

Going Fortnightly

As we announced in the last issue, *The Leveller* will be coming out fortnightly from this Autumn.

Readers' reactions to the announcement have ranged from great enthusiasm to amazed incredulity, but we've received virtually no hostile comment.

Let us have your views on the new project and we'll print them in forthcoming issues as we build up the campaign.

An initial letter to Supporting Subscribers and friends of the magazine has raised well over £1,000 to finance the first stage of the fund-raising drive.

This money has gone into the separate fortnightly fund to distinguish it from *The Leveller's* main cash flow.

(And those debts are coming down too: they currently stand at £1,500 and we expect to get them cleared away over the summer. If you haven't sent us a donation yet.....)

Just over half of the initial money has been spent on producing 40,000 copies of a leaflet announcing our plans and calling on people to send in a £10 Launch Subscription.

We'll be producing up to a quarter million of these leaflets and distributing them widely throughout the left this summer. Subscribers will already have received some copies with this issue, and we hope you'll pass them out at work, meetings, concerts, demonstrations and so on.

Other readers who would like to take copies of the leaflet are asked to contact the office and we'll send them to you.

The main means of financing the Fortnightly will be these Launch Subscriptions. They cost at least £10 (£5 for students, claimants and OAPs) and will last for the first six months. There's a form on the bottom of this page. Current subscriptions will be carried over into the fortnightly, and pro rata, but

we would really love it if current subscribers sent us a Launch Subscription too.....

The collective's Fortnightly working group has made a number of recommendations: decisions about format, content and pricing will be made shortly and we'll present a full report in the next issue. The final decisions will be made in September, when the finances are clearer.

There are a number of things you can do beside taking out a Launch Subscription.

We are expanding the collective: Tuesday night meetings at the office are open and you are very welcome to come and take part. There will be another open meeting on Saturday August 9 at the office, starting at 3pm. This will be an opportunity to meet the collective in a less busy atmosphere than in formal meetings.

We are also seeking assistance in the following areas:-

Local Correspondents: who can keep us informed of what is going on in their localities.

Special Correspondents: who have a particular interest or expertise in any of the following areas: News and Current Affairs; Finance and Business; Science and Technology; The Law; Education; the Welfare State; Local Government; Foreign Affairs; Music; Film; Radio; TV; Books; Sport; Sex; Personal Politics - and any other area you think important.

Designers; cartoonists; photographers; artists; lay-out people.

Advertising; distribution; finance and administration people.

Contact the office - by phone or by letter - if you would like to be involved in any of those areas.

We will also be needing more equipment for the office. In particular we'll be wanting: typewriters; filing cabinets; tables; chairs. lights.

Finally, it's possible we'll be needing larger premises. If anybody knows of anywhere cheap and reasonably central, we'd be very grateful to hear about it.

Have you taken out your Launch Subscription yet? As a special bonus offer you'll get the remaining issues free. If you don't want to cut the cover, a letter will be just as good.

To: The Leveller 57, Caledonian Road, London N1.

I enclose a cheque/PO for (At least £10. Students, claimants and OAPs £5)

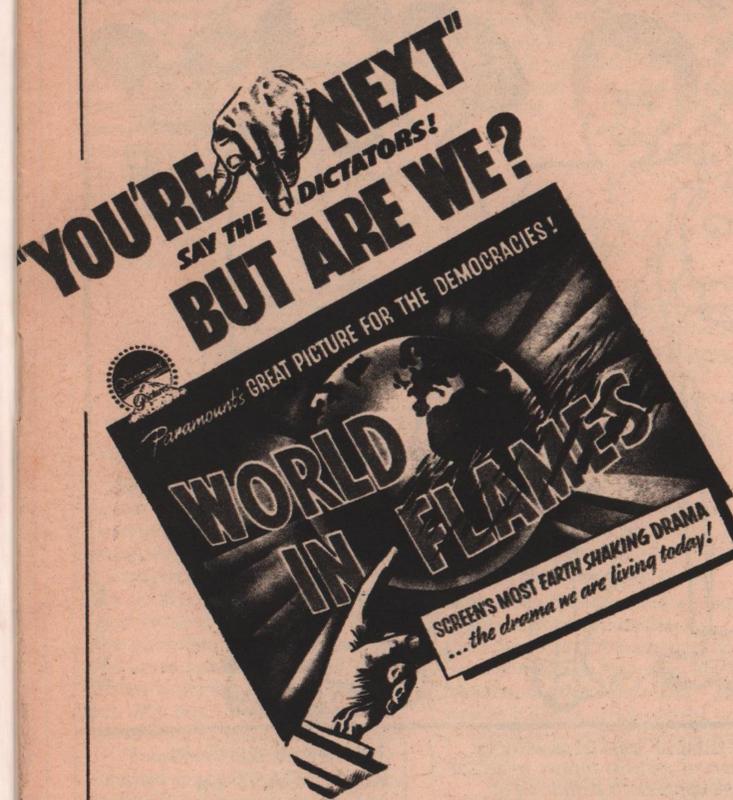
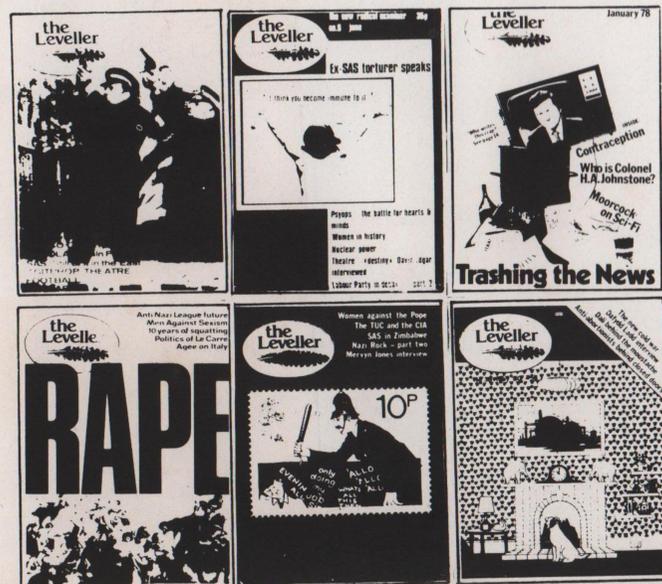
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Please make cheques/POs payable to: The Leveller (1979) Ltd.



Armageddon Now

IF YOU buy a Jaguar from a certain Reading dealer you can now get a nuclear fall-out shelter COMPLETELY FREE. This says even more about the general state of public consciousness than it does about the motor industry. After the two-car garage the shelter is becoming what the middle class family has to have; it just has to, because it knows our rulers want us better dead than red.

The Home Office claim they've been taken by surprise by the thousands of frightened people calling up for futile advice. The liars - not just for pretending they'll protect us, but because their plump fingers have been on the panic button ever since Thatcher started to crank up the Red Peril to get defence and security spending increased.

Everyone's talking about tactical and strategic weapons, making pointless sums of rival megatonnes, poring over stupid maps showing who's got what pointed where. In this issue *The Leveller* looks at what this means for the people of Britain and Europe. Starting on page 14, we've got an analysis of how and why the nuclear disarmament movement is growing again; how people in East Anglia are reacting to the plan to plum Cruise missiles among them; how eastern Europeans in the Soviet satellite states expect to get roasted; where the new-generation RSGs are sited and who's going in them; how Americans are retreating into survivalism; how computers have nearly blown up the world with their fuses; and, to bring it all firmly down to earth, how people can organise their civil defence against Brezhnev or Thatcher.

P. 14-19

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Covers by Ivan Hartel (camera: Chris Jenkins, with thanks to Neil and Colin; photos courtesy of Athena Reproductions, Camera Press, and United States government)

Attack on CAST

I WENT to the May Day event in Edinburgh (*Leveller* 39). I thought the CAST show was very well produced, committed and, at first, funny. Obviously a lot of work has gone into it. However, I objected to the show for several reasons and I interrupted the performance by talking to the actor Roland Muldoon. I want to explain why.

I am a working class man. I was not the only man who objected so you can't dismiss the protest by saying, as Muldoon appears to, 'some women attacked it'. This sounds like the 'hysterical feminist' attitude. I deliberately chose to communicate with Muldoon, and I wasn't the only one. When I tried to talk to Muldoon, he became more abusive to the audience and threatened to beat me up. I interrupted the show because of its sexism and its unaware, anti-working class content.

First the sexism. Women are subject to sexist abuse every day. There is no reason why women should have to listen to more from an actor on a stage. Muldoon says if we had waited, we would have found out it wasn't sexist at all. I didn't believe him at the time, and I'm glad we moved in when we did. For a male character to say 'she wears her varicose veins like she's got ranks in the army over him' is obviously a very confused, abusive and sexist remark. Even if he means well it's very presumptuous of a man to stand up and tell women how oppressed they are. Women will be the best judge of that.

In any case, if you give the benefit of the doubt, let the show go on and it turns out to be sexist after all, what's happened? You've been had again. All you get is a shot of your own powerlessness and maybe a nice little debate about whether you were being oppressed or not. Too late. The solution is to confront your own sexism and eliminate it. Not to parade it up and down a stage.

Hardly anyone has mentioned the class content of the show. It was precisely the implied attack on working class people that I objected to. HP Muggins is supposed to be an 'archetype of a man in this modern society': by this Muldoon obviously means an archetype of a working class man.

A number of stereotypes have been laid on working class people. In reality we are the creators of everything of value in the world. Just look around and see. Everything of any use or beauty was made, delivered and serviced by working class people. We are creative, intelligent, tough and caring. We have a rich cultural heritage.

You wouldn't know this by listening to HP Muggins. This stereotype is a figment of a middle

nopelessly inadequately with the class imagination. It comes straight out of the *Daily Mirror*. The British Working Man, typified by Andy Capp, on strike for no good reason, drinking all day, or drunk. Joe Muggins is a byword for a vulgar aggressive male, 'common as muck'. He is also supposed to be more sexist than middle class men. A middle class myth of course. Doctors beat their wives, but their homes have thicker walls so you don't hear about it. Above all, the stereotype is one of stupidity. He takes all the crap and usually takes it out on the wife. Use this character on the stage and you buy into the whole lot of oppressive nonsense. Roland Muldoon seemed to assume he was playing to a middle class audience. Wrong. We don't need Roland Muldoon to come here and tell us what it's like and it's not like that. There is nothing essentially crude, stupid or sexist about us.

Don't abuse the audience. We pay your wages. Of course people do internalise their oppression. Some working class people have been taught to ignore clarity, and think art and music is not for them. A lot of us do act powerless a lot of the time, and take it out on each other, or on women, or on blacks or young people. But this is not what we are really like. If we were, there wouldn't be any point in making a working class socialist revolution. We have been told we are stupid and useless. Most of us came out of school, believing that. *It is not*

criminal legal framework to part of socialist theatre to accept the oppressor's definition of what we are and hand it back to us as reality. Our job is to eliminate all this nonsense, not to dramatise it.

It's very tempting for the artist to be 'brutally honest' and try to 'portray things as they really are' and then concentrate on the imposed boredom, aggression, hopelessness. These are the very things that we struggle every day not to pass on to each other.

Contrast the show with the songs from Chile that we heard on May Day. No time for confessions. Full of pride. Full of life. We too have a long, long history of resistance and achievement. Let us celebrate that. We need this sense of pride.

A note about censorship. I take censorship to mean the state preventing publication or broadcast of anything it considers threatening. It has the back up of confiscation, fines, prison and in the end, death. For a paying audience to kick an act off the stage is something else altogether. It's a matter of people taking control of what they will hear and see. Muldoon had a powerful PA system. It's pointless talking things over with that. Sexism, like racism, should not be given a platform and it's up to men and women to oppose it wherever it shows up.

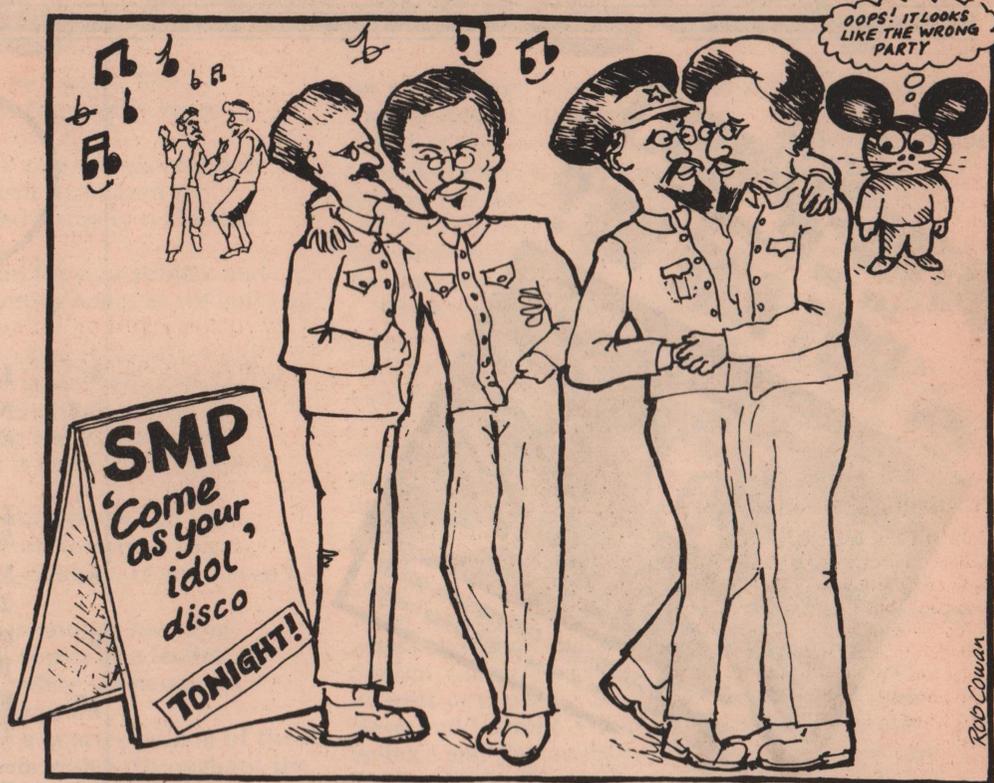
Michael Spring
Edinburgh

kinds should actually be
Reply: CAST on

OVER THE years, CAST Theatre Group has been attacked in 'news' papers where the policy of the ruling class is presented as news. But never did we expect that we would be attacked by a biased fragmented-man-hating-autonomist in *The Leveller*, and that this demented person's opinions of what went on on May 1st in Edinburgh would be presented as News!

Anybody who was there will tell you that the play had run only one minute, before the censors attacked, not ten as your 'News' article (*Leveller* 39) states. As obviously you wouldn't believe 'so-called socialists' like us - we invite you to hear tapes of the play where the character of Harry Percival Muggins says that he hates his wife (and incidentally that she hates him), and this takes place in the very first minute of the act. It is in fact in the tenth minute that we hear her singing 'Rip It Up'. We never got that far in Edinburgh.

We intensely dislike being described as 'so-called socialists' in a 'News' item in a so-called left paper. We don't really care if J. Blytham spends the rest of her life pretending to herself that actions like hers, and the now notorious 'Play-Wrecking Mullahs of Edinburgh' leads to socialist unity. We don't care if *The Leveller* wants to print her self-righteous opinions - but NEWS -



never.

It is obvious that the play has its faults, but our reputation - let alone 15 years of hard 'so-called socialist' work demands that we have the right to perform the play and we would then - and do - listen to criticism even from those whose politics are so bankrupt that all that is left to them is to attack plays. That *The Leveller* should join the ranks of the *Sun* and *Telegraph* and mount attacks on us from the right and call it 'News' - well, well, well who would have thought it possible?

Roland Muldoon
Claire Muldoon
Warren Lakin
CAST Theatre Group
London NW1

Prostitution: public property

I THOUGHT Tricia Dearden's article on prostitution and the woman's movement (*Leveller* 37) was good, but I think she missed out a fundamental part of the analysis. She points out that poverty is the main cause of prostitution. There are also poor men who turn to gambling and crime rather than selling their bodies to get out of this economic rut. Why don't women then turn to those other forms of illegal revenue?

Women's bodies are constantly flaunted as objects to sell every new consumer product on the market. Their bodies are stuck in magazines and on cinema screens to arouse men. Throughout women's lives they are made to see themselves in terms of men - do they look attractive in this dress, this lipstick? Women's minds and bodies are being constantly raped, so women consider their bodies to be something men dispose of as they wish. Since women are not encouraged to respect their own bodies, some women will obviously choose prostitution as a means of making money because it's

only an extension of a woman's position in society anyway.

How the hell can anyone expect prostitution in the legal sense of the word to stop when all around us people are 'prostituting' women's bodies both in public and in private? Let's face it we're all in the same game together, some of us get paid some don't!

Helen
London N4

Fuck: bad mouthing

I OCCASIONALLY spend 45p of my pension on a copy of your magazine. I agree with most of the points and arguments put forward by your contributors. But one thing I do not agree with is the use of the word 'fuck' in what are supposed to be serious political articles. It doesn't offend me personally, as I spent six years in the army, where it is used as a verb, noun, adjective and even pronoun. However it must offend some people, especially those with young children. And of course the use of these words detracts from the force of the arguments. Because basically they are a manifestation of adolescence and people tend to judge an article on the type of language as well as the political content.

I suggest that you take these points up with your contributors.

N Holloway
Bath

Socialism: common cause?

I don't think my own political views coincide with the overall socialist views of your magazine. But I was amazed by the magazine when I saw it for the first time. I am seventeen years old and practically everything I believe in was in your edition of *The Leveller*.

A 'Gang of Four' advert, a 'No Nukes' article, a 'do we need the car' number, an abortion argument, a cold war issue, an anarchist article and an excellent joke on nuclear war - because man it is an unreal joke. I would just like to say that if all these things make me a socialist, then I suppose I must be, but I don't like branding myself, as it keeps you too narrow-minded...

Andy McGarry
Gateshead

Lesbians; blind preference

GENERALLY SPEAKING, during most revolutions, the activists are so busy revolting that they lose sight of their original aim(s). I for one would like to know what the aims of the lesbian 'revolution' are.

According to an early group of American lesbian feminists named 'The Furies' one goal of our revolution is to have a society where no particular expression of sexuality is enforced... As lesbian/feminists we affirm the bisexuality of human nature'. This is a quotation from their book entitled *Lesbianism and the Women's Movement*, a handbook with which every self-respecting, politically aware lesbian ought to be familiar. But how many lesbians today would swallow that one whole?

It is my experience that many women calling themselves lesbians have not really thought about lesbianism in the long term. They do not seem to have asked themselves 'What is the future of lesbianism?' but have merely turned to it out of bitterness, disappointment and hatred of heterosexuality and the monopolistic patriarchal society - all the negative reasons. For them it has become an end in itself rather than a means to an end. Perhaps it is their insecurity and self-uncertainty that keeps these kind of lesbians blinkered. I don't

know, but I should like some honest answers. Until I hear some I shall continue to believe that they dare not use their eyes for fear of what they may see of themselves.

And what about women, all women - some lesbians often assume that they are the only women who matter - what kind of a future do we want collectively? Do we crave a period of superiority, of being the oppres-

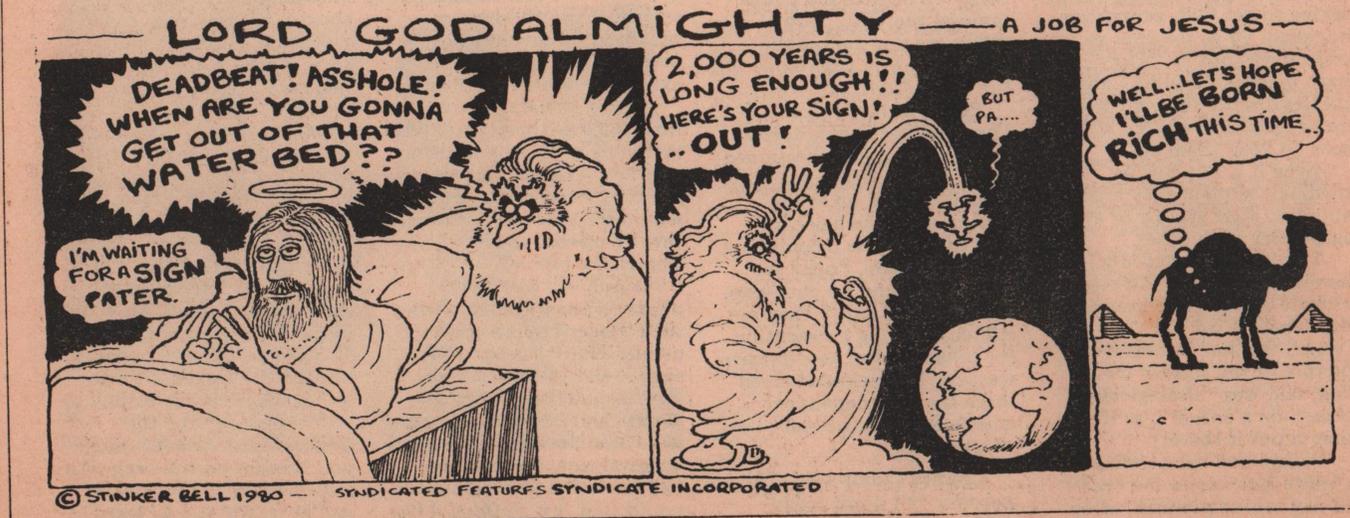
sors, a situation in which men are kept down in the lower-paid, more menial jobs or, more extremely, authorised out of existence except for the few 'privileged' allowed to live as sperm slaves? Do we want a time to come when lesbianism is looked upon as the only socially acceptable sexual behaviour, a kind of lesbian fascism? Must we let the pendulum swing painfully back and forth for eternity never to find a peaceful balance of power? Do we want to go on fighting and pulling away from the accepted to the unacceptable and back again until the fatal exhaustion of the human race?

Would it not be better for everyone, lesbian 'specialists' included, to aim for that balance, the central position of the pendulum, to achieve that utopian society a little earlier? Or is peace not what we want?

So come on all you lesbians who will not tolerate bisexuality in 'your world' or we will begin to believe we are being oppressed merely for having stepped closer to Utopia. And what could be more unfair than that?

A woman of no fixed sexual preference. (sent in from Nottingham Women's Centre)

The articles promised on non-violence, referring to last month's theme on political violence, have been held over for space reasons. Apologies to the authors.



ON JULY 14 the *Daily Mail* launched its major special investigation of the Workers Socialist League. Most of the front, and the centre pages, were given over to fantasy-land accounts of how a few dozen Trots in Oxford were plotting to take over the world. That it was idiotic is not the point. It was the product of a systematic campaign of harassment of WSL members and supporters by the paper's staff over several months.

Two staff reporters and freelance photographers have been following people round all day, banging on their doors, obtaining internal documents and turning up outside unpublicised internal meetings. And in one incident, on July 9, two members have claimed a photographer, Charles Cramp, pulled a gun.

The *Mail's* object didn't just seem to be to compile the articles. Hundreds of journalist-hours went into it. One WSL member says: "It was as if they wanted to make us all paranoid, to start mistrusting and questioning each other, to undermine our activities. They presented one supporter with a list of 25 names and asked if they were members. Some were quite new members. They had the addresses, in one case the new address of a member who'd moved, which some of us didn't even know. They followed the man they showed it to round Oxford for the whole day."

It's clear that they — industrial reporter Bob Porter and 'ace investigator' Harry Longmuir — were getting pretty good information from somewhere. Most likely source would be right-wing members of the Oxford Labour Party, who've been trying to get WSL supporters expelled. Or as the *Mail* so objectively put it: "They have penetrated some Labour parties despite the vigilance of democrats in the party who seek to keep them out."

Even if it's an insider, members explain they aren't about to start grilling or even suspecting each other.

The incident allegedly involving the gun took place outside one of their houses in Bartlemas Road, Oxford (which the *Mail*, alongside a picture of the sinister dwelling, said was "strategically placed on a corner", as if they'd put it there!).

Cramp had been sitting in a white *Mail* car in the road all day taking pictures, after

Mail me the old story



We expose the guilty men: (left to right) Longmuir, Cramp and Porter.

coming to the door and asking for a particular person. In the late afternoon he snapped Alan Thornett and Tony Richardson, two WSL militants at Cowley, as they returned home. They went up to the car, and Thornett asked him what he was doing.

On being told, he said he reckoned that, in that case, the film was his. He took the camera off Cramp, who got out of the car and approached them with what Richardson says he saw as a revolver in his hand. Cramp said: "Give me the camera. I'm not joking." Richardson: "I think you better had. He's got a gun."

Both men say it appeared to be a long-barrelled revolver, with the chamber open. It was not pointed at them, but held down by Cramp's side; Thornett returned the camera and Cramp got back in the car and roared off. The WSL people called the police.

Five minutes later, Porter and Longmuir showed up at the house. Thornett refused to answer any questions, saying: "Wait till the police come". The intrepid pair taunted the WSL people: "Why are you calling the police, are you frightened of the *Daily Mail*?"

Police arrived, took Thornett and Richardson to Cowley nick, and questioned them. Cramp had, apparently, already turned up at the station of his own accord, told by someone a complaint had been made. Police say they had found no gun; were the comrades sure? They are still considering prosecution for possession of an offensive weapon. It is acknowledged there are no independent witnesses to corroborate the allegations.

Charles Cramp told *The Leveller*: "I don't really

want to talk to you. It's a matter between me and the police. You're another lefty publication I suppose. They're all just lefty arseholes. You can print I had a gun if you like, but if I had, I wouldn't be walking around the streets now, would I?"

An executive at the *Mail* confirmed Cramp was working for them that day.

Capital is not really frightened that the WSL will take over the world. Its fear is much nearer home, only a mile, as the *Mail* points out, from Bartlemas Road. BL's Cowley plant, where WSL militants, led by Alan Thornett, deputy convenor and chair of one of the three TGWU branches, constitute the best-organised resistance to Edwardes in his whole declining empire.

Editorial support for BL closures is obvious, and attacks on people trying to keep the outfit going make breakfast-time titillation for Tories too prim to turn to the *Sun*. The real business of smashing shopfloor organisation involves direct action, dividing workers against each other.

For all the *Mail* journalists involved have been good NUJ members, who would see no conflict between that and the job they're carrying out. They would be incensed at the idea they're operating as Thatcher's police.

Cramp is a freelance photographer, available for such 'doorstepping' assignments. There is a band of such men, who prize the 'professional' way they go about their business. If you were at a Notting Hill Carnival riot, for instance, and knew the photographers, you'd find few staffers. After

getting beaten and having their equipment seized in previous years, many refuse to go. The freelancers stepped in. Such photographers do not give up their cameras easily.

At Cowley, press harassment has been intense. When Thornett's deputy convenor credentials were withdrawn by the company in 1974, there was a strike, and the press resorted to the 'angry wives' trick, playing up a movement by a few wives to undermine their husbands. Dividing married couples is only the most obscene form of setting working people against each other. Which journalist ever incited Lady Edwardes to say her husband is wrong?

Last November posters and leaflets were circulated at Cowley, attempting to link WSL activists, including Thornett, with IRA 'terrorism', because they'd taken part in a march for political status for H-Blocks prisoners. The posters carried the militants' pictures, names and addresses. This was shortly before the convenor elections. Thornett was returned with an increased majority.

Dislodging him, and wrecking the understanding he has built up over the years of serving 20,000 workers will be harder than the *Mail* or Thatcher thinks.

And in the Labour Party, the assertion that the WSL controls the left will meet such derision it will blow up in the *Mail's* complacent face. The *Daily Mail*, the paper that printed the forged Zinoviev letter, whose lying leading article precipitated the General Strike, that brought you Nazism on the back of a red smear in the thirties, is still at it. Will it ever learn?

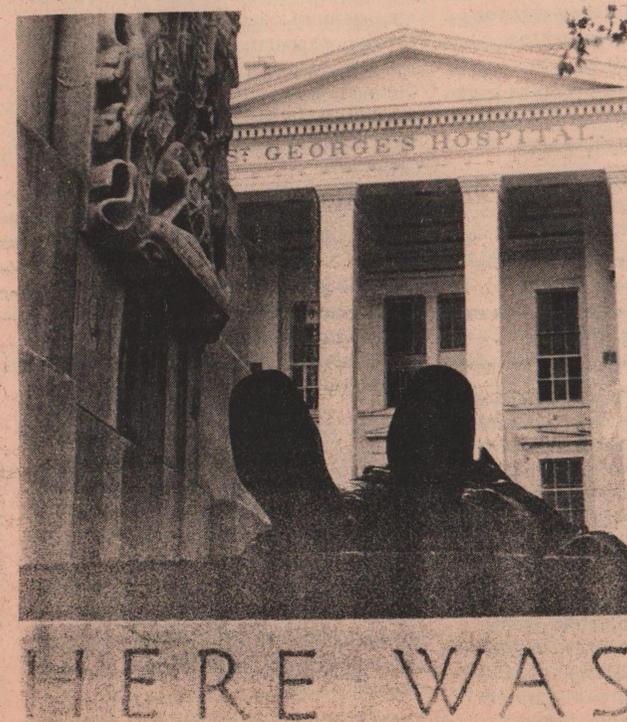
Casualties in the class war

"IF SOME of the older patients are moved now, they will just go downhill and die within a couple of months. In the last year one patient was moved from the ground floor to another. The whole routine that she knew, the friends she was sure of, all changed and you could see her going to pieces. She was soon dead". Arthur Hautot, a COHSE shop steward, speaks very angrily about what the Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth Area Health Authority want to do to St. Benedict's Hospital, a specialist geriatric unit in Tooting, South London. The AHA quite simply want to close it down by September 30 this year

Admissions to the hospital were stopped on December 1 last year when there were 161 patients. Now they are down to 98. The bottom floor, the rehabilitation wards, has been closed. The staff at the hospital are determined to stop the hospital being run down any further. They have organised the longest-standing occupation of any hospital so far and are still providing first class care for their patients. The occupation committee holds weekly meetings open to staff, trades unionists and

local residents, but after eight months it is frustrated about the lack of sustained support. Most of the staff are COHSE members, and NALGO is also represented, but there has been no real involvement at the national level in either of these unions. They have watched other occupations either smashed by police action - as at Etwell Hospital in Derbyshire and Princess Mary in Margate - or slowly crumble away, like St George's at London's Hyde Park Corner.

The three and a half month work-in at Etwell Hospital was broken on March 31, when a massive police operation lasting five hours sealed off the whole village of Etwell. Despite growing threats to both staff, patients and relatives, the occupation had remained solid. The night before the raid two administrators slept in the hospital. At 5.00 am they crept out into the dark and unlocked the hospital gates. At 6.30 am 120 police cordoned off the village and a further force arrived at the main gate to push away the pickets. Ambulances taken the previous night from trade unionist drivers and attendants were driven by senior



administrators into the grounds. Patients were bundled out of bed and carted off.

Three weeks later, at Princess Mary Hospital, Margate, administrators raided again and managed to remove 20 patients while the police cordoned off the pickets outside. This time patients were bundled into private cars. But 32 patients remain in the hospital and the work-in continues. Management want to move the patients to the Royal Seabathing Hospital but it is in need of repair work that the local AUEW and EEPTU have blocked. Such outside support is vital if these hospital closures are going to be stopped.

St. George's Hospital, Hyde Park, was finally closed a few weeks ago. It became increasingly difficult to get patients because of pressure on doctors who refused to send them there. Staff at the hospital were guaranteed jobs at other hospitals, and those who did not want to

move were bought off with redundancy money. The NUPE stewards failed to get enough support either in the hospital, or from outside. Local residents, most of them insured with BUPA schemes and the like, have not been sympathetic. Just before the hospital was closed it was totally redecorated and it now sits like a big white elephant, guarded in empty silence by a few men from Securiguard.

If this is not to happen at St. Benedict's, which is also a magnificent building of interest to private investors, then those concerned about the National Health Service must find some way of giving support. Tory vandalism must be stopped before we creep further towards a final solution for the uneconomic members of their society.

Offers of help to: Arthur Hautot (COHSE), St. Benedict's Hospital, Church Lane, London SW 17.

Roger Andersen
Roy Webb

Poles together

THE PARTY bosses in Poland have got what they were asking for. As predicted in the last issue of *The Leveller*, they implemented meat price rises on July 1, and were met with a wave of strikes.

The rises, a result of a reduction in the subsidy on certain meats and meat products, were not announced. Only after industrial action began, particularly in the big engineering factories in Warsaw, did ministers go on radio and TV and line up hack commentators in the press to mouth 'reasons' for the rises.

The strikers did not confine their protest to meat prices. Within a day, 40% of the 17,000 workers at the URSUS car factory were striking, not just for index-related wages to compensate for price rises, but for increases in allowances for working in conditions harmful to health and for working double shifts.

Concessions were wrung from factory management, including the promise that there would be no victimisation of strikers.

At the POLMO car parts plant at Teew, near Danzig, the entire workforce of 3,500 was out within a day.

In some cases, it is reported, 10% pay rises have been won. Information is hard to get, but it is clear the regime

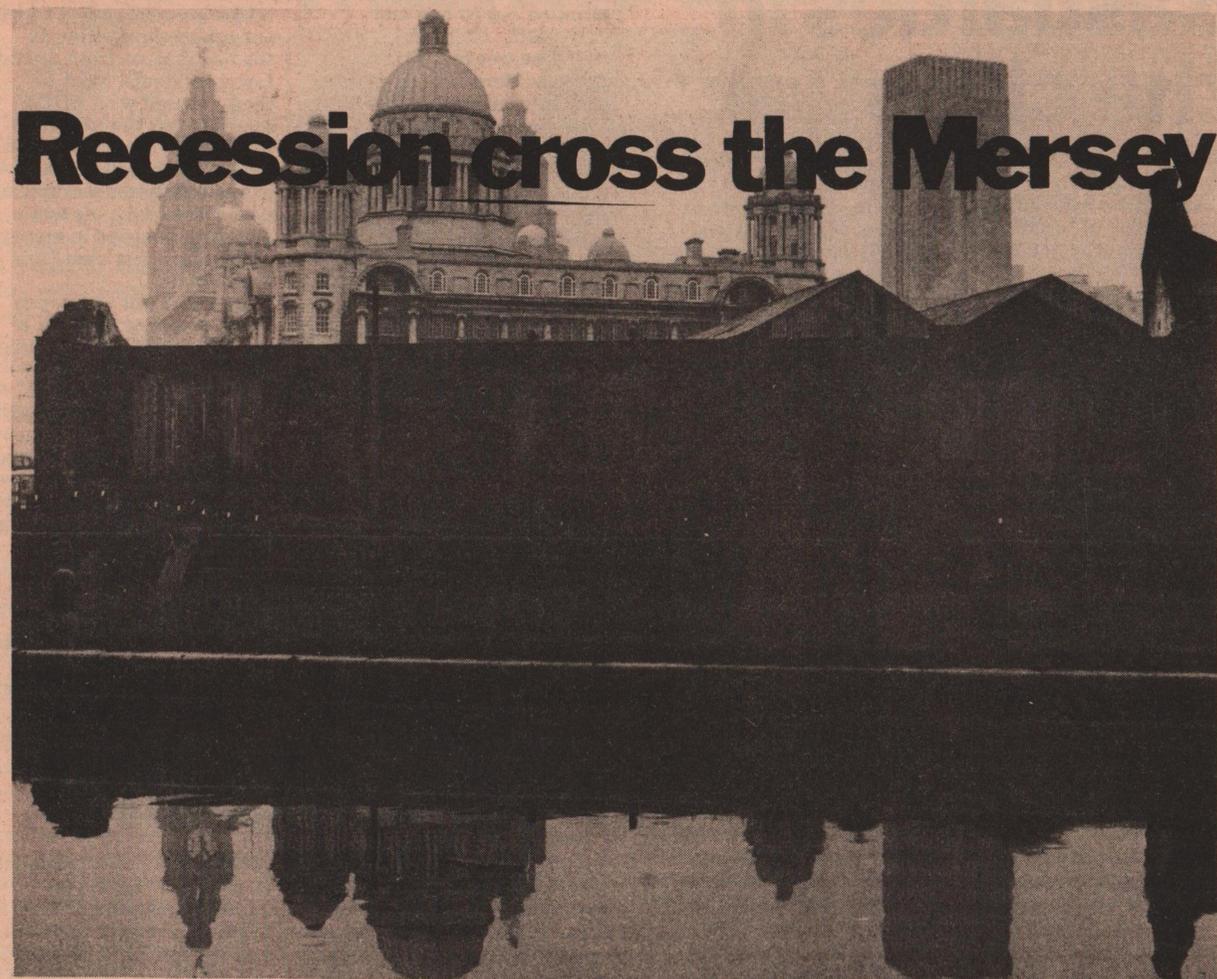
of Edward Gierek has failed to head off the widely expected protests. Gierek's tenth anniversary in power, this December, if he makes it, will be a grim reminder. It was a wave of strikes against food price rises imposed by his predecessor, Gomulka, that brought him to power.

The strikes have been vigorously supported by the social self-defence organisation, KOR. *The Leveller* has received a statement from KOR, embryonic trade union structure and demands are being formed in the strikes. Part of it reads:

"We wish to underline our support for the strikers' demands... We warn the authorities against irresponsibly provoking the public, an action which may lead to national disaster. We appeal for down-to-earth talks with democratically elected representatives of workers.

"Organise yourselves at work places, to elect democratically independent workers' representatives who will formulate demands on behalf of workers, who will conduct talks with the authorities and lead the workers in a responsible but also a determined way. Workers must be made aware that only common action can bring positive results."

Recession cross the Mersey



When Liverpool's city fathers chose the city's motto a hundred years ago they picked the slogan "God Has Given This Leisure To Us". It has never seemed more apt. Last month unemployment in the area was the highest since the war at 13%, that's just the official statistic. Andy Curry talked to Andy Shallice, Linda Grant and Sam Davies of the Merseyside Socialist Research Group about regional policy, unemployment and trade unionism.

LEVELLER: *I've seen a thing you come back to again and again in Merseyside in Crisis. It's about capital not being controlled by the people who work for it. Do you think there's any way it can?*

SAM: Not so long as capital is privately controlled. Regional policy was an attempt to direct capital without challenging the private nature of it. When the Industrial Development Certificates were being used it was very difficult to set up new plant in the south, to a certain extent it was influencing the movement of capital, but it was a temporary phase. Regional policy has been abandoned altogether, the change came in the last Labour government where Healey said "There's no point in

trying to influence capital to go to these areas like Merseyside, all we can hope to do is to put all the emphasis into the growth points in the south-east and the midlands and hope that if they recover then eventually it'll spill over to the regions.'

ANDY: Of what's left of regional aid to Merseyside, 99.5 percent goes to multi-plant firms which are mostly multi-nationals. And 50 percent of that goes to the chemical industry, the most capital-intensive there is.

SAM: The present government policy is that we've just got to go along with capital. And if the general tendencies are allowed to go unchecked then the regions will become industrial graveyards.

ANDY: In a sense that's the crux of the problem for socialists; on the one hand having an eminently desirable end, the social ownership of the means of production, and having ten thousand people, maybe a hundred thousand at the most, who are prepared to fight in their workplaces to try to achieve those ends. The socialist movement has failed to develop strategies that will bring about the possibility of the control of capital.

When it comes to alternative plans for companies we don't see that in a ninety day period when redundancy notices have been issued that it's possible to

produce an alternative plan. It's taken Lucas seven years to produce their plan, and people have had criticisms of that saying that maybe its only use is to hit management over the head with On the other hand it does challenge the role of workers in companies, to see themselves not just as wage slaves but as producers. In the end you're still faced with the problem of who owns the company.

LEVELLER: *When Dunlop closed the tyre factory at Speke, the stewards produced a plan then.*

SAM: It was done in the ninety day period, but that's too late, and it can't just be done in one firm, it's got to be part of a general political strategy to fight unemployment.

ANDY: And when someone from Lucas was talking about their plan he was arguing for better management, that they've got £200m of orders waiting if they start producing socially useful products.

LEVELLER: *At Dunlop they could suggest alternative socially useful products, but the only criteria they can get management to take them up on is that they'll sell.*

SAM: Dunlop's is a really interesting case, because it was regarded as one of

the best organised firms in Liverpool in union terms. A multi-plant union organisation that bridges plants all over the country and outside the country, they had all that at Dunlop. But when the closure notice comes, the ninety days, that all counts for nothing. All the traditional institutional pathways by which unionism is carried on is suddenly negated, you're knocking on the door to management saying, 'Can we talk to you'. With redundancy on the scale we have it now (in the twelve months 1978-79, 18,000 jobs were lost on Merseyside) the trade unions are faced with a situation in which the practices of traditional trade unionism are totally inadequate.

ANDY: The traditional limitations of trade unionism were exposed there . . . the representational nature of trade union organisation, which is to delegate all responsibility to your steward. And when redundancy is threatened the whole workforce has to be involved, and time after time only 80 or 90 people turned up out of a workforce of 2,400.

LINDA: There's the whole question of redundancy payments too. The size of the pay-off becomes the primary issue for negotiation for some people in the trade union movement.

ANDY: And just to say something about Massey-Ferguson. There the work force was solid demanding that the plant stay open but the whole battle was lost after the Manchester workers voted to accept movement of the work to the Manchester site.

LEVELLER: *The effect of unemployment on families is quite well documented, but can we talk about the effect of unemployment on the area as a whole?*

ANDY: It's in the book about official and unofficial statistics. We think that one in five is probably a reasonable estimate of unemployment. But the official rate of unemployment is based on the 1976 industrial census and since then we've lost 60,000 jobs in the area, so the official figures are an underestimate.

LINDA: Looking at the unemployment figures for Merseyside Special Development Area, although they don't take into account people who don't sign on, it's worth noting that the increase in women's

unemployment accounts for 93 percent of the total rise in unemployment between 1976 and 1979. One of the things also is that girls leaving school have been less likely to get jobs than boys.

SAM: Unemployment among young blacks is estimated at 90 percent in Liverpool 8. This is long term unemployment, whole families completely out of work. Generally the degree of long term unemployment is very worrying, especially now with the problems school leavers have getting jobs. You have a whole generation who've never been involved in the labour movement. This raises the whole question about the organisation of the unemployed . . . If you go back to the thirties the unemployed were organised.

LEVELLER: *Going back to where we started from, what do we do about it? I suppose I'm asking what people who consider themselves socialists do when they're faced with massive structural change and unemployment over which they have no control.*

SAM: We've been asked before what left groups were doing, whether there were connections between trade unions, tenants associations and so on. And when you start thinking about it there aren't the connections, or they're very hesitant. The only conclusion we could make in the book was that given the continued control of private capital and the continuing trends, the future is bleak. The book documents the failure of traditional organisations and policies and stresses the need, more urgent than ever, for new methods of struggle.

LINDA: It's not a question of writing off the trade union movement or the Labour Party but it's questioning the way the trade union movement approaches all sorts of issues, its concern primarily with wage demands and its concern with the amount of redundancy pay. I'm sure none of us would say that the trade unions ought to be replaced with something new, it's how these difficult questions can be taken into the trade union movement.

SAM: The reputation of Merseyside for militancy is in a sense misplaced, because in fact what has that militancy meant in terms of halting the movement of capital out of the area. It meant nothing.

THE MERSEYSIDE Socialist Research Group was set up about three years ago by a number of people involved in research at Liverpool's University and Polytechnic. They were all working on aspects of working class history in Liverpool, and the idea of the research group was to try to get their work off the shelves and into the community, to try to help equip the people who are confronted with the problems with some of the material they need to begin discussions about policies.

Merseyside in Crisis, their first book, is a comprehensive account of

the development and decline of the local economy. It traces the origins and growth of the local trade union movement from the beginning of the century, analyses the role of the state nationally and locally, and assesses critically the nature and politics of the local Labour Party. As they say in the conclusion, "History can explain the past and contribute to an understanding of the present. But it cannot be summoned to make the future — that is our task."

'Merseyside in Crisis', 120 pages and illustrations, is available from 23 Glover Street, Birkenhead at £1.15 including post and packing.

The killing of Walter Rodney

OVERSEAS delegates attending the funeral of Walter Rodney in Guyana — the British Labour Party, incredibly, sent Sam Silkin, who earned his bread attempting to lock up the left for the last government — have brought back a great deal of information on the circumstances surrounding his murder (see last issue).

On arrival at Georgetown's Timehri Airport for the funeral on July 21 (declared an International Day of Solidarity with the Working People Alliance) they were subjected to thorough searches, given only 24-hour visas (later extended) and had all their papers scrutinised, particularly those relating to condolences to Rodney's family and the WPA, of which he was a leading activist.

WALTER RODNEY'S funeral had to take place without his body because the Burnham regime refused to hand it over to his family. When it did so the following day, the body was rapidly decomposing. The excuse offered: The Georgetown public mortuary's refrigeration system was in disrepair.

On the Monday following, an estimated 35,000 people marched through Georgetown. Police, and House of Israel thugs who harass WPA groups at small meetings, kept a low profile faced with such a show of strength.

Outrage at Rodney's assassination has provoked even Burnham's own officials to give information to the WPA. They said that Gregory Smith, named by Donald Rodney (Walter's brother who survived the explosion) as the supplier of the walkie-talkie bomb, was in fact a double agent, in the pay of the Guyana Defence Maritime Force. He had been a corporal sent for training in electronics to the British Military School in London. He 'defected' in 1978, grumbling about low pay, but returned later that year. Instead of being disciplined, he was promoted to acting sergeant. When he 'defected' again in late 1979, he claimed that he was being victimised and not offered a gazetted post.

Vietnamisation in El Salvador

NICARAGUA has just celebrated the first anniversary of its liberation. Next door but one in El Salvador, the moment of general uprising approaches — 'irreversible total conflict' — as even an exiled Christian Democrat describes it.

NOW organised in a unified Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), the fighting forces of the El Salvadorean people have refused to be baited by the armed forces into a premature confrontation. The military junta and its remaining token civilians (two Christian Democrats) protect the interests of the small group of families that hog the country's wealth, wearing a veil of reformist pretence styled by Carter in the United States. But the four military wings grouped under the direction of the Front have now achieved a level of organisation that encompasses even an information offensive.

They detail 914 casualties inflicted on the armed forces of the junta since the

beginning of the year — a fact concealed by the government. In July the third largest city in El Salvador was taken over by the people's military. They attacked government installations and banks before being pushed out by the armed forces.

One of the myths perpetuated by the foreign press and the US government is that there is a clear distinction between the armed forces and the reactionary paramilitary groups. There is none. They work in close co-operation, especially in rural areas, intimidating the rural workers to prevent them linking up with the people's forces.

The latest attack by the junta was a dawn raid on the legal aid department of the archbishopric of San Salvador, which gives help to the relatives of the disappeared and murdered, which collates evidence and testimony on atrocities. Names and testimonies along with lists of international organisations with which the popular organisations in El Salvador have established links were among the files which

were removed. A Salvadorean exile in Britain, a member of the British Solidarity Campaign, describes the raid as 'a very selective and well thought out blow'.

A Jesuit priest, Jesus Nieto, one of the strange brew of radical theologians that Latin America produces, works in the department. He visited Britain in May, giving a first-hand account of events in his country to those who would listen. He was so stung by the only article to appear in the establishment press on El Salvador while he was here (*Observer*, May 11) by Peter Deeley, that he sat down and wrote an article in reply and asked the *Observer* to publish it. After much to-ing and fro-ing, and suggestions that he cut it down to a letter, nothing was published in answer to what Father Nieto denounced as the US State Department's line on El Salvador: that the US was 'preventing a bloodbath' between right and left.

Father Nieto's whereabouts now are not known. He was not back in San Salvador when his department was raided. This is what some of his censored article said:

'The junta's claim to be a progressive reforming force rests almost entirely on the agrarian reform programme (one per cent of the population owns 40 per cent of the usable land). US Ambassador

up. So the WPA, which first began to operate in 1974, and was formally launched in December 1979, is fast becoming unstoppable.

The WPA has the support of many unions, among them the Clerical and Commercial Workers' Union, the National Association of Agricultural Commercial and Industrial Employees, and the Guyana Agricultural Workers' Union. Rodney himself was in touch with bauxite workers, who showed a lot of grass-roots support, although their union's leadership is aligned to the Guyanese TUC which supports the government.

The WPA has been singularly successful in reducing racial conflict, by attracting support from within both Indian and African communities. It has instituted a collective leadership, with a rotating chairperson from among 13 executive members.

Burnham, in contrast, has turned to friends abroad to bolster his diminishing support. The British are training his army for jungle and anti-guerilla warfare, and his police in crowd control tactics. The US offers advice and weapons. The IMF granted him a \$100m loan a fortnight ago. And his 15-year-old regime, sustained by fixing elections and referenda, is now turning to a new constitution which will make him president for life. It may well happen that before it comes into force, later this year, the WPA and its allies will have consigned yet another dictator to his doom.

For details of meetings, pickets, etc., contact: WPA Support Group (UK), 11 Wandle Road, London SW17. Tel. 01-673 7436 or 767 5574.

Continued from previous page

It was then that he befriended the Rodneys and offered to build walkie-talkie sets for the WPA. Again, no disciplinary action was instituted against him.

It transpires that he made regular weekend reports to GDF Marine Command, and on at least two occasions, talked directly to the Guyanese Chief of Staff, Norman McClean, after he 'left' the GDF. He was also visited at odd hours of the night by senior army officials.

According to Donald Rodney's statement, Smith gave specific instructions where to test the radio, how it was to be held, and at what time testing should commence. He also made sure that Walter Rodney would be doing the testing when he handed over the 'walkie-talkie' bomb.

The bomb itself, senior Guyanese officials have let it be known, was too sophisticated to have been manufactured by Smith. It was specially flown in from abroad, an anti-personnel bomb possibly made by the CIA. McClean's secret mission to the US weeks before may have been directly connected with it.

The Burnham regime's involvement with the murder was exposed by the government radio report made at 6 a.m. on Saturday morning, the day after Rodney was killed. It said that the bomb had exploded outside Georgetown prison and that the victim's face was completely unrecognisable. *All this would have been true if Rodney had followed Gregory Smith's instructions to the letter.* In fact, the Rodneys went past the prison and parked to test the walkie-talkie in Hadfield Street. And Walter had held the brown paper bag containing the equip-

ment in his lap, so his body, rather than his face, took the brunt of the explosion. Donald, a few feet away, escaped with injuries.

Witnesses also say that army and police were waiting in vans in the neighbourhood of the prison, and they instantly cordoned off the area after the bomb went off. Gregory Smith was flown the same night to Kwakwami, in the interior and then on to Surinam, by GDF transport.

Despite the circumstances outlined above, and the small size of the bomb, the regime maintains that Rodney was carrying a home-made bomb to blow up the prison, and has charged Donald Rodney with possession of explosives.

It is reminiscent of the sloppy attempt to stick an arson charge on Walter Rodney, Omowale and Roopnarine. That trial, which even ex-Attorney General Sam Silkin declared a travesty, will go ahead on August 20. After so many postponements (and more are expected) even Burnham's unsatisfactory witnesses will have to plead loss of memory to save face.

Burnham appears to have been involved with the assassination of the WPA's most internationally known figure. And since 80 per cent of Guyana's industry is nationalised, he has been able to inhibit employees from openly showing support for the WPA. But Rodney's death has brought unprecedented support for the WPA cause, both within Guyana and internationally. Negotiations between the WPA and the People's Progressive Party to unify opposition to the PNC regime have been speeded

White is quoted as saying (in the *Observer*) that what is happening is 'the most profound reform in any Latin American country in many years'.

'It was the turn of events in Nicaragua last year which convinced the US of the need to back a reformist coup (October 1979) in El Salvador, thereby depriving the left-wing opposition of its *raison d'être*. So far the opposite has been the case.

'Such land as is being redistributed is handed over to members of the right-wing paramilitary organisation ORDEN (now known, since a banning order, as FDN) and of the pro-government peasant organisation UCS which was created and is financed by the USA. The land reform is a sham. It leaves untouched the major interests of the big landowners.

'Members of the genuinely representative peasant groups are being deprived of what little they have, tortured and killed.'

Amnesty International has corroborating evidence: 'In Chalatenango Department a circle of fire was lit around a village to prevent people escaping. Troops entered the village, killing some 40 people and abducting many others... troops were ordered to occupy plantations... under these orders they attacked villages supporting opposition peasant unions... land seized has been handed over to members of ORDEN, a movement clandestinely organised by El Salvador's previous government to use 'guerilla-style' terror against government opponents.'

Another eye-witness report: 'On March 6 there were 12 people killed in Aguillares. They were all tortured severely. For instance, the torturers scraped the skin off their faces and made long shallow cuts with machetes along their arms. They cut their fingers lengthwise. If you see the backs of corpses they are all purple with bootprints. If they don't find people at home they burn their houses and corn... This has been done by the National Guard.'

The rural workers have suffered heavily as the programme of repression, the 'rural reform', concentrates much of its attention on terrorising the rural masses from joining the popular revolutionary movements.

This is the 'reform' *Observer* correspondent Peter Deeley reported the 'extremists' as preventing the US from upholding. In answer to a letter from a member of the British Solidarity Group in June, he described the army as far more than a force for running the country: 'It is virtually the only way up for the bright sons of the working class who elsewhere might rise to the top through the civil service or the arts.'

Judy Foy of the El Salvador British Campaign, to whom Deeley gave the benefit of his insight in correspondence, said: 'Perhaps their work could be hung in the museum of contemporary arts or the National Gallery, then the people who have died with skinless faces and mangled

bodies wouldn't feel their deaths to be a waste. If it could provoke in Britain an outrage that would break the Foreign Office's complicity with the US line, the army's work should be hung for everyone to see. Maybe then the silence in the British press will be broken'.

The army is in fact largely recruited, nowadays press-ganged, from the peasantry, who are deserting at such a rate that a pick-up van goes round collecting uniforms dropped in the streets. No guns are left behind.

The effect of the junta's 'reform with repression' has been that all the 'moderates', the social democrats and almost all the Christian Democrats, have resigned from the government. Those who remain have no popular support. On April 13 these disaffected groups joined with the mass organisations to the left



Mixed traffic on a San Salvador shanty town street; the armoured cars move in to form the FDR, making it a broad front which groups everyone from centrist businessmen to the far left. The left itself, far from being fragmented, as the *Observer* claimed, has never before been more united.

The labelling of mass organisations — BPR, FAPU and LP-28 — as 'terrorists' was thoroughly debunked by Archbishop Romero shortly before he was murdered. He said: 'No, given the present situation in the country, I believe more than ever in the popular organisations, I believe in the true necessity for the Salvadorean people to organise themselves because I believe they are the social forces... which are going to achieve a society with genuine social justice and freedom.'

These are the organisations which the US, through its massive military aid programme, has been attempting to crush. In an open letter to President Carter, Archbishop Romero called for a halt to this military assistance, and a guarantee that the US would not intervene in El Salvador. He never received a reply, and now he is somewhere the airmail doesn't reach.

FDR representative Rafael Menjivar said in Britain in June: 'The interests of imperialism which the United States' intervention in El Salvador is struggling to preserve is merely the beginning of a new wave of imperialist strategy towards the world as a whole, and Latin America in particular. But it is also in El Salvador that we see the real possibilities of liberty for the peoples of the world.'

Menjivar's 'diplomatic mission' has been largely ignored. 'It is important to communicate that 400 people a month are dying in El Salvador, more than at the height of the Nicaraguan war; that there is a war in El Salvador and not, as the State Department is endeavouring to persuade people, a civil war that has to be contained'.

On the other side, the Institute of Strategic Studies, whose information pool includes the CIA, says in its latest

report: 'The spectre of another Cuba in Central America is a powerful image in American politics and after Afghanistan it would be harder for Washington to resist harsh responses to radical movements.'

In Nicaragua, the US arrived late and in bad shape. Their reaction has hardened subsequently with regard to El Salvador. They have increased aid to the extent that there are now 36 military advisors in the country, 100 marines, 35 helicopter gunships (Vietnam-style) and four military bases.

With the increasing weakness of the El Salvador army, given a desertion rate of 600 a month, the US has also established four military bases in neighbouring Honduras and Guatemala, threatening direct and massive intervention.

Menjivar concludes: 'We want to warn people of other countries of the process of Vietnamisation, the crisis that we believe is being created, not just in our zone but in the world as a whole. No country will be able to remain outside the struggle in El Salvador.'

Pat Murray

SHORT NEWS

Drugs rumbles

ON JUNE 5, in answer to a question in Parliament from Lord Melchett concerning the Misuse of Drugs Act, Lord Belstead, Minister of State at the Home Office explained that Section 23 of the Act permitted the police to stop and search people who looked under the influence of drugs, or about whom they had received information, but *not* to randomly stop and search people.

Apparently he's got his wires crossed on this issue, just as he has on those police officers who go 'fishing' for immigrants. Even police figures totted up 372 people stopped and searched without reasonable cause in towns around Stonehenge during the midsummer festival. The figure included strip searches carried out at police stations. At Aylesbury women complained that male police officers kept peering into the garage at the back of the police station while they were being strip-searched.

A free festival set up on common ground at Camplin Stone provided further evidence of police misuse of the Act. Between July 3 and 6, almost all the 250 people who went there were subjected to a random 'stop and search' by 50 police accompanied by six sniffer dogs bunched at roadblocks set up around the site. Only six of those stopped were arrested for possession of drugs.

When Release confronted Chief Inspector Wagg, who was in charge of this expensive and unjustified operation, he showed surprise that Belstead had made such a claim and said he would refer to his superior officers. Since then there have been occasional searches, but not on the same scale as before. Most of the 250, earlier offered this tactile and tactless welcome to a free festival, filled in complaint forms in which they also mentioned that police had not identified themselves when requested to do so by people they were searching.

At Inglestone Common, near Bristol, police ingenuity reached new heights. About 2,000 New Age Gypsies had congregated there for four or five days. On July 3 police with dogs and the Bristol Support Unit, (the local SPG which took a mauling in St.

Paul's, Bristol, a few weeks before), in all about 100 officers, decided to join the festival fun by making a drugs raid. Of 13 arrests, only six were on drugs charges, the rest for assault on police. They all pleaded guilty, of course. As people 'of no fixed abode', they would have been remanded in custody as one of their number was awaiting trial. Instead they shelled out £460 in fines (but how much did the police operation cost?) A number of people, including women and children, were mauled by police dogs, and six of them had to be given hospital treatment for bites.

The day before Inglestone's council had handed out notices to quit on the common; but the council's legal department told Release that that was simply a matter of form, and that the notices would not be enforced. After they'd driven off the police, the New Agers decided to stay put. They were joined by travellers from other festivals at Glastonbury and Pridy-pool (where a huge trench around the site prevented access). The numbers swelled to over 300.

That's because Lord Beaufort has his eye on the site, and wants to build a 'Pleasuredrome' there. The locals have formed a 'Commons Committee' to resist his plans. They want to keep their grazing rights. The local Lady of the Manor, Mrs Dreyfus, owns the mineral rights. Until these are all surrendered, Lord Beaufort, with his 'motion' of new use, can go suck.

Meanwhile, the New Age Gypsies are taking legal advice about suing the police for making free use of their persons.

Watering the workers wages

ON JUNE 14 the transport fleet at Fuller's Griffin Brewery, West London, stopped working and the loading bays were left heavy with barrel upon barrel of London Pride and Extra Special Bitter. The barrels haven't moved since and the other brewery workers have all been laid off. The T&GWU branch had been trying to negotiate a wage rise of 25 per cent, but management had offered 13 per cent plus a whole package of charges designed to increase productivity. The transport workers were especially annoyed about the suggestion that they cut down the lorry crews from three to two: all but 50 of them walked out.

This strike will not directly affect too many people (except

for real ale freaks addicted to ESB and London Pride) but it is a classic example of Thatcherite policies at work. Fuller, Smith and Turner are an old established brewery with something like a hundred tied houses (which have had to turn to Theakstons and Ruddles for their beer during the strike.) They had done quite well for themselves and the real ale campaign has helped their profits. Recently they decided to expand their plant to the tune of £2 million-plus, and at the same time they increased their dividend to shareholders by 22 per cent. There obviously isn't enough for both re-investment and increased profits, so the brewery workers and the drinkers are being asked to pay. 'In order to get this policy to work Fullers have' brought in a new Personnel Manager, Mr R. Holton, who has clearly benefitted from CBI management seminars.

Dave Penn, T&G Branch Secretary, said: "It was a nice peaceful company until the new Personnel Manager joined. There have been five disputes in the nine years that I've been here, and four of them have been this year since he arrived. This is the most serious dispute so far. Myself, the Branch Chairman and one shop steward have received final written warnings because of our obvious intent to disrupt the workings of this company. We have also been accused of manipulation, corrupt practice and conning the workforce."

During negotiations Mr. Holton said that profits had nothing to do with the workforce and since the other workers were laid off he has tried to show that they do not support the strike. He sent out letters to 194 employees, which included the non-union members but excluded those on strike. This 'referendum' was an attempt to intimidate people because their *names were on the papers*: in spite of this he only got 75 to say they thought the pay 'award' was fair. He still managed to get a story into the local papers claiming that the majority of the workers at the brewery were against the strike because only 31 people were willing to put their disagreements with management in writing. The remarks on some of the mutilated ballot papers could hardly have been to Mr. Holton's liking.

The strike is still solid in spite of the T&G national officials being very slow to send them any strike pay (which is only about £6.00 a week anyhow). They need money, so all beer drinkers could cut out that extra pint and send money to: Frank Tracey, 138, Dalling Road, London W6. Cheques and POs should be made out to T&GWU Branch 1/418

Roger Anderson

An Anarchist conference?

If you think leftwing meetings can be bitterly sectarian, then you should have gone to the anarchist conference held in Oxford at the end of June. It was the first attempt since the early seventies to get together the various groups of anarchists throughout the country.

Most of the established groups such as Solidarity, the Anarchist Communist Association, the Freedom and Xtra collectives and the London Workers' Group turned up.

But despite the wide response, or maybe because of it, it is doubtful if there will be another conference in the foreseeable future, since many of the 150 who attended left the weekend thoroughly pissed off with everyone else.

Part of the problem stemmed from the lack of a clear aim. As one of the Oxford Anarchist Group organisers later admitted: 'They really just called a conference 'for the sake of having a conference'.

In the first session it was decided to hold small workshops followed by plenaries for report-backs and further discussions. The workshops covered topics ranging from the nuclear threat through anarcha-feminism to anti-psychiatry. By far the largest workshop dealt with the question of 'Anarchism and the Left' and it was characteristic of the whole conference.

A suggestion for the meeting to be chaired was shouted down by one individual. As a result the discussion was dominated by a few who were the most assertive or the most macho (One of these had shouted down the suggestion for a chairperson in the first place). Incidentally the proportion of women attending and participating was no higher than at most left-wing meetings.

The attitudes expressed towards the left varied from co-operation on some campaigns to violently breaking up their public meetings. No attempt was made to establish a consensus or even to gauge the feelings of the majority who didn't speak.

The only practical suggestion to come out of the conference was for a national anarchist magazine. Dave Coutts of the A.C.A. hoped this could provide a forum for debate between the various groups. The idea was received with a scepticism which in view of the sectarianism of the conference is totally understandable.

Richard Pantlin

"Organisations to free up the herb must move from being simple law reform lobbies to becoming popularly-based instruments for the mobilisation of powerful social forces". Tim Malyon, the former coordinator of the Legalise Cannabis Campaign, looks back over the achievements of the first two years.

Drawing on the organic network

THE CANNABIS movement has always occupied a shady area, pilloried by the right, possibly because cannabis has never made it as a ruling class intoxicant, and treated with grave caution by the left. In the middle sits the smoker, possibly as many as five million in the UK, wondering what all the fuss is about, and very often developing a most healthy disregard for any form of authority or organisation.

Small wonder then that when the Legalise Cannabis Campaign first started, saw the future in terms of a well-organised, conventional law-reform lobby. "Ultimately a Parliamentary campaign, because ultimately that's where the law gets changed", was my description two years ago (*Leveller* 18, August/September 1978). However, as membership and support have rolled in from a bewildering variety of people in all walks of life and whilst still maintaining its conventional lobbying activities, the direction of the campaign has somewhat changed.

It was the first Annual General Meeting which started to reveal the political leanings of LCC members. Whilst a majority of those attending had never been actively involved before in organised protest or politics, discussions about legalisation revealed a common pool of beliefs: members stated clearly that packets of ten reeferers on sale from the local tobacconist and advertised as the coolest draw in town would not suffice. We, the consumers, were not prepared to see our market taken over for our exploitation. Out of that AGM

came a discussion paper, *Cannabis in the Market Place*, which sets out a number of criteria for the legal marketing of cannabis: no advertising to create new demand; consumer protection concerning price and quality; fair wages and conditions for producers at home and abroad; proper health information, unrestricted cultivation for personal use. We felt that the only system with some chance of satisfying these criteria was one involving producer and consumer co-ops where producers and consumers controlled the market between them.

Big increases in membership, and the active participation of members and local LCC groups, meant that during our second year of existence a far larger proportion of resources had to be devoted to building up the LCC as an organisation, encouraging people to become active. "What can I do?" has become a constant call in the office, and has forced us to face the basic questions: what does this movement mean, and how can we stimulate an understanding of the mechanism that oppresses us, thus opening up practical avenues for protest? Certainly we must 'protest and survive', but how?

Our answer has been to build up LCC communications and local groups, sending out a newsletter every two months to members, and monthly mailings to groups with information and campaigning ideas. Groups send information to the office, which is then recirculated. Whilst it is

hard for one person living in the middle of Wales to protest, if that person is in touch with many other people locally, as well as with journalists, lawyers, printers, bands and owners of PA systems, their voice can become heard locally, nationally and even internationally.

As LCC members have initiated this process some extraordinary old friendships and ties, the organic network of the old 'alternative society', have been revived and imbued with new energy. One example of this was the decision taken at our last LCC meeting in March to encourage protests in court, with the main office preparing a leaflet and helping with legal advice. Local groups would offer essential support. 4,000 members and 16 local branches can make loud collective protests.

The First International Cannabis Legalisation Conference in Amsterdam this February confirmed a core

there is no
fury like a
vested
interest
masquerading
as a moral
principle

of somewhat anarchistic unity in the politics of over 300 different nations. Concern about future multinational involvement in the trade, and the use of cannabis laws as tools of political repression predominated. Dr. Freddy Hickling, Senior Medical Officer at the Bellevue Psychiatric Hospital, Kingston, Jamaica, traced back associations between ganja and black culture, and corresponding attempts from the time of slavery onwards to repress both: "The reality of ganja is related to its rebelliousness, its restiveness among the native populations of colonised countries, the

fact that people use this and disobey the ruling dictates of the time". Describing the development of the cannabis culture in Poland, and its repression, Dr. Zbigniew Thielle, radical member of the Polish Psychiatric Society and leading drug dependency consultant, came closest to framing in words my personal view of the political value of an active cannabis culture and movement: "The establishment rejects in the first place the new, alternative socio-cultural values, manifested, either intentionally or unaware by circles shaping the 'pot culture'...

At the end of his speech Dr. Thielle stated: "The striving for legalisation of the use of marijuana is, in my opinion, right... the striving we express here results from the acknowledgement of the most widely-understood human right to self-determination and free choice... the road towards this aim is long and full of hardships and requires mobilisation of powerful social forces. The legalisation of the use of marijuana could become one of the stages of this way."

If it still exists in a couple of years, Parliament may well abolish cannabis prohibition. However, members of the movement have experienced rather too much of the politics of oppression to see legalisation, and the movement behind that, as a simple matter of law reform. Abolishing one weapon of oppression, 'Sus', for instance, may well lead to more extensive use of another tool, such as the stop and search provision of the Misuse of Drugs Act. And so it will continue until we free up our lives.

Further to this, although the cannabis leaf is for many a powerful symbol of 'peace, love and unity', which can draw many people into active political action, the commodity also represents huge sums of money, some of which will be diverted both before and after legalisation to tatten those same people that enforce and support the present laws. "Ganja is a 44 billion dollar industry. What people in the Third World are really worried about is are we going to be ripped off again?" (Freddy Hickling). In such a climate organisations to free up the herb must move from being simple law reform lobbies to becoming popularly based instruments for Dr. Thielle's "mobilisation of powerful social forces"

E.N.D. is nigh

THERE has been a dramatic resurgence in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. *David Clark* argues that this time the campaign has got to succeed.

CND's public meetings, which used to be attended by 40 or 50 stalwarts, are now gathering crowds of 600 people. The Labour Party demonstration last month, poorly publicised and held on an appallingly wet and windy day, still managed to mobilise perhaps 20,000 people. E P Thompson has been stumping the land, addressing packed halls with the message of European Nuclear Disarmament. It's the beginning of a Europe-wide movement touching influential centres of progressive opinion in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union itself, a fantastically important development.

We should not get carried away with euphoria. Last time there was a mass upsurge against nuclear weapons it was absorbed and negated by capital. We should not let the same thing happen twice.

But progressive politics have moved a long way since 1960. Then there were relatively few choices. There was no organised women's movement, gays hadn't come out, sexuality was on the agenda, of course, but it had more to do with sleeping bags than branch meetings. The environment was what we marched through, not about, music hadn't got much beyond skiffle, while the main body of extra-Parliamentary politics was the anarchists. Alongside these forces marched hundreds of thousands of largely non-political people who came from a relatively prosperous 'never had it so good' Britain where GNP rose every year and the main employment problem seemed to be a shortage of engineers. These people didn't care about the class nature of the Soviet Union, but they did care about their kids getting blown to pieces by a hydrogen bomb.

Since then intercontinental bombers have been supplemented by Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, which have been countered by anti-ballistic missiles, which in turn have been countered by multiple independent re-entry vehicles. Nuclear submarines have been supplemented by hardened missile silos and mobile missile launchers. Space age technology, with enormous potential for peace and progress, has been produced for war by the avaricious military/industrial complexes of both east and west. Nuclear knowhow has seeped out of the hands of the few and is now spreading like an unsightly stain across the globe so that any machismo dictator general can get his hands on a simple bomb.

Meanwhile the focus of debate in the west has shifted quite subtly and almost unnoticed away from 'deterrence' towards 'tactical nuclear war'. We are being conditioned, in east and west, into believing that if 'Protect and Survive' is an obscene joke the answer is not to pull out of the game but to spend more on shelters. And the introduction of the Soviet SS20 and the Cruise has made it even more likely that one side or the other will use Europe as the battlefield while remaining safely bunkered in the depths of the USA or USSR.

The Soviet Union is now spending such a high proportion of GNP on defence that even her own economists are reported to be alarmed that it is seriously distorting the economy. In Britain the government is contemplating spending £5 billion on Trident, which, all questions of morality and military effectiveness aside, is economic lunacy, and will not create one job in the UK.

Why do they do it? We do not have the benefit of insight into the minds of the Politburo but we can see the arguments quite plainly as they're expressed here. A recent article by Peregrine Worsthorne told *Sunday Telegraph* readers: 'Rather than be ruled by Russia the western peoples would be prepared to risk destroying the human race. Such is the measure of their detestation of alien domination. They would go to any length - including the first use of weapons that would poison the earth's surface for hundreds of years and endanger the entire species, most of whom have no interest in the defence of the West - to prevent a Russian takeover. When it comes to defending what the West holds dear, moral considerations soon give way to atavistic and primitive passion. Hundreds of millions of deaths would not be too high a price to pay for our independence.'

Worsthorne is one of the most perceptive commentators of the New Right, and his writings repay careful study for their insights into High Tory thinking. We should not underestimate what he is saying. He is quite prepared to blow up the whole world.

It may be argued that brute instinct always was the only guide for capital, but the frightening thing is that the conservatives who profess such thinking hold state power on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Indeed ordinary Soviet citizens who for sixty years have felt themselves surrounded by the armies of imperialism, were they to have the freedom to read Worsthorne, would probably give thanks that their leadership is able to offer some protection against such ranters

Opinion on the left on the nuclear weapons issue is divided, particularly over the question of the Soviet Union. The SWP, which first emerged as the International Socialists during the original CND campaign, built itself on the slogan 'Neither Washington nor Moscow but International Socialism', which depended on an analysis of the Soviet Union as state capitalist. They want Britain out of the arms race and NATO, like all the left, but they do not defend the Soviet Union.

The more orthodox Trotskyist groups, depending on some variation of Trotsky's 'deformed workers' state' analysis, defend the Soviet Union from attacks from western imperialism, even though most are highly critical of Soviet society. The IMG blame the US alone for the current escalation of the arms race: they do not see the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan as imperialist, nor do they believe it can be equated with American intervention in the middle east or Latin America. They want Britain out of NATO but in any conflict between western imperialism and the Soviet Union would support the USSR.

Most Communist Party members probably regret that either side holds nuclear weapons, but they defend the Soviet Union's right to do so while the West still threatens what they see as socialist states. They too would like to see unilateral disarmament and Britain out of NATO and adopting a neutral stance, most of them for the best of reasons, a handful for baser, Stalinistic motives that would give Worsthorne nightmares.

Attitudes within the independent left vary considerably, from the virtually non-critical defencist policy of the New Communist Party to the anarchists'

outright opposition to all states. Within the framework of CND itself, which is now bursting with life after nearly a decade of marking time, the political direction is largely provided by the left of the Labour Party and part of the CP, while the purely pacifistic, concerned Christian and ecological traditions are also still important.

But in the movement outside the Labour Party there is agreement on opposition to all British-held and western nuclear weapons and to NATO.

Inside the Labour Party, which is currently going through its most fruitful discussion for decades, there is profound disagreement. The right wing is totally committed to an 'independent' British weaponry, arguing along the same lines as Bevan's 'going naked into the conference chamber'. William Rodgers, who warns of the 'strange army of bedfellows' climbing onto the bandwagon, is deeply committed to NATO, and the leadership has always been an active protagonist in the Cold War. There is little hope for change here. But on the left there is room for guarded optimism. Because this time, unlike twenty years ago, the defence arguments are clearly seen as part of a wider political debate, in particular over party democracy, over getting a leadership committed to Party policy. Current policy is: no Cruise missiles on British soil, no successor to Polaris, no increase in arms spending.

But the most promising initiative of all and the one that most scares authority, east and west, is the European Nuclear Disarmament campaign launched by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation and proselytised by Thompson. END cuts across state, party and national divisions with the devastatingly simple proposition

that none of us in Europe, east or west, has any particularly serious disagreement with anyone else nor wants to get into a nuclear war. Therefore we should talk together and campaign for a nuclear-free and independent Europe. It's a wonder no-one thought of it before.

It will be much easier to mobilise END in the western liberal democracies than in the totalitarian states of the east, but the message will, nevertheless, travel across borders and find a resonance in Prague, Warsaw and Budapest. As Roy Medvedev pointed out in his dialogue with Thompson, it will be more difficult to communicate with Soviet people, where the Party dominates all forms of political and cultural life, and such essentials to debate as free communication and travel are barred to most citizens. The western campaign to boycott the Olympics and all other social, cultural and sporting exchanges (while continuing, of course, to trade) will lessen even further any chances of dialogue with the Soviet peoples.

But END is quite simply the most subversive movement to have been launched for decades. Everyone can understand its message, and it's easy to identify who's against it: the bureaucrats, generals and admirals, the owners and controllers of capital, the apparatchik running state-controlled armaments factories and the heads of the military/industrial complex, the proprietors and controllers of the flow of information and ideas, and their penny-a-line hacks who write what they're told, the grey men in bunkers who plan armageddon and their masters in power who'll press the button from deep in the earth or high, airborne above it.

But our potential is enormous, for not only is the simple issue of nuclear annihilation so clear to everyone, but we march against the backdrop of a deepening world recession caused in large part by the enormous proportion of surplus value that has already gone into the arms race. Now our rulers propose to spend us out of the recession by escalating the arms race into the upper reaches of nuclear insanity.

The last time nuclear weapons played a central role in politics, the arguments were largely confined to the UK and the Labour Party. But it was vital to the birth of the independent, extra-Parliamentary left of today. This time there are tens of thousands of people throughout Europe who went through that experience and know the dangers of absorption into the right-wing social democratic mainstream, who are not attracted to the Soviet Union and do not wish to take sides. The answers to the current madness lie within that conjuncture, for the issues are so clear: literally, socialism or barbarism.

Cambs vs Cruise

AN ALMOST post-holocaust silence has descended on the area round Molesworth since its number came up as a base for Cruise missiles. The community has not uttered a whimper of protest; the voice of the Church, the Rev George North, Rector of Brington and Molesworth, is a stony 'no comment'. He has nothing to say on such a momentous local development.

Certainly Defence Secretary Francis Pym's advisers could hardly have selected a more red-necked 'do our bit for Britain' Tory area. At a meeting in the gymnasium at Brington School on July 7, Jim McArthur, a resident of Keyston, another village adjoining the Molesworth airfield, spoke hesitantly but at some length of his opposition to nuclear arms in general. He was subjected to a megaton tirade of abuse, particularly from one red-faced blimp who told him, to murmurs of approval from the 130 or so villagers present, how he had fought in the last war and that it had only developed because Britain was unprepared.

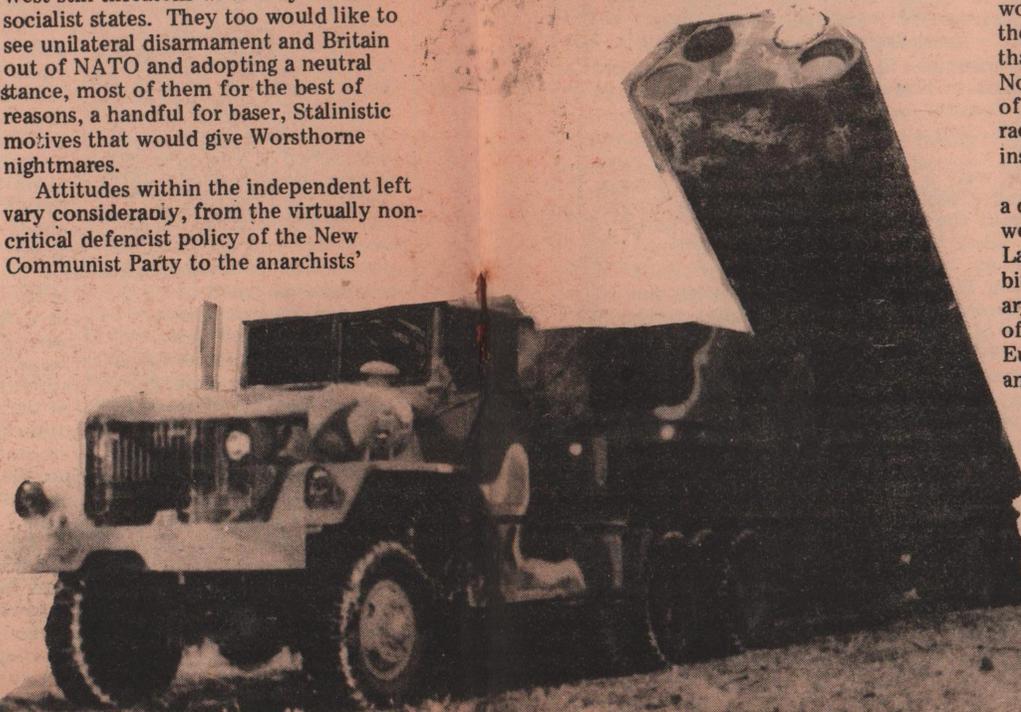
McArthur and Caroline, his wife, are now seeking refuge from this kind of fallout in the embryonic Hunts Against the Missiles campaign, one of the protest groups now proliferating in East Anglia almost as fast as the warheads.

Beyond the complacent barrier of Molesworth the signs are of the most spontaneous and widespread development of public concern for years. It is remarkable because the local tradition has been of almost numbing political smugness. The trade union movement is not strong; the middle classes wax fat in thatched picturesqueness; the entire region returns only one (right-wing) Labour MP (from industrial Ipswich).

The campaign has got off the ground since the NATO decision to site the Cruises in Britain on December 12, he says. 'The movement is getting stronger as each day goes by. There are now about 30 groups and new ones are being formed all the time. Quite small places are suddenly forming their campaigns against the missiles.'

From Spiller's account the movement is healthily democratic. East Anglia Against the Missiles is a co-ordinating body which leaves local groups to develop their own initiatives while standing by to give advice and support when called upon.

One of the largest groups is in Cambridge, where people were recently affronted



Armageddon Now

ted by a 12-page 'Defence Briefing' in the *Cambridge Evening News*. Cambridge Against the Missiles secretary Freda Knight calls it 'an apology for NATO' and has been prominent in demands for another supplement 'giving the other side of the case'. She says they have offered a lot of material, including an article by the 'passionately anti-nuclear' Astronomer Royal, Sir Martin Ryle of the Cambridge Cavendish Laboratory, a Nobel physics prizewinner. The paper has yet to print this material, though editor Colin Webb, formerly of *The Times*, says he is considering it. But he adds that there is no question of handing over pages to the campaigners. 'They do not seem to appreciate the need for editorial control, and if we do publish a supplement it will be produced by our own journalists.'

But he has had to publish pages of letters, the overwhelming majority arguing the anti-nuclear case. No single topic has provoked such response in the paper for years.

Being in East Anglia, the protest has an acute sense of fair play. In March CAM managed to get Pym, who 'represents' Cambridgeshire, to debate the nuclear question with Lord Soper. Pym, hardly the most gifted speaker of the age, was comfortably demolished, but Freda Knight thought he was being 'rather brave' to come along, and to ensure that he had at least a few friends in the audience had issued free tickets to the local Tory party. Even so, Pym was alert enough to worry

DEFENCE Secretary Francis Pym is, in common with Cabinet colleagues, a wealthy man. He lives in a splendid house in Sandy, Bedfordshire, about 16 miles from Molesworth as the missile flies.

This handsome edifice has been the subject of some controversy, since Pym last year sought, but failed, to get permission to demolish it and, in tune with the national air of austerity, replace it with something more economical to run.

It would be unfair to construe the minister's enthusiasm for the missiles as a move to by-pass the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act, by bringing a rain of Soviet missiles onto his constituency.



Pym: 'rather brave'

about his survival; he refused to have the debate televised or recorded (and, naturally, no-one was going to override his refusal).

A further public debate is planned for October. It will be another one-sided contest, with arch-reactionary Bury St Edmunds MP Eldon Griffiths offered up to Bruce Kent of CND.

Griffiths was the MP who attempted to prevent the villagers of Brandon, Suffolk, holding a referendum earlier this year on the prospect of hosting the Cruises at nearby Lakenheath. The poll was eventually held, and approved the idea, though narrowly. Lakenheath is one of three nuclear air bases under USAF command in the region, the others being at nearby Mildenhall, and Alconbury,

35 miles west. Cambridgeshire lies between them.

If the Labour group that holds half the seats on Cambridge City Council has its way the city will have no civil defence provision in the event of nuclear war. In their most decisive move in years they have united to express their opposition to the Cruises and to expose the monstrous con-trick of civil defence. They expect the crucial Liberal support to withdraw Cambridge from national civil defence and wartime emergency planning.

Cambridge used to have a Regional Seat of Government, in Brooklands Avenue on its southern outskirts. The deep shelter facility for bureaucrats to scurry into is still there.

Ron Knowles

The Survivors



A FULL-PAGE advert in an American newspaper: a picture of a sad-faced child, holding out an empty bowl; above it, the question: 'No food tomorrow?'

It's not an ad for Oxfam, but for what's fast becoming a growth industry in the US, survival. There is a rapidly-growing demand for do-it-yourself nuclear fallout shelters. It's almost happening here.

The cult of survivalism is based on a kind of elitist paranoia, with a bit of frontier-style self-sufficiency thrown in. Survivalists are particularly concent-

rated in the south west.

Basically they fear just about everything, and they'll go to great extremes to protect themselves against it. Not just the holocaust, but Russian invasion, famine, race riot, total economic collapse —

you name it, they're protected against it. A typical survivalist in Texas goes to bed surrounded by 'insurance' — a small arsenal of firearms, 25 thousand dollars in Kruggerands, six months' supply of food, and a can-opener.

Survivalists were a relatively small group of fanatics until the 1973 oil embargo, when their numbers shot up. There are now several firms profiteering handsomely from the fear of Doomsday. They sell food that will survive lengthy storage, weapons, and helpful advice on how to live through a variety of disasters.

The sales manager of one in California says that since the hysteria over Iran and Afghanistan, business has trebled.

'People are coming to us because they're concerned about the Russians,' he says. These firms are now coming out into the open. In the past they'd kept a lower profile; now they're advertising. Mail order survivalism is thriving.

These people aren't just crazy, and it's not a new craze either. They identify with the people who originally colonised the country, living in the past as well as the possible future. After all, their bunkers share the good earth with the Pentagon's missile silos.

Mark Smith

THE SCENARIO we're asked to accept is the long-range war between the US and USSR, with hundreds of missiles whizzing east and west, and presumably crossing in mid-Atlantic.

The war isn't going to be anything like that, not if it's started on purpose, at any rate. Military planning on both sides is for something quite different: a war that starts with attacks on the buffer states of Europe — the two halves of Germany; Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia in the east; France, the Low Countries, perhaps Britain in the west. Even the mad people who spend their time dreaming up these things want to put off the ultimate

horror of global war.

But the buffer states can be wasted, supposedly as warnings, while the super-powers continue to negotiate.

Evidence that this is western planning has come in NATO documents recently leaked, it is believed by the KGB, in an attempt to raise the nuclear stakes.

These show partial target lists for western tactical nuclear weapons, and list places not only in eastern Europe, but in Austria, West Germany, Finland and Yugoslavia.

From the east, *The Leveller* has received the testimony of a former Czech officer trainee, *Ivan Hartel*. He was a student of nuclear physics in Prague

who became a leading activist in the protests of 1968, was implicated in the first post-invasion trial, was forced into exile and subsequently deprived of his citizenship.

During his training as a sub-officer in the Radio-Chemical Surveillance Personnel he was taught the basic Warsaw Pact defence strategy, which shows the puppet Czech leaders were prepared to evacuate their country and have it laid waste, to suit their Russian masters.

The Leveller has broken the British Official Secrets Act often enough. Never before has it broken the secrecy provisions of the Czech penal code. Another first for freedom!

Monument for peace of mind

WE were taught about the major Warsaw Pact strategic doctrine and the role assigned by the Russians to Czechoslovakia itself and possibly to other East European countries as well.

In the event of an attack by the Western Imperialists, our response was rapidly to effect a scorched earth policy. We would withdraw eastwards, ultimately into Soviet territory, burning and destroying everything. When the imperialists advanced into Czechoslovakia we were to bomb them — if necessary with tactical nuclear weapons — wipe them out and proceed to reclaim the land.

Thus Czechoslovakia was to be scorched not just once, but at least twice. 'We' were the Czechoslovak army. No mention was ever made of Czech and Slovak people, but no-one ever asked. No-one ever voiced any protest.

When I came to the West, I discovered the rational beauty of the Western strategic doctrine, and the place assigned to my country in NATO military thinking. In the event of a Soviet attack, even a conventional one, the West will respond by nuclear-bombing East European countries (especially Czechoslovakia) with medium range missiles, while taking great care not to touch an inch of Soviet territory proper in order to avoid escalating the conflict into global war. Meanwhile, peaceful advances will be made to Moscow, to allow the Russians time to stop their aggression.

So Western thinking also is to dispose of my country (and a few others, notably East Germany, Poland and Hungary) to avoid confrontation with the USSR. One can speculate that this would be the role of Western European countries from the point of view of the USSR.

So there is a strong potential for countries in Europe to be wiped out at the whim of the superpowers, without them coming into direct confrontation with each other.

IN the Radio-Chemical Surveillance Personnel our job was to go out, clad in

rubber suits and capes, 'anti-radioactive galoshes' and gas masks with various filters, carrying rudimentary radiation detection and anti-chemical warfare equipment. We would take samples of air, surfaces and earth, flora and fauna for analysis, and carry out rudimentary analysis ourselves. We were to be dropped in an area after an attack and report on the level of radiation or what kind of chemical or gas was being used; the nature and force of the nuclear blast, composition and direction of the fall-out clouds, and so on.

They told us we would have an average life-time of 1½ minutes.

We were to be expendable. If we were lucky we could last a couple of weeks. If 1½ minutes was to be the average, I don't know how quickly the first would die.

It's difficult to come to terms with such calculated cynicism about human life. A few people joked about it but everyone else just accepted it. As for the population, it was being prepared for civil defence certainly more than here, but it was sheer tokenism. Regular drills were held in factories, schools, institutes — like fire drills in Britain — about once a quarter, but not in homes, only in workplaces. Alarms were sounded and people marched into underground shelters, which were just the existing cellars, nothing specially built.

These drills are a waste of time. Nothing short of total cover of the body together with an autonomous breathing system (and ideally a pressurised suit) will prevent contamination. Yet people are not being informed about the real nature of the dangers. They are being issued with pathetic plastic bags and wrappers if they are lucky.

They are told to collect bedsheets and lie on the ground, behind an obstacle, with their head outwards from the epicentre of the blast, to cover themselves with the sheet, preferably wet and salted, and afterwards to throw the sheet carefully away in the direction of the prevailing wind. Compared to this, with my 1½-min average lifetime and rubber suit with gas

mask, I could consider myself lucky and privileged indeed. Were I to be a member of the politbureau, I could consider myself luckier still.

THE SKYLINE of Prague used to be defiled by a giant statue of Stalin, built of granite, about 80 feet high, on a huge plinth on the Letna hill overlooking the Vltava. The monument was built in the 1950s. It was more than just a testament to the idiocy of the Czech leadership in deciding to build the biggest monument to Stalin in Eastern Europe at a time when his mystique was already crumbling. It was more than an exercise in futility and national self-degradation. It was a cover-up to conceal the construction of the nuclear shelter for party and government officials.

There is underneath the hill a huge network of tunnels and passages, with access from government and party buildings, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Russian Embassy.

When the monument was built — the statue was dismantled in the 1960s but the base remains — the Central Committee of the Communist Party decided to take over the Ministry of Transport building, by the river, nearer to the hill. (The Ministry of Transport was moved to the old Central Committee offices out of range). The office of the Government Executive was also moved, to a site immediately adjacent to the hill. The Ministry of the Interior stands on top of the hill, next to the big block of luxury flats known as 'Molochov', where most of the top officials live. The huge Russian Embassy compound stands on the other side of the hill. The Presidential Office is on the Hradcany, Prague Castle, which is on the next hill, not far away, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs nearby.

The bureaucrats have long ago made contingency plans to save themselves pretty fast if the time comes. As for the rest of Czech and Slovak people — virtually nothing.

THE LEVELLER continues its handy reader-reference series with details of the UK's Sub-Regional Headquarters (SRHQs), the successors to the old war-emergency Regional Seats of Government (RSGs). SRHQs are a chain of well-stocked underground shelters in various parts of the country, whose purpose is to ensure that 'top people' come through the megadeaths unscathed and ready to restore working order in post-nuclear Britain.

Safe seats in a hot spot



Former War Room, Cambridge, with new extension added.

THE CURRENT network of 17 Sub-Regional Headquarters for England and Wales developed out of the 10 Civil Defence regions which gave us our RSGs of the first great nuclear war scare in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The arrangements for Scotland and Northern Ireland appear not to have changed much since then, but any additional information about them would be welcome.

The new system of SRHQs is closely linked to 10 Defence Region Armed Forces Headquarters (AFHQs) controlled ultimately from United Kingdom Land Forces Headquarters at Wilton, near Salisbury. The Land Forces have a big say in post-nuclear administration of these isles. They also have 'Field Force 80', whose HQ is at Bulton, Wiltshire, and whose job is to 'protect vital NATO and national installations and bases'. SRHQs will be run mainly by civilians, with help from military liaison officers. In the period after bombs are dropped they will probably be subordinate to regional AFHQs. In turn, SRHQs administer County Council War HQs, bunkers where up to 120 people, under the command of the non-elected Chief Executive of local government, wait until the radiation count drops enough for them to emerge.

The government will have a number of choices for its own special retreat during hostilities: the tunnel system in central London (Holborn, Whitehall), the Home Office Central Communications Establishment at Wealdstone (Harrow), Blandford Forum in Dorset, and Warminster. The military top brass will have continued use of its pres-

ent system of deep bunkers for army, navy and air force operational command: Salisbury, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Northwood, Bentley Priory, Soutwick, Pitcaire Castle, and possibly even Dover Castle. The list is probably much longer than we'll ever be allowed to know, right down to the mini-bunkers for the Royal Observer Corps, whose job it will be to keep a tally of the location and megatonnage of any bomb-bursts. What we are more concerned with here is the

location of your nearest Sub-Regional HQ. The list below shows those that are known or suspected, numerically by Defence Region.

All this may seem cold comfort to most of us — not only do we have no say in where our own and America's nuclear weapons are sited (or whether we have them at all), but when the decision is taken to go to nuclear war in our name, we won't even know exactly where to find our lost leaders....

| Civil Defence Region No. | SRHQ Site | County HQ |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| 1. NORTH | 11. Brizelee Wood (Alnwick) | Middlesbro. Durham, N'castle, Sunderl'd. |
| 2. NORTH-EAST | 21. Shipton-by-Bessingborough (Yorks) | Hull, Northallerton, Wakefield, Barnsley. |
| 3. NORTH MIDLAND | 31. Chesterfield | Matlock, Lincoln, Nottingham, Leicester, and Northampton. |
| | 32. (NE Leicestershire) | |
| 4. EASTERN | 41. Bawburgh (Norwich) | Cambridge, Norwich, Ipswich. |
| | 42. Sovereign Hse, Hales Rd, Hertford. | Bedford, Chelmsford. |
| 5. LONDON | 51. Kelvedon Hatch, Brentwood, Essex. | Five groups: Southall, Wanstead, West Norwood, Cheam; fifth not known. |
| 6. SOUTHERN | 61. Surrey Constabulary HQ, Mount Brown, near Guildford. | Maidstone, Guildford, Lewes, Chichester. |
| | 62. Civil Service Commission HQ, Alencon Link, Basingstoke. | Reading, Aylesbury, Winchester, Ventnor and Wood Eaton. |
| 7. SOUTH WESTERN | 71. Ullenwood Army Camp, nr Cheltenham | Brislington, Dorchester, Gloucester, Taunton and Trowbridge. |
| | 72. Hope Cove, Cornwall | Truro, Exeter. |
| 8. WALES | 81. [Not yet built] | Carmarthen, Bridgend, Cardiff, Swansea. |
| | 82. Abergavenny (?) | Abergavenny, Llandridnod Wells. |
| 9. MIDLAND | 91. Warwick (?) | Birmingham, Sutton Goldfield, Stafford, and Warwick. |
| | 92. Kinver (?) | Worcester, Shrewsbury. |
| 10. NORTH-WEST | 101. Dukes Hse, Houghton St., Sthport. | Carlisle, Preston. |
| | 102. [Under construction] | Chester, Cheadle, Liverpool. |

Scotland has four zones, with HQs at Barnton Quarry, Anstruther, Kirknewton and Prestwick. Northern Ireland is one zone, administered directly by the Ministry of Defence.



Checking the final programme

THE US General Accounting Office (GAO) has been investigating the effectiveness of North American Air Defence Computers (NORAD) — the ones that went wrong. The report condemns both the computer system and Pentagon chiefs. The WIMEX system of computers is too old and of completely the wrong type for the job. The computers were designed for 'batch processing' rather than as an 'online' system. Online systems require reliability and have to be able to handle vast quantities of input and output data simultaneously, whilst a 'batch processor' has to be a powerful 'number-cruncher' i.e. do sums very quickly.

The Honeywell machines used in WIMEX are not good at online work. They were not designed for the job, and they are at least ten years old.

GAO criticises the Pentagon chiefs for being obstructive — they would only release half the information needed for the report. We can assume that the information withheld would have been even more embarrassing to the Pentagon.

The hawks in the Pentagon, not content with siting Cruise missiles in your back garden, put their faith in an ageing computer system which has caused three major false alerts since last November. One where planes actually took off. The computer malfunctions were discovered after four minutes, another five and it might have been too late.

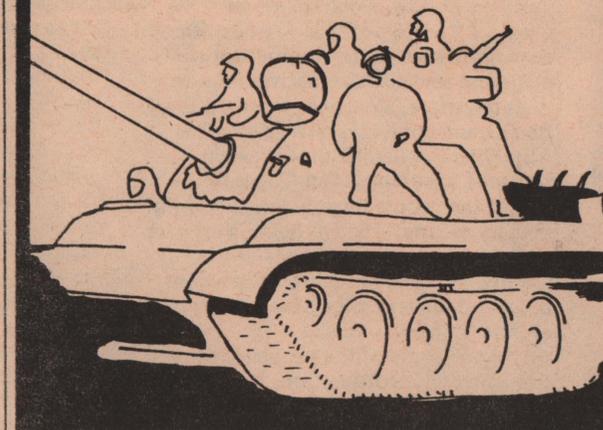
What an epitaph for the human race. 'Died as a result of computer error. Rest in pieces.'

Dan Re'em



...and now the other Home Guard

Occupation patrols are heavily armed, eagle eyed and nervous. They watch the road, doorways, windows and rooftops for mines, bombs and snipers. They are as dangerous for passers-by and the curious as they are for bomb-throwers and snipers.



WHILE the last issue of *The Leveller*, with its Jake Prescott interview, was going to press, several exitable Tory MPs were demanding Home Office action against another former Angry Brigade defendant, probably Britain's best known anarchist, Stuart Christie.

Winston Churchill, former Tory defence spokesman, Julian Critchley, vice chairman of the Tory defence committee and Ian Sproat, the scourge of the social security scroungers were all demanding that Christie's latest, *Towards a Citizens Militia* be investigated by the Home Secretary and the Attorney-General, the *Sunday Telegraph*, the *Scottish Daily Record*, the *BBC's Today and World at One* programmes, and Grampian television, all ran hysterical stories on this 'blueprint for terrorism'.

The Leveller asked Stuart, why he published the manual. He said:

'The tactics and methods of resistance are explained so that libertarians can start to consider seriously a situation which is becoming less and less hypothetical. There is a real threat of a nuclear holocaust from both east and west. An alternative to that threat is a citizens' defence force along the lines of the Yugoslav, Swiss and Israeli models. An organised and defended population would be a lot more difficult for an aggressor to subdue than a professional army elite.'

'Apart from an East-West confrontation the other possible scenario, is that a cabal of ultra-right wing politicians and army

officers seize power at 4am tomorrow.

'It's all very well saying that this is a fantasy but contemporary history is full of examples and there will be more to come. Living, as we do, in a society rooted to obedience to authority, it's safe to assume that by midday there would be people cheering in the streets. By 3pm we'd have citizens loading other citizens, the so-called social security scroungers and "non-right-minded people" onto lorries. Leading MPs would appear on television oozing assurances that all was for the best and that it was our constitutional duty to accept the new order. By the next morning we'd have respected members of the bench setting the seal of legality on the authority of the new regime and packing the opposition off to football stadiums to await the new

justice.

'The politicians who have voiced concern about the manual for the most part haven't read it. Those who have are deliberately misinterpreting it as a blue-print for revolution. It's not. It is a defensive contingency document aimed at the general public.'

Stuart claims that the information contained in the manual, which includes the fundamentals of combat operations, organisation, weapons and explosives, sabotage, ambush attacks on communication installations, power stations, rail networks and airfields — details on hiding weapons, illegal printing, and behaviour during interrogation, was gathered from sources which included the IRA, Ulster Loyalists and anarchists in South America, Spain and Germany.

Although Stuart says the manual is 'aimed at the man and woman in the street' it assumes that the reader has a basic knowledge of weapons and explosives which most people in this country, under forty five, do not have.

For an anarchist publication it has a few strange statements, which even Stuart recognises some libertarians will balk at, like 'Command of a military force by committee is not advisable' and 'the writer recommends Clausewitz . . . He is an authoritarian deluxe, but nevertheless one of the most brilliant military tacticians'.

Indeed, take away the anarchist cliches and libertarian sentiment and the manual could be any capitalist country's Home Guard manual. Perhaps that's why the police haven't taken any action. After all as Stuart pointed out, 'the police had a copy of the manual weeks before this whole issue blew up, and the police college at Bramshill are subscribers to Cienfuegos Press'.

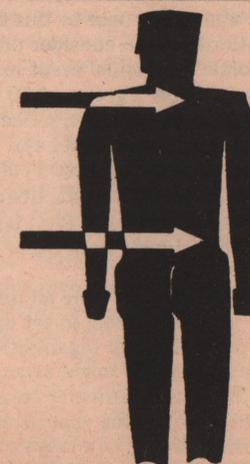
Alan Sinclair

Disabling guards quietly

Hit below neck, between shoulder blades

Hit obliquely between small of back and loin

Use iron bar or blunt side of axe



PICKING UP THE PIECES

In Leeds on August 30 there will be a conference to follow up the ideas put forward in *Beyond The Fragments*. Here Lynne Segal, one of the book's authors sets the scene for the conference.

WHEN Sheila, Hilary and I first wrote our sections of *Beyond the Fragments* early last year, we really had no idea what effect our labours might have. Of course, we hoped that in looking at our own political experiences over the last ten years we would raise questions on political organisation and practice which had troubled many socialists and feminists. It seems we did, given the huge impact the book has had on the left.

Certainly we haven't raised all the questions. In particular we failed to develop many problems central to the women's movement. But it's true to say we were primarily addressing the left, and we wanted to put feminism on the offensive in relation to it.

We shared common assumptions. We didn't feel the organised left groups had learned adequately from or integrated the insights of feminism. Most of them didn't really try to. We didn't feel that the structures and practice of existing groups could encompass the many and varied activities of socialists and feminists which we saw as part of the socialist movement. We stressed the importance of many initiatives outside these groups. We thought that possibilities for communication existed, at least initially, more on a local than a national level. Sheila, in particular, developed a critique of the Leninist democratic-centralist 'vanguard party', which reflects rather than transcends some of the inequalities of capitalist society.

Over the last year the three of us have been besieged with requests to give talks and write articles on the themes of the book. It was in response to this that we began, with others, to consider possibilities for some 'fragments' event in the autumn. There is now a group of 50 or so people organising this event, reflecting a variety of political experiences and traditions (industrial, community and cultural, mainly non-aligned feminists, libertarian socialists, left Labour and Big Flame members, and individuals from other groups).

From the beginning we were all quite clear that we were not trying to set up a new national revolutionary organisation. We hoped the conference might strengthen people in their own particular areas of work or activity, by sharing experiences and ideas, perhaps seeing new ways of linking one area of work to another. We wanted the day to help develop a more

popular vision of socialism, stressing the importance of the social, cultural and personal dimensions of socialist activity. We thought it important to discuss the problem of how people relate their personal lives to politics. We also stressed the importance of developing workers' plans and socialist alternatives in industry and welfare, alongside the need for defence and combative struggles. This is why Mike Cooley (of the Lucas shop stewards' combine committee) will be one of the people introducing the morning plenary session. He will be drawing some of the wider political lessons of the alternative plans produced by the combine, and the way they have organised around them.

We are aware of the problems of reformism and incorporation, for example in relation to workers' plans and socialist alternatives. We are aware of the tensions around alternative politics and the necessity for industrial confrontation and combat against the state. They raise questions of the relationship between the movements and revolutionary organisations, between exploitation and oppression, between local and national organising.

'A need to go beyond the division between those active in the labour movement and Left groups and those fighting for change outside these structures'

For example, those of us who have worked in NAC must be aware of some of these problems. How do we broaden the campaign around abortion and link it to the overall attack on women? Can men work with women in a feminist campaign? What is the relationship between local and national groups in NAC? How successfully have the revolutionary groups and the women's movement managed to work together on this issue? What should be NAC's relationship to the Labour movement, the Labour Party, and so on?

Another important recent development is the growth of the anti-Cruise missile movement. This promises to bring people together in a way that the anti-nuclear power campaign has so far failed to do. But how can we work to make it an effective and politicising movement which strengthens class struggle against the state?

AT THE day event, we expect to start with a plenary session, with short opening statements from socialists active in the women's movement, tenants campaigns, shop stewards' combines and anti-racist work. There will then be workshops, 30 of them, taking in different themes from housing, the welfare state, socially useful production, the anti-nuclear movement, radical media, to collective practice and transport. In the afternoon there will be further workshops, intended to explore the links that could be possible between socialists in different movements. The organising group suggests some basic guidelines, such as past experiences of unity, within campaigns and rank and file groups, fight-back committees, socialist centres and left Trades Councils. There will be a final plenary session, the basis of which is still under discussion.

In the evening there is music from Leon Rosselson and Frankie Armstrong, plus disco. Throughout the day there will be exciting events for children, as well as a creche for the under-fives.

We see the event as only a beginning, with possibilities for a further two-day event in the spring. We hope there will be local spin-offs that can strengthen resistance to the Tories and build for a socialist alternative.

A number of left groups are predictably resistant to the Fragments event. For myself, I can see no contradiction between accepting the need for a national revolutionary organisation and seeking to strengthen and help sustain the work of all those committed to revolutionary change.

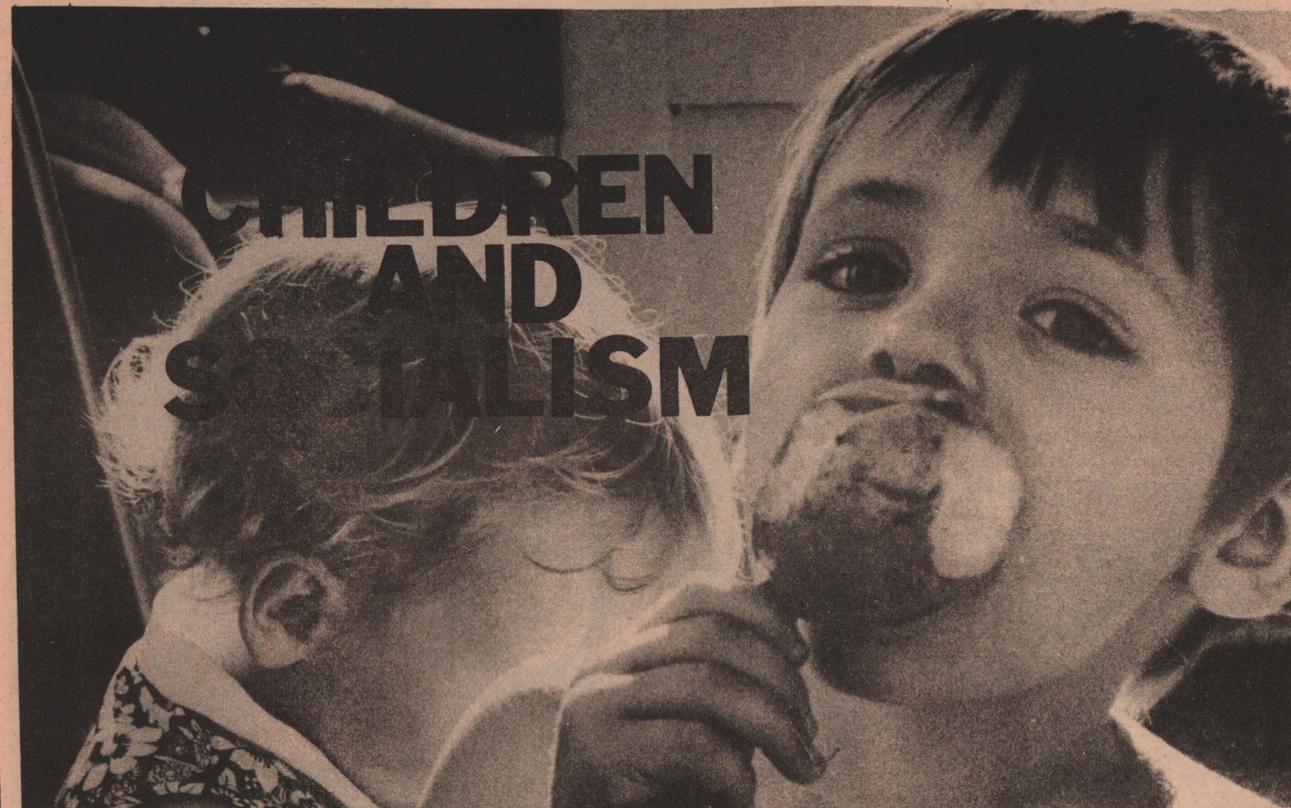
It is vital for us to create new ways of working together. I see a need to go beyond the division between those active in the labour movement and left groups and those fighting for change outside these structures. I see it as THE priority.

We are still open to suggestions and participation. Contact us at 39 Kelvin Grove, Liverpool 8, 051-727 4608, for further details.

Lynne Segal

Can you help?

The Leveller collective is helping organise two of the morning workshops; those on the radical media, taking in the use of media for other forms of socialist education apart from periodicals; and on collective practice and the possibilities of co-operative production under capitalism. Please contact us, rather than the hard-pressed Fragments comrades, if you would like to take part or offer any ideas or material for these workshops.



CHILDREN are under particular attack in the present crisis. They are the most vulnerable and powerless of groups, and despite Thatcher's adulatory attitude to the family they are being hammered.

The reorganisation of the supplementary benefit system means that discretionary grants for shoes, clothes, staying on at school and so on will cease. School meals and transport are becoming too expensive for many; the child allowance has in effect already been cut.

Most of the left has very little to say on all this. The most progressive demand to date on pre-school care, for instance, has been '24-hour nurseries, paid for by the state, controlled by the community'. Reality for parents in a city like Leeds is very different. The few state nurseries we have are full, and 'unsupported mothers' and 'problem families' take priority.

The care offered by such nurseries is often of dubious quality: they're often overcrowded, over-regimented and a breeding ground for the sexist, competitive and racist values of our society. This does not mean we should give up campaigning for state nurseries. Of course they must be extended. But they must also be improved.

For a woman like myself, a socialist and a feminist who wanted to have a child on my own terms, the situation posed a problem. Should I manipulate a place that would undoubtedly be of greater benefit to another woman and her child, in a place I didn't even like? Should I put all my energy into initiating a possibly futile campaign for the sort of nursery socialists want, dragging my

daughter round with me? Or should I try to find an alternative solution, utilising my privileges as a well-paid part-time worker living collectively in a large house? I chose the latter. A major consideration was my desire to be closely involved with my child as well as to carry on with work, politics, friends and other interests.

Six adults and three children formed the basis of our creche.

Not only were we critical of state nursery care, we were also critical of the rather haphazard nature of some of the collective child care we had seen. Our creche operated five days a week, 9 to 4.30, with a rota among the six adults.

Despite changes in our relationships, and people moving, the creche has continued. Although we have been able to offer support to other children and parents, the commitment of the original people has remained central. Now the three children are at state nursery school in the mornings and in the creche in the afternoons. They all start school in September.

Most women are forced either to accept the inadequacies of nurseries or child-minders, or to be artificially constricted as a mother. Thanks to the Women's Liberation Movement, nursery provision is a demand in the socialist programme. But despite this, most groups, organisations and campaigns on the left expect their members to find their individual solutions to the problems posed by wanting to make a reasonable job of bringing up children and to participate actively in political struggle.

It's surprising that so few organisations

question why their memberships are predominantly young, male and single. They don't seem to analyse why older members, particularly women bringing up children, drift away or seem to be erratic in their commitment. Most of us never have the chance to discuss these in our political forums.

If we pursue our politics at the expense of our children, they could quite legitimately put up two fingers to our sort of socialism and join the Festival of Light. I want our children to learn that politics is part of everyday life and that political involvement is something to take for granted. This means taking them on certain demonstrations and pickets where there is no likelihood of danger. (*Comradely note from the typesetter: do so while there are still such events allowed*) It means developing political practice that includes children.

I want them to learn that socialist politics can be fun and that socialists are nice people (*ALL of them? - the typesetter again*) who value children and make them feel important. Socialist politics should give children the chance to decide what they want to do in the way they want.

All this involves opening up our relationships with our children to others in our political organisations and on the left in general. It could provide an invaluable experience of communism, an experience that can begin to encourage in them the seeds of a creative and positive opposition to the system that oppresses us all.

Big Flame has a pamphlet available on Children and Socialism, from 217, Wavertree Rd, Liverpool 17, 30p.

Jane Storr



Marram

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FEMINIST moving to London to start course urgently needs somewhere to live, sharing with other, preferably in or near Brixton (anywhere considered, though). Can anyone help? Anne Martin, 101 Shirebrook Road, Heeley, Sheffield.

WORKING TOGETHER
— a conference for radical booksellers. York, Sunday September 21. Send now for details, Federation of Alternative Booksellers, Mushroom, 10 Heathcote St, Nottingham, 0602-582506.

NEVER AGAIN! The Hows and Whys of stopping fascism, by Colin Sparks.

Fascism, born of the economic crisis of the 1930's, brought the barbarism and death camps of World War II. Now, as another crisis deepens, it raises its head again... This book looks at how and why fascism grows, how and why its opponents failed in the 1930s, and how and why it can be stopped today. Price £1.95.

ROSA LUXEMBURG, by Tony Cliff

How many people, when asked to list the great socialist thinkers, will come up with a line of men? Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky... Far too many of us forget that among the greatest contributors to socialist ideas stands Rosa Luxemburg. This book aims to redress the balance. Price £1.95.

Available by post from
BOOKMARKS, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London, N4

BOOKMARKS bookshop, two floors of books on socialism, trade unionism, workers' history, women's issues, internationalism... and much more. Just round the corner from Finsbury Park tube station in North London. Come see us...

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COUNTERMOVE

A new London-based delivery, courier and despatch group aiming to combine cheapness, reliability and flexibility with a broad range of services. At present, Countermove is based around the needs of printers and small publishers; it intends responding to cultural, community and left groups.

Countermove is working with Wholesome Trucking in forming the London Transport Co-op. Countermove, 52 Acre Lane, London SW2. 226 9483/ 278 4066.

BOOKS

one - Campaigns and Pioneers in the Making of COHSE', which traces the history of the union from its foundation as the National Asylum Workers' Union through to the formation of the Welfare State, and is currently working on a longer version, taking the story up to the present day.

The booklet provides a great deal of valuable information about early union struggles against appalling pay and conditions and a total lack of job security - the Union's first General Secretary was summarily dismissed from a Lancaster asylum for posting union notices on the staff notice board. Mick Carpenter's account, enlivened with some contemporary reports and excellent photographs, successfully captures not only the bare history, but the feel of these crucial events in trade union history in an era of public service which still suffers from Victorian attitudes and penny-pinching.

All for one - Campaigns and Pioneers in the History of COHSE costs £1.00 and is available from:

The Confederation of Health Service Employees, Glen House, High St., Banstead, Surrey. SM7 2 LH.

PUBLICATIONS

THE NEW issue of the End Loans to Southern Africa newsletter (No 20) contains information on the close working relationship between Standard Bank of South Africa, a subsidiary of Standard Chartered Bank of London, and the South African military state. The bank has purchased 2.5 million shares in SASOL, whose oil-from-coal project is of immense strategic importance to the oil-

hungry apartheid state, and has made a R. 20 million loan to the illegal South African administration in Namibia.

For further information contact: Terry Shott. Tel ephone 01 609 0211



EALING NEWS has just produced its fourth issue and it seems to be going from strength to strength. It is published by the Ealing Community Relations Council, and takes the place of the ECRN News, which was a rather bland mixture of recipes and official flannel on community problems. The new paper is trying to be a proper community paper and hopes to become independent in the future. The present issue provides coverage of the Blair Peach inquest, housing in Southall, a visit to the Harmondsworth Detention Centre, the Ealing Under Fives Action Group and the British Movement.

The old ECRN News used to be distributed through the Council's internal mail to schools, but the new paper has been denied these facilities by the ruling Tory Group. They claim that there is no censorship involved, but it might just have something to do with the critical line that has been taken, especially in

Ealing Eye, a column which looks closely at the behaviour of the local worthies. Available from: ECRN, 2, The Green, High Street, Ealing W5.

THE JUNE issue of The Freethinker carries a scathing attack on the Community Standards Association, a Cornwall-based group with links to the Festival of Light and Mary Whitehouse's National Viewers' and Listeners' Association. 'A close examination of the Association's publications and activities', writes William McIlroy, author of the Freethinker article, 'reveals that behind the smokescreen of innocuous platitudes and smug sermonising is an organisation that encourages snooping and informing.... teachers are fair game for CSA marks.... films can be banned without being seen, magazines condemned without being read, and newsgents reported to the police without their knowledge.'

The Freethinker costs 25p and is available from: 702, Holloway Road, London N19.

A PAPER in the second issue of the Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development discusses the establishment of bilingualism in the home. Many parents, put off by fear of the unknown, often aggravated by ill-informed advice from teachers or media personnel who may attribute any speech difficulties or learning problems to a child's bilingualism, have been tempted to abandon the idea of encouraging bilingualism in their children.

The paper, by Dr George Saunders, discusses the difficulties and attempts at overcoming them in an actual family - of Australians who speak both German and English - and it should be useful in showing that child bilingualism is not only possible but beneficial. A very necessary point to make in a society where the forces of the State, in the shape of frequently monolingual teachers, doctors and child health visitors often seem convinced that bilingualism is something that requires treatment.

This issue of the journal (Volume 1, No2) is available to individuals, price £2.00, (Library price £5.00), post free from:

Tieto Ltd, 4, Bellevue Mansions, Bellevue Road, Clevedon, Avon, BS21 7 NU

EVENTS

THE STONES from which Jimmy Boyle's recent sculptures are carved were once the black-encrusted blocks from which the Gorbals were built. Now in the 13th year of his sentence in Barlinnie Prison, he has an exhibition of his work at the Pentonville Gallery in London. 'All of this is no different', he says, 'from the means I used in the Gorbals. Violence was creative in that situation simply because it was socially acceptable. Art is alien to them, as alien as the moon.. The very fact that I've developed these creative (art creative) areas of myself has angered not the people to whom art is alien, but those who are comfortable with it. So in many ways in doing what I'm doing I'm attacking the entrenched

is at: 42 Gloucester Avenue, London NW1 (Chalk Farm or Camden tubes).

RECORDS

LOL COXHILL, the sax player known for his variety of collaborations, ranging from The Damned on one hand to the international improvising pool company, on the other, and who has appeared with the LMC, has just released a solo album, Lid. Throughout the album he never dwells on one particular theme or mood for too long, but gradually transposes the theme and changes direction. Contrast is the central component; spontaneous performances and pre-conceived offerings, rhythmic up-tempo numbers and more atonal pieces are juxtaposed to produce music that is not only innovative but also highly enjoyable. Lol Coxhill. Lid. Ictus Records 0011 (Italian Import) Sat. at:

The Pentonville Gallery, 46, Amwell Street, London EC 1.

CAMPAIGNS

WHEN JOHN SAUNDERS, sacked by the Scottish National Camps Association for 'indulging in homosexuality' took his case to the Employment Appeal Tribunal, they ruled that his dismissal was fair. The decision is binding on Industrial Tribunals throughout the UK unless it can be overturned by a higher court.

John Saunders has decided to take an Appeal to the court of Session, Edinburgh. The case comes up in the autumn and several organisations have decided to pool expertise and energy in the Employment Protection Appeal to overturn the ruling that a lesbian or gay man can be fairly sacked merely for being homosexual.

The Saunders Case - Bulletin No. 1, and copies of the EAT judgement are available from: Employment Protection Appeal, SHRG 60 Broughton Street, Edinburgh EH1 3SA.

MEANWHILE, A COMPLAINT to the local government ombudsman alleging injustice has been filed by the Nottingham Campaign for Homosexual Equality. They had approached the Nottingham Teachers' Centre for hire of a room to show an educational tape and slide kit, entitled 'Homosexuality - A Fact of Life'. The Director of Education blocked the booking. Eventually, after six months' patient lobbying, the banning was confirmed.

County Councillor Dennis Pettitt has agreed to forward the complaint to the Commissioner for Local Administration. Last year the Rotherham CHE brought a similar case to the Ombudsman and won, forcing the Borough Council to change its policy towards the CHE and its gay ratepayers.

For further information, contact: Mike Raymond/Chris Richardson, 19 Thomas Close, St Anns, Nottingham. Tel: 0602 55196.

ORGANISATIONS

BIG FLAME are holding their Summer School from July 26 to August 2nd at Beechwood Hall in Leeds. The theme this year will be Basic Marxism and Beyond. The cost will be £35 for over 16's and under 16's will be £20, which will cover accommodation, food and entertainments. For all enquiries, please contact: Big Flame Summer School, 217 Wavertree Road, Liverpool 7. Tel: 051 727 6353 or 01-986 1782.

A WOMEN'S PLACE NEEDS SPACE. A Women's Liberation Information Service run by a voluntary collective.

AWP provides contacts inside and outside London helps groups find speakers on Women's Liberation, and offers facilities such as duplicators and typewriters and a central meeting place. Unfortunately they've got to move out of their short life squat soon, and need to find new premises in Central London where they can continue to provide a place where women can work together for liberation.

If you can help with: Long term funding; Standing orders; Donations; Names of sympathetic housing officials and people working in housing departments; or any other ideas, please contact: A Woman's Place, 48 William IVth Street, London WC2 Tel: 01-836 6081.

THEATRE

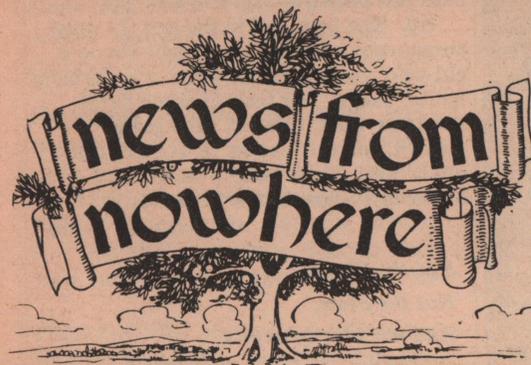
INTER-ACTION has produced an Anti-Nuclear Roadshow due to tour Britain from October to December. It consists of two plays and an exhibition which has been put together by Islington Friends of the Earth.

'Nuclear Prospects', the first play, was staged in the Almost Free Theatre's 'Last Anti-Nuclear Festival' in 1979, and covers the formidable breadth and intensity of the security arrangements which are implicit in a nuclear state.

'Lies in Your Hands', the second play, deals with the problems of highly radioactive nuclear waste.

Both these plays are political thrillers. Groups using the roadshow can guarantee an exciting and entertaining night out.

The tour will be available from late September to mid December, and will cost a minimum of £180 per day (exclusive of VAT) plus hospitality, where available, against a negotiated share of box office receipts. If you are interested in booking, please contact: Michael Paton on 01-485 0881.



NEWS FROM NOWHERE, the Liverpool radical bookshop, has produced a comprehensive booklist on Prisons and Prisoners. Helpfully subdivided into sections such as 'History and Ideology', 'Contemporary Information on British and Irish Prisons', 'Literary Writings', etc., it features such diverse treatments as Victor Serge's 'Men in Prison', Amnesty reports, Wilde's 'Ballad of Reading Gaol' and Jonathan Marshall's 'How to Survive in the Nick'.

For the full list, write to: News From Nowhere, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool 1. Tel: 051-708 7270.

IF YOU'RE BLACK, a woman, or both, they really do treat you like rubbish. They say they do it so that you know how to deal with a situation of stress, and not because they're racist, sexist and everything else under the sun'. In Taken for a Ride, a new Centerprise publication, Ruth Parsons, a woman bus conductor, describes her work in a lively and often amusing way. She talks very openly about the difficulties of the job, particularly for women, and is aware of the way that things could be improved. With cartoons on nearly every page, and large print, the book is designed to be of interest to adult literacy students, and to schools, as well as anyone who has ever had to travel by bus.

'Taken for a Ride' costs 60p (plus 20p p&p) and is available from: Centerprise, 136-138 Kingsland High Street, Hackney, London E 8 2NS. Trade orders should be sent to: PDC, 27, Clerkenwell Close, London EC1.



SHEBA is a feminist publishing co-op run by a group of women from within the Women's Liberation Movement, brought together by the need to see more and a greater variety of publications committed to feminism in bookshops and libraries everywhere. Their first titles are:

- Sour Cream £1.25
- The Ten Woman Bicycle £1.25
- For Ourselves £4.50
- Smile Smile £1.75
- Spare Rib £2.50
- Diary 1981 £2.50
- Women and Russia £1.75

To receive Sheba's special offer mail order package of copy copy of each title for £10 (incl. p&p), contact: Sheba Feminist Publishers, 183 Swaton Road, London E3.

COHSE, Britain's largest health service union, was formed 70 years ago this month. COHSE's historian, Mick Carpenter, has written a booklet entitled 'All for

Alimento em pó para lactentes desde o nascimento até um ano



Enriquecido com vitaminas e minerais

ESSENTIAL READING for the kitchen notice board: the Baby Milk Action Coalition's list of Nestle products to leave out of your shopping bags. Since the firm owns 475 subsidiaries, including such household names as Findus and Crosse & Blackwell, you're almost certain to be inadvertently subsidising its aggressive promotion of powdered baby milk in the Third World - even the Leveller office has a jar of Gold Blend in the back room. The dangers of bottle feeding are widely recognised, particularly where the lack of clean water and hygienic conditions, poverty and illiteracy make it virtually impossible to prepare artificial feeds safely. This leads to infection, malnutrition and often death. The Nestle boycott is part of an international campaign to persuade all infant food companies to modify their practices. In addition, BMAC will be targeting the British companies, Cow and Gate and Glaxo later this year. For further information, contact: Andy Chetley, Tel: 01-609 0211 (office) or 607 7175 (evenings)

REVIEWS

World wobblers

THE WOBLIES is proof that a youth spent in subversive activity leads to healthy longevity. The film tells the story of the International Workers of the World (or Wobblies) through the reminiscences of octogenarian ex-members... dozens of them, all just as committed now to the IWW's basic socialist creed as when they first recruited the unskilled industrial masses of America.

Their accounts, backed by contemporary newsreels, posters, songs, paintings etc, trace the movement's brief history from the beginning of the century to its collapse during the first world war.

Organised labour until then had meant white, male skilled workers under the American Federation of Labour. Basic qualification for IWW membership was being a worker and the movement quickly attracted the new immigrants, blacks and women... a 'radical fungus' as the American Federation of Labour graphically described it.

Just as simple as its recruitment philosophy were the IWW's industrial/political aims. Not for them the reformist 'a fair day's pay for a fair day's work'. They believed, in the words of one ex-lumberjack, that 'work-

ers instead of parasites should own the means of production'. The 'how' of this was never very developed. Though the strike was the worker's basic weapon, as another old Wobbly puts it, 'it all got a bit vague after that'.

Harrassed and hounded by the police, regularly imprisoned, occasionally shot, the Wobblies were nevertheless a remarkably joyful lot, as their songs and slogans show.

Their songs were a means of recruitment, sung on street corners when delivering political speeches was banned, and throw up wonderful lines like:

'and the wages are outrageous/ have been for ages', like 'Trust in the lord and sleep in the street'. They were into lapel badges

too (One woman in the film carries on the tradition by wearing a giant 'Senior Power' badge through her interview.)

Mostly the interviewees concentrate on their successes, like the textiles strike in which mass meetings involve four or five different languages, and the workers sent their children to Wobbly families in other cities where they could be fed and cared for, except that the police kidnapped them... but it's a long story. See the film. It's great! Too late to catch it in London at the ICA now but it's distributed by The Other Cinema tel (01) 734 8508.

Barbara Gunnell

The Wobblies. 88mins. Colour/black & white. Produced and directed by Stewart Bird and Deborah Shaffer.



Politics And Power. Volume One. Routledge and Kegan Paul £4.95.

HERE IS a welcome, stimulating, weighty but pricey addition to the political debate. The editorial board of *Politics and Power*, nine men and five women, are mostly academics from a variety of left Labour, Communist, nonaligned and socialist feminist persuasions. None are from the Trotskyist or Maoist tradition and, though strong on libertarianism, none are anarchists. A broad and identifiable tendency which sees its project as offering: 'new solutions to the problems which confront socialists in Britain, and particularly how to move out of the political ghetto in which the left has isolated itself. The introductory editorial pinpoints the way in which new groups and movements - women, blacks, tenants, environmentalists and so on - have

REVIEWS

Out of the political ghetto?

opened space for new types of political activity yet, they note: 'these new movements and the traditional left have clearly failed to come to terms with each other'.

Many of the new forms of struggle: 'pose a radical challenge to the most cherished ideas of statist socialism', and indicate 'a growing concern to establish new forms of organisations and democratic control over the state provision of health, education, housing and other services, to overcome the hierarchical structures and often irresponsible behaviour of the nationalised industries, to open up the practices of the great departments of state to public scrutiny and control - all challenges to precisely the forms of public sector organisations favoured by statist conceptions of socialism'.

A fruitful area of debate that will be familiar to many *Leveller* readers is covered in 13 essays and an extended book review. Diana Adlam contributes a major

piece on socialist feminism and contemporary politics: 'What is at stake is the definition of politics, what counts as political struggle, what are appropriate forms of organisation and intervention, the vision of ultimate political goals'. Jim Tomlinson explores new territory with a look at socialist politics and small business, Dan Smith contributes a useful look at defence and the conservatives, while Graham Taylor has an offbeat look at Marxist inertia and the Labour Party - great stuff, which prompted *Socialist Worker's* Duncan Hallas, in a predictably hostile review, to suggest that: 'surely such stuff is too obviously right wing to cut much ice on the left'.

The great logjam of Leninist orthodoxy is visibly crumbling, helped enormously by the development of the women's movement and eruptions like the *Poverty of Theory* and *Beyond the Fragments. Politics and Power*, which

intends to come out every six months, contains several fire-crackers to tie to the tails of the dull grey economic men who have usurped much that is good about the socialist tradition.

There is, however, a damaging flaw. While the editorial board are responsible for production up to the typesetting stage, Routledge Kegan Paul then take over, insisting on the £4.95 cover price and a commercial rather than PDC distribution. Members of the board seem content to stop their activity at the stage of the finished manuscript instead of evolving socialist forms of production and distribution. Thus their valuable work becomes expensive and inaccessible and their project liable to absorption. We must hope that something more politically acceptable emerges when they renegotiate with RKP after the first four issues.

David Clark

"I don't believe that television news will ever do more than underline the dominant views of society". Mike Craig, who's worked in the BBC-TV newsroom, looks at *More Bad News*, the second volume of the Glasgow Media Groups study of television news.

The two men in charge of the BBC television news bulletins on any given day (and those that do it are all men) start work at about half past nine, with a meeting. The editor in charge of the nine o'clock news gets together with his counterpart in charge of the bulletins, and they discuss the forthcoming day's coverage with the editor of television news, the home news editor, and the assistant editor in charge of planning.

On average, they're about forty-five, and they've been working in television news for some years. They have a sense of professional caution - even timidity - that is ingrained, and covers what it sees as the main events of the day (although this, of course, never needs to be said in the newsroom) they're no longer concerned with finding things out. They're technicians who discuss the best way of covering events - not whether it's worthwhile.

A team of journalists works for each of the two editors of the day. Their skill is brevity, which is just as well. They write what the newsreader says, and they generally have between forty and seventy-five words to get across the outline of the story. It's rare for even a correspondent or a reporter to get more than three hundred words to explain the most complicated news item.

The sense of being technicians, and of reflecting the main events of the day, are both conveyed by the television news diary. The main

Mediating the media

sort of events are thought to be Commons debates, white papers, government figures, speeches by politicians and trade union leaders, and foreign news, especially if there's a British "interest".

Little of this can be gleaned from reading *More Bad News*, yet it goes a long way to explaining their central hypothesis: that television news portrays a view of the world that is neither neutral or impartial, but favourable to dominant interests in society.

The Glasgow University Media Group don't work like that. Instead, they're viewers too. The difference between them and the other eighteen million or so who watch the main bulletins on BBC and ITV each night is that they have recorded what is being broadcast - and subjected it to a most detailed analysis.

There's no new research here. *More Bad News* covers the same ground reported in the first volume, *Bad News*. The difference is that this time they devote more than half of a four-hundred-and-fifty page book to a minute description of the news in the week May 11-17 1975.

The group say this is 'a first step in the decoding of the all-pervasive messages of the electronic media'; (modestly), 'a detailed and documented critique of the ideology and practice of current television journalism'.

'More Bad News' by the Glasgow University Media Group (Routledge and Kegan Paul) £17.50 (really!).

'to take cognisance of what is actually produced'.

The failure of the Glasgow Media Group is just the opposite: they have no understanding of why the news comes out the way it does. They only know that it does. And this failure to relate what is produced to the process of production means that for a book that devotes much space to politics, *More Bad News* is essentially apolitical.

This is clearest in the first section, where they discuss attitudes to the Social Contract. They produce a lot of evidence to show - conclusively - that television news reported only the view that the main cause of inflation was excessive wage increases.

The reason: because it was a view that Government ministers promoted almost every day in an

effort to get the Social Contract to stick. Statements by high-ranking ministers are well within the scope of "the major events of the day".

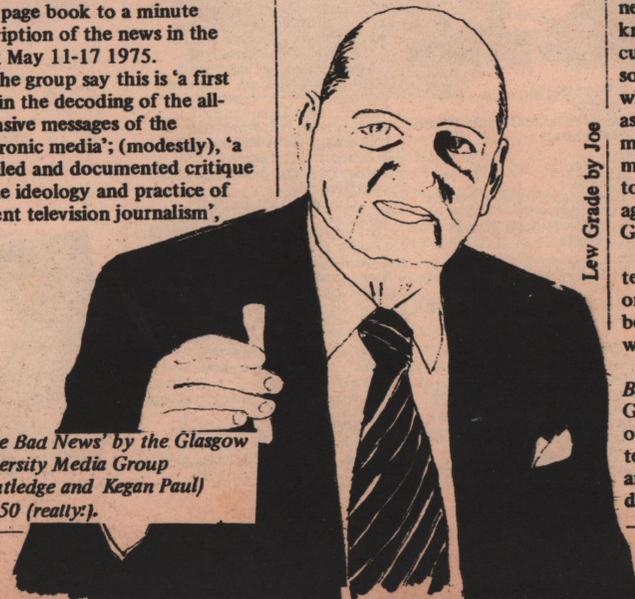
Their minute analysis also attributes significance where none is due - in the way that wording are changed, or film edited, from one bulletin to the next. If they'd talked to the news producers they'd know that such changes were caused by the constraints of time and boredom - in about equal measure.

Again, watching the clock as they replayed the video recorders has led them to claim that another distortion in television news - its obsession with pictures, the so-called "visual imperative" - doesn't exist, because of the small percentage of film used in the bulletins. But they also claim that the news personalises disputes. The reason for the personalisation is because the journalists need to mention a name - so they can use a photo of the person to "enliven" the story.

But the main problem with *More Bad News* is that we all know what's wrong with television news. The Glasgow Media Group know too. "Television news is a cultural artifact; it is a sequence of socially manufactured messages, which carry many of the dominant assumptions of society". Any media academic would tell you as much; it's even possible these days to find news producers who would agree. But all the Glasgow Media Group do is describe it.

It is worth pointing out that television news is biased, but it is only a starting point. It's biased because of the very framework within which it is produced.

It is clear from reading *More Bad News* that the Glasgow Media Group would like a different sort of news. I don't believe that television news will ever do anything except underline the dominant view of society.



Lew Grade by Joe

The party truth

'Angi Vera'

POLITICAL education: in London in the first week of July you could go to classes at the Communist University or Marxism 80, or you could go to the Gate Cinema at Notting Hill and see the way the real Stalinists do it.

Vera Angi (the film's title reverses the names in the formal manner of the Hungarian Communist Party, the manner in which all the characters are addressed) is a young woman selected for a six-month course for leading cadres in the newly-liberated Hungary of 1948. She graduates with acclaim, leaving in her wake one disgraced tutor, several less pliant comrades who fail, and all the liberating passion or feeling she may have started with.

She doesn't start with that much, for she's drawn and played deliberately as a neutral character. Young (18), virginal (in every sense), a war orphan; no background, class, political educational or social; confused, cool, and, as portrayed by Veronika Pap, conventionally beautiful, in a doleful sort of way. In a word, an innocent, on whom the machine gets to work.

Her one initial positive quality is a righteous indignation at conditions in the hospital where she nurses. That's what gets her

onto the course.

By the end, the indignation has gone, and all that's left is the righteousness of the party hack, which impels her to denounce the miserable tutor with whom she's spent one illicit, apparently satisfactory night.

But Vera (the name, of course, means "true") is more than just a cypher through which the rigour of state party politics can be explained. She is the Hungarian people in 1948; recovering from fascism and the war, uncertainly experiencing the tuition of an outside force that calls itself "liberating" but imposes, along with a degree of social levelling, a rigid ideological control, at odds with the rhetoric.

So the first to go are the ones who mean it; old comrades, organisers underground in the thirties or wartime partisans, too set in their thought patterns; new radicals who resist the subordination the apparatchiks require; and the waverers who want to believe that what they're being taught is what they've always felt, but aren't quite sure. In the dramatic "criticism and self-criticism" session of the course (rather more of the former, it turns out), where Vera does her denunciation as an act of self-criticism, there is a peasant woman who stands up and says she hasn't the confidence to put her view.

She is informed by the smug

party boss who's hied from Budapest for the session that in the new society there is no longer any justification for workers or peasants feeling inferior. She sits down, abashed. The fault is not in the system, but herself.

There are more appalling characters, true communists: a miner who tries to fit, and gets disdainfully rejected by Vera, in favour of the tutor; a loud and lively woman (Maria) who slags off the bureaucrats.

The machine aborts their party careers. The film seems to be saying that personal liberation and socialist organisation are incompatible, a depressing conclusion itself at odds with its generally hearening anti-bureaucratic flavour. We all empathise

with Maria and the miner (who is also struggling with the monogamous ethic), and Vera, and her Stalinist woman journalist mentor (Anna) become more distressing with every frame. There's not much hope held out for liberation at any level. Sexuality is suppressed or frowned on all round, and Anna's determined motivating memory of her lost love, a partisan killed by the Nazis, has no apparent physical element.

No-one's going to draw much joy from this, unless it is simply an attack on the way Hungary embarked on its road to socialism. In which case, we must just try harder.

Gopsill Tim

