men. They are the oppressors of women, and like all oppressors it is in their *objective* interests to maintain the power and privilege they get by oppressing. Whatever a man's intentions therefore, he can do very little to alter the degree to which he is sexist.

Much of this is true. But in its conclusions it is a defeatist argument that offers no hope to any man trying to be anti-sexist. It underplays the areas in which sexism can be significantly reduced — far more than housework! — as it underplays the impact that the Women's Liberation Movement has made on some men.

Those men who have come into close contact with feminism over the last ten years have been struggling to find ways of responding to its challenge that are genuinely anti-sexist. Men's groups are one of the more successful responses.

Feminism threatens our conditioned masculinity, our manhood, in a very concrete way. It threatens the power that lies behind our masculinity. But because our manhood is such a central aspect of our identity, this threat can be felt as an onslaught on our individual personality.

Men's groups help to defuse this threat. Through talking and relating with other men it is possible to see what is happening to you in perspective. "No, it's not specifically your individual fault. Your sexism is shared in common with other men. We have to learn to take responsibility for it," is perhaps the gist of the better initial conversations that occur in a men's group.

From there it is possible to break out of the isolation of seeing yourself as uniquely to blame for your sexism, and to develop a political commitment to anti-sexism that is part of a general

commitment to fighting all forms of oppression, supporting all liberation struggles.

But of course there is one rather important problem. In opposing sexism, and the oppression of women, men are opposing *themselves* as the agents of that oppression. And they are in general fighting against their own objective interests, whether these interests are in the selection process for a job or the greater emotional consideration that they expect from women.

Male privilege may be relatively small in comparison to the privilege with which the ruling class is 'blessed', but nonetheless it is both real and substantial, and exists on the backs of women.

"The oppressors are indeed fucked-up by being masters (racism hurts whites, sexual stereotypes are harmful to men) but those masters are not oppressed. Any master has the alternative of divesting himself of sexism, racism; the oppressed have no alternative — for they have no power — but to fight. In the long run, Women's Liberation will of course free men — but in the short run it's going to cost men a lot of privilege."

(From *Goodbye to all that*, an

essay by Robin Morgan in *Chronicles of a feminist*.)

While the creation of a non-sexist society is obviously in the interests of men, in the short term the WLM represents a genuine threat.

So how do men who have become committed to anti-sexism fit into this picture? If we are to be in a position to *indirectly* further the cause of women's and gay liberation by being prepared to challenge male sexism, then we need to be able to understand the ways in which as men we have been fucked up by male conditioning. Taught to be aggressive unemotional, competitive, to see women as inferior, etc. — all the normal macho traits, in fact. We need to learn to relate to other men in ways that do not repeat the normal sexist patterns of male behaviour.

In short, being anti-sexist is not only about opposing the oppression of women and gay men, but also about trying to find non-sexist ways of relating to men. This is something that men, both in men's groups and individually, can work towards. It has nothing to do with the concept of a Men's Liberation Movement — what have most white heterosexual men to be liberated from but capitalism — and every thing to do with encouraging others to be anti-sexist.

In practice this has usually

meant that men's groups have stressed the importance of reducing sexism in personal relationships, because this is where men who have begun to question their masculinity need most support and encouragement.

However, this emphasis on sexism in our personal lives has led to the avoidance of how we can be anti-sexist in our 'public' lives, ie. how we go about challenging sexism at work, in the pub or on a bus. No one is saying it is easy — after all, how do you react when you've gone down to support a picket line and one of the pickets you've just been talking to comes out with "Look at those tits" or worse, as a woman walks past?

Though what is obviously needed is the creation of a climate where we are as ready to confront sexist remarks as we are racist remarks, that situation is a long way off. Which makes it all the more important that men who are committed to anti-sexism start to take this 'public' aspect seriously, whether it is reacting to a patronising statement, or supporting an abortion demonstration.

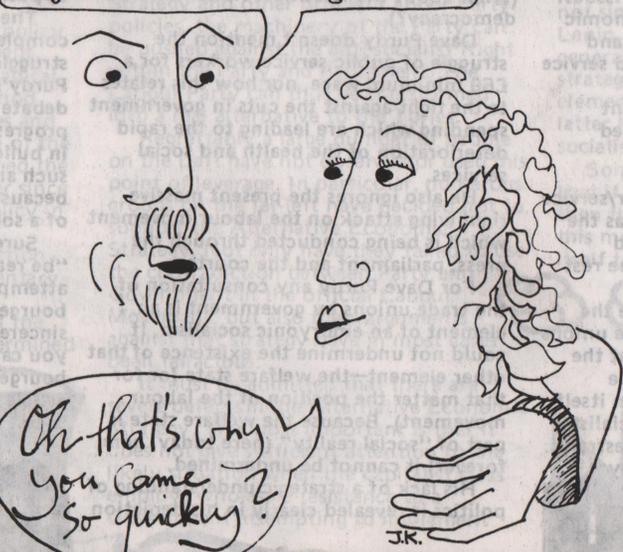
One reason why this has not generally happened is because a substantial number of anti-sexist men have more or less rejected class politics and see the formation of a Men's Movement as an alternative to socialist activity. Setting aside the problems of a Men's Movement, there is no doubt that by rejecting a *critical* but *positive* orientation to the left they are making themselves increasingly marginal, not just to the struggle against capitalism, but to the struggle against patriarchy. The slogan "No Women's Liberation [and by extension, no non-sexist society] Without Socialism, No Socialism Without Women's Liberation" has got dropped on the wayside.

In fact unless this banner is picked up, and Men Against Sexism takes an explicitly critical but constructive orientation to the left, it will drift into isolation, with the possibility of becoming more or less reactionary on the way.

The tragedy would be the repercussions this would have on the left — men on the left would be able to use this as a neat example of what happens to men when they try to be anti-sexist. And the old argument, that it's *solely* up to women comrades to confront male sexism — to bully male comrades into being nicer human beings — would get a renewed lease of life. ■

With acknowledgement to Dabson Men's Group

The abject failure of British Marxism to achieve any long term penetration of working class consciousness is the consequence of the difficult historical conjuncture we have undergone...



# Back Pages

## Nighthawks: a late night sigh of loneliness

"Nighthawks is a perceptive portrayal of the gay scene in London. Through its honesty and personal conviction, it aims to convey an image of gay life in order to offset the one usually shown in the commercial cinema." Not my words, but those of producer, director, scriptwriter, Ron Peck, Ron Peck, Ron Peck in a press handout for the release of his own movie.

After three years in the making and a buildup from the gay press which would have flattered Orson Welles, *Nighthawks* will flicker on a silver screen somewhere near you after running awhile at the Gate Cinema in London.

I had heard bad things about *Nighthawks*. An amateur production, its cast of thousands was recruited on the basis of advertisement, personal contact, who had slept with who and so on. And, as you might imagine, finding gay men for a movie is about as difficult as giving money away in Oxford Street. The result is, with two or three exceptions, a collection of individuals whose main contribution will be to provide subsequent audiences.

The story, if such it be, is of a gay man, Jim, who spends his time endlessly looking, picking up men in clubs, going home with them for sex and then driving them to the tube station in the morning. In the first hour he doesn't meet anybody nice at all.

There is no spontaneity, no laughter, no excitement. The furtiveness of his contacts may be bad acting, but the dialogue must be scripted for I have never met such depressing people in my life.

There is no on-screen sex in *Nighthawks*. A few in-bed-together scenes and a limp prick here and there maybe, but coming so long after, for example, *A Bigger Splash*, which gave millions the opportunity to see two men making love, it's surprising we don't see it here. Instead, it's crudely butchered out and any hint that sex can be beautiful is denied by sudden cuts to driving-to-the-station-next-morning shots.

The monotony of Jim's relationships is given a small lift through his daytime employment as a geography teacher. He befriends a woman supply teacher, Judy, and they sometimes talk together. Car scenes are a Ron Peck favourite and in one Jim tells Judy this gay business is not all it's cracked up to be. He frankly confesses to having more husbands in a half-term at school than Elizabeth Taylor's got through in a lifetime.

Judy, first open-mouthed with the shock of Jim coming out all over her, later sympathises and assumes the cliché supportive role. She hints that her own married life is pretty horrendous but, since this is a movie about gay men and she is a woman, she



Ken Robertson as Jim in a dramatic moment from *Nighthawks*.

has no chance to talk about her family, her hopes and fears. Jim doesn't ask about such things: he is the man, the star, the one who does the talking.

In the second hour of *Nighthawks*, Jim meets John and strikes up a brief friendship with him. How long it lasts is hard to tell, but, sure to the stereotype Jim is condemned to work out, he soon finds himself back in the clubs looking for sex. John (played by Robert Merrick) is a convincing human being and, as such, stands little chance of success in *Nighthawks*.

Others suffering are Ken Robertson (playing Jim) who appears to have no confidence in

the role given him and is only at home in his part when teaching at school and talking with Judy, and David Graham Ellis who wrote the outstanding music.

I went to this movie determined to find what was positive for gay people over and above the fact that there is now one more gay movie than there was before. Sadly, *Nighthawks* breathes a suffocating despair, like a long late-night sigh of loneliness. All I would ask of those familiar faces darting about the club and bar scenes is whether their lives are really like this and, if they are, what are they doing about it?

Brian Deer

## Feminist Review: finding the middle ground

WHEN I bought *Feminist Review* in my local bookshop, I was thrilled. I'd heard that it was in the making, and the editorial fired my imagination. Rejecting the instant politics approach, the collective describe themselves as feminists and socialists and want to bridge the gap between academic and political work: "We do not see theory as the property of academia, nor the production of a journal such as this as a flight into intellectualism."

And then I read on. Out of a choice of *Women in South Yemen*, *Feminist Art*, *Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination*, a study of Charlotte Bronte, *Materialist Feminism*, and *Female Sexuality in Fascist Ideology*, I chose the last one. The whole issue of fascism and women has always interested me.

Sadly, my heart sank and then I became enraged. What was it

the editorial had said about not producing a journal as a flight into intellectualism? In an introduction to the main article by Macciocchi, Jane Caplan states that Macciocchi's "perspective and vocabulary will be unfamiliar and distracting for many readers, but I think it would be a shame if these obstacles, real as they are, deterred us from coming to grips with what she says."

No anger or disagreement on my part there, but the language that follows in this introduction is so academic and difficult to understand that I gave up reading and began to fume. One gem of a sentence reads, "It also emphasises the exceptional functional prominence of ideological mechanisms in fascism, without pretending that an ideological interpretation is adequate on its own." Sentences like that reminded me of all those friends of mine who were given The

*Poverty of Theory* by E P Thompson for Christmas, and who still haven't managed to wade through it.

Luckily for me I soldiered on and read the Macciocchi article, which pleasantly surprised me. It wasn't as complex and difficult as the introduction, and seemed to be fired *not* from a love of intellectualism but from political fervour. "It is not simply a question of 'repossessing our bodies' as the feminist slogan goes, but of repossessing our brains." Her theory includes extracts from Virginia Woolf and Bertolt Brecht to make her points.

Reading on, I began to rest a little easier, and yet was aware that intellectualism, long words and complicated sentences, almost for their own sake, crept into other articles. It's not that I'm arguing for no words with more than one syllable in a jour-

nal of this kind. It's just that for a journal to really link the theoretical with direct political practice, then the theory must be understandable or it simply won't be read by a wide enough audience of militants to make its point, and will be left in a sea of isolation.

*Feminist Review* can save itself from that fate. Pictures and the odd cartoon break up the text and are a welcome sign in such a journal. It could bring real promise: a deeper level than *Spare Rib* is able to offer is a real bonus. But the tendency in the women's movement to perpetuate dry academic texts as receptacles for theory is the most ineffective way to change the world. There is a middle ground between the *Sun* and the academic heights, and here's hoping that *Feminist Review* finds it.

Dorothy Jones

# Back Pages

## BOOKS

**Apprentices of Freedom** by Judith Cook is a new book about the Spanish Civil War, based on recent interviews with some of the 200 veterans still alive.

Sam Wild (veteran) - "Spain made me a working class snob. I've had experiences of all kinds, but the happiest days of my life were spent in Spain. For the first time I recognised the dignity, the goodness and bravery of ordinary people, in this case the Spanish people. I also experienced the comradeship of my own people - the British - which I had not believed to be possible."

**Apprentices of Freedom** is published by Quartet Books at £4.95

subscription (£5 a year) from **Spare Rib Subscriptions**, c/o Linda Phillips, 114 George Street, Berkhamstead, Herts HP4 2EJ.

The second issue of **Libertarian Spain** devotes its editorial and much of its space to the growth of the National Workers' Confederation (CNT). The Libertarian Spain Committee was set up by the Libertarian Communist Group to build links with sections of the revolutionary movement in Spain. **Libertarian Spain** No.2 is from Box 3, 73 Walmgate, York YO1 2TZ, price 20p plus postage.

The first issue of the new **Chartist** bi-monthly magazine (incorporating **Chartist International**) contains articles on the Labour left, socialist feminism, immigration controls, Bolshevism, Rosa Luxemburg, the economy and local government. 35p plus 15p postage, or 4 issues for £1.50, from **Chartist Publications**, 60 Loughborough Road, London SW9.

The March issue of **Labour Research** surveys the position of women in the trade union movement. While women at work constitute 41.2% of the total workforce of 22,213,000, the proportion of TUC-affiliated union members who are women is only 28.5%. **Labour Research** looks at the growth in the number of women members in unions. In those where special efforts have been made to recruit women, the results have been encouraging. Between 1974 and 1978 the AUEW Technical, Administrative & Supervisory Section increased its women membership by 174%. **Labour Research** is from LRD, 78 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HF, price 42p including postage.

## CAMPAIGNS

Preparations are now under way for what could be the biggest protest yet at Tormess, due to take place on May 4th-7th. The event is being organised by the **Tormess Alliance**. Information from the **Scottish Campaign to Resist the Atomic Menace (SCRAM)**, telephone 031-225 7752.

## PAMPHLETS

A paper delivered to NACRO's annual general meeting last October by Dr Hans Tulkens, Head of the Dutch Prison Administration, has just been

published as a pamphlet: **Some Developments in Penal Policy and Practice in Holland**.

The pamphlet compares prison sentencing policy in England/Wales and Holland. While the number of offences recorded in both countries has risen comparably, in Holland prison sentences have been much less frequently used as punishment and the average length of prison sentences has fallen dramatically.

In 1950, the situation in both countries was similar. But since then the percentage of very short sentences - less than one month - has doubled to 57% of the total in Holland. In Britain, on the other hand, this category of very short sentences has decreased by one-third to 18% of the total. At the other extreme, long prison sentences - one year or more - have decreased by nearly two-thirds to only 4% of the total in Holland. In Britain this category has increased from 16% to 28%.

According to Dr Tulkens, "the substance and form of detention" in Dutch prisons "are more and more expressly geared to resocialisation. This aim is a fiction as long as imprisonment is too long, too rigid and gives too much the impression of an act of vengeance..."

The pamphlet can be obtained from **NACRO**, 125 Kennington Park Road, London SE11, telephone 01-582 7172.

The past five years have seen great upheavals in the British motor industry. Workers have been facing mass redundancies, closure of plants, reorganisation of work and tighter discipline. In response to this growing crisis in the industry, the **Institute for Workers' Control** convened a



**THEATRE: Gillian Hannah and Clive Rogers in Teen-dreams, a new play performed by Monstrous Regiment**

conference in 1976 which set up a Committee of Inquiry to look at the industry from the point of view of the people working within it. This committee has just published its findings in **A Workers' Enquiry Into The Motor Industry**.

Published and prepared in co-operation with the **Conference of Socialist Economists**, the report draws on the experience of stewards and workers at Chrysler (Ryton, Stoke, Whitley), Ford (Dagenham), Vauxhall (Ellesmere Port, Luton), Austin Morris (Cowley), Triumph (Canley, Tile Hill, Speke), Rover (Solihull), Jaguar (Coventry), Alvis (Coventry), Automotive Products (Leamington), Wilmott Breedon (Birmingham), Massey-Ferguson (Coventry). The enquiry was co-ordinated by **Coventry Workshop**.

The A4, 100-page report looks at the current state of the industry, why things are going wrong, workers' responses, existing strategies for the industry and workers' alternatives - combine organisations and workers' plans. The report costs £2.25 from bookshops, or from **CSE Books**, 55 Mount Pleasant, London WC1X 0AE. Add 25p postage.

"It's not only oppression that unites us, but more importantly, struggle," say the editors of **Women in Struggle**, a pamphlet from the **Poster/Film Collective**. The pamphlet was born out of a three-week series of events organised by the **Collective** in February/March 1978 around the theme of 'Women in Struggle'. Women at these events wrote the articles and later compiled the pamphlet. It focuses on economic and cultural imperialism and contains valuable information on women in Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Far East, and nearer home, Ireland and Grunwick.

The **Poster/Film Collective** are planning more pamphlets along the same lines and welcome ideas and suggestions from women. Write to: **Women in Struggle**, Box 50, Rising Free Bookshop, 182 Upper Street, London N1.

Every year, the **London Housing Aid Centre, SHAC**, is contacted by hundreds of women who are splitting up from their partner. They are worried about their legal rights to the home they have shared, their children - and money. Often Council or Social Security officials, or even lawyers, have been unhelpful and only increased their confusion.

pic: Kevin Cummins

**A Woman's Place**, a new rights guide published by **SHAC**, provides signposts through the maze of family break-up for both married and unmarried women. It gives practical advice on how to keep the home and children, on how to deal with violence in a relationship, and how to claim tax and welfare benefits. **A Woman's Place** is from **SHAC**, 189a Old Brompton Road, London SW5, price 85p including postage.

The reasons behind the overthrow of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto are challenged in a new pamphlet called **Conspiracy in Pakistan**.

The pamphlet is part of an international campaign to rebuff the allegations made against Bhutto during his trial. The pamphlet shows that General Zia's move against the government of Pakistan, in July 1977, came at a time when the government and opposition parties had agreed a programme of action to resolve problems arising from the general election. This counters Zia's claim that the stability of the country depended on military intervention. The pamphlet also shows that, far from infringing constitutional issues, Bhutto gave Pakistan the first government since independence where constitutional rights were protected in the courts. **Conspiracy in Pakistan** is from **Musawaat Weekly**, 16-18 Brushfield Street, London E1, price 50p plus postage.

## CONFERENCES

The **Oxford Anti Nazi League** are organising a conference on the theme of **Fascism Today** to be held at the end of June.

Organisers say the aim of the conference is "to service the anti-fascist movement by bringing together contributions to our knowledge and understanding of contemporary facism." Speakers will include Maurice Ludmer (**Searchlight**), Martin Walker (**The Guardian**) and a representative from Birmingham's **Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies**. More information from the **Oxford ANL**, PO Box 16, Oxford OX1 2JE, telephone 0865 52000.

The **Men Against Sexism** conference scheduled for February 23rd-25th has been postponed 'till April 6th-8th. Other details remain the same. The conference will be in Manchester and information is from Mark Henderson, 544 William Kent Crescent, Hulme, Manchester 15, telephone 061-226 4440.

# Back Pages



**ROCK: a new album from the Tom Robinson Band**

**Democratic Accountability in the Media** is the subject of a weekend conference organised by the **Institute for Workers' Control** at Nottingham University on March 31st-April 1st. The conference will look at the following questions: "On what principles should a free press be organised? How should news media be 'independent' and in what ways should they be 'accountable'? What role should media workers play in the organisation of their services and what access should the public have to the channels of comment and criticism?"

Speakers will include Tony Benn, Ken Coates, Geoffrey Goodman, Alan Sapper and Audrey Wise. The cost is £11.00 (residential), £2.50 (non-residential). More information and a booking form from: **IWC**, Bertrand Russell House, Gamble Street, Nottingham.

## EVENTS

After the success of the 1977 People's Jubilee and the 1978 People's Festival, the London District Committee of the **Communist Party** is organising a **Great London Festival** for June 17th at Alexandra Palace. Information about booking stall-space and any other enquiries to Jon Grindley, Festival Organiser, LDC, CPGB, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1, telephone 01-242 1776.

## FILM

A benefit screening of **Take It Like A Man, Ma'am** for the **People's News Service** will take place at the **Scala Cinema**, Tottenham Street, London W1 on Sunday 1st April at 1.00pm.

Tickets are £1.50 at the door.

**Take It Like A Man, Ma'am** was made by the **Red Sisters Collective**. Ellen Rasmussen, a fifty year old housewife whose family has grown up, one evening joins her husband at an office party. She feels out of place and listless now she has little to do in life. The following day she visits the doctor who suggests she is going through menopause. Back home she has a nightmare in which the social roles of the sexes are reversed. She awakes with a start. Against the opposition of her husband she searches for work and gets a job. She grows in confidence and happiness and eventually takes part in a strike in the firm.

**Take It Like A Man, Ma'am** is also to be screened by the **Liberty Hall Film Society** on Sunday April 29th at the **Everyman Bistro**, Hope Street, Liverpool 1, starting at 8pm. Members 25p, non-members 40p.

## THEATRE

From 17th April-5th May, **Belt & Braces Roadshow** are presenting **The Scream**, a new play by Billy Colvill. **The Scream** is an expressionist play concerned with betrayal. The background is the SDP's bloody suppression of the revolution in Germany in 1919, represented by archive film material and an original composite of slide-show and music. Against this it examines in theatrical form the Labour government's current betrayal of the workers. Performances at 8pm Tuesday-Saturday (7pm, April 18th) at the **Half Moon Theatre**, 27 Alie Street, London E1, telephone 480 6465/6727.

From 27th March, the **Royal Court Theatre** will be presenting the **Joint Stock Theatre Group** in **Cloud Nine** by Caryl Churchill. The play "has come out of a period of workshop and research by the whole company with the author" and is on the theme of "sexual politics. It is about relationships between women and men, men and men, women and women," says the Royal Court.

The **Lesbian Left Revue** will be performed at 8pm on Sunday 22nd April at the **Everyman Bistro**, Hope Street, Liverpool 1. **Lesbian Left** is a group of lesbian feminists who meet every week in London to exchange ideas on feminism, lesbianism and socialism. The group says, "We decided to expand the activities of the group and some of us decided that we would like to

produce some theatre. The **Revue** is the result, and most of the songs and sketches were written and worked on by those in the group. The areas covered are how we became lesbians, our relationships, and how other people react to lesbianism."

**Hormone Imbalance** is a new Feminist theatre group formed especially for the Gay Times Festival recently held in London. Now by public demand the group will be performing the show at the **Socialist Feminist Conference** on 24th March and will be at **Action Space Drill Hall** on 29th and 30th March. The show is about all the things you thought you'd never dare to say about lesbian/feminists. It's

written and directed by Melissa Murray

**Monstrous Regiment's** production of **Teendreams** by David Edgar with Susan Todd (see **Leveller 24** Back Pages) goes North in April and May. Schedule as follows: **Nuffield Studio Theatre, Lancaster University**, April 23rd-25th; **University Theatre, Newcastle**, May 1st-5th; **Nottingham Playhouse**, May 14th-19th. **Monstrous Regiment**, 190 Goswell Road, London EC1, telephone 01-253 2172.

## ROCK

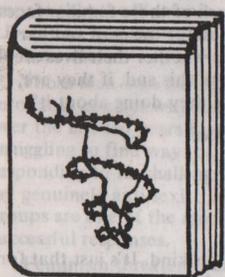
If you enjoyed the first album from the **Tom Robinson Band** - **Power in the Darkness** - you will want to buy **TRB 2**, just released by EMI. Producer Todd Rundgren has given the band a slicker sound, more appropriate for the American market, and sadly lead guitarist Danny Kustow loses out a little to the band's new keyboard player Ian Parker.

What is hard to understand is why, with **TRB 2** as with **Power**, the messianic Tom chooses not to print his lyrics on the sleeve. Instead, he had a list of 'good causes' drawn up to give free ads to, including, curiously, the **Flectoral Reform Society**. The organisations will be grateful, but maybe they are giving Tom as much as he is giving them.

Most people will tell you otherwise, but Tom's significant contribution remains the extra visibility he has given to gay people - particularly in his song **Glad to be Gay**. He will be keeping up the good work in a new disco love-song, co-written with gay megastar **Elton John**, to be released in May. Spys report "it's amazing".

## MAGS & PAPERS

The April issue of the monthly women's liberation magazine **Spare Rib** features: 1979 - the year of the child; Rock Against Sexism; caring for disabled women; women in Eritrea; and tests carried out on immigrating women. **Spare Rib** also carries its usual news, reviews and information for women. From all the best bookshops and newsagents or by



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