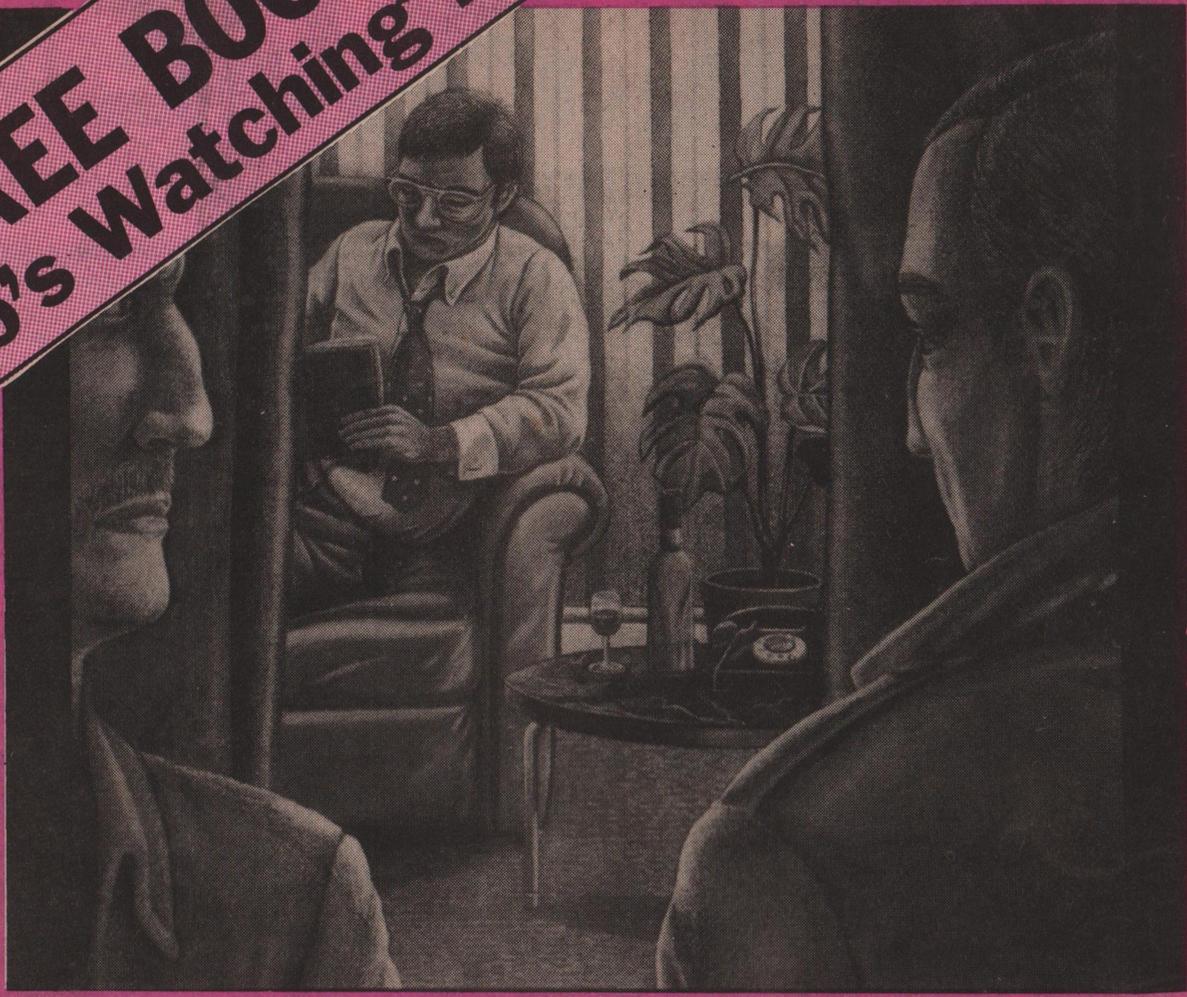


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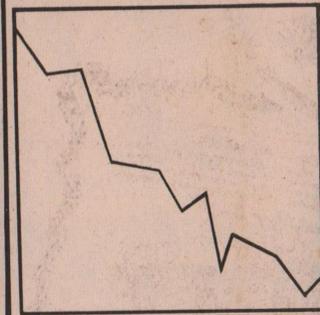
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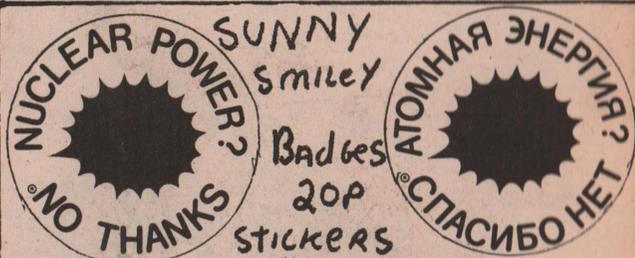
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New Nationalists on the streets page 7

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NO-ONE needs telling the next issue is our 50th. It's also the 5th anniversary of our pilot issue, which is reason enough for a mild celebration.

There will be a grand **BENEFIT**

on Friday February 20 at the Polytechnic of Central London in New Cavendish Street, London W1 (nearest tube, Great Portland Street).

We're lining up three great bands - Aswad, Jam Today and The Passage, all Leveller goodies. Admission £2.50 (£1 unwaged); late bar, nice times etc.

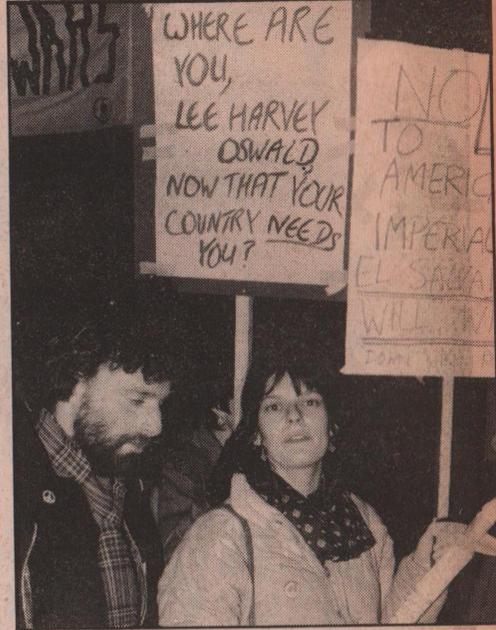
We're also planning a grand jubilee political event: a teach-in on the security state. For organisational reasons (like a cancelled booking at the London Sch School of Economics) this has had to be put back a fortnight, to March 7. The teach-in will have film and theatre, debates and workshops, stalls and discussion groups and will run all day, non-stop.

Look out for details in next issue!

Jeremy Nicholl



Double demo on January 20 in London's Grosvenor Square, home of the American Embassy. Top left: protest against US intervention in El Salvador; left centre...



Jeremy Nicholl



Jeremy Nicholl



Nick Hanna

and far right: members of student CND on the march against Cruise missiles; bottom left and centre right: arrests on the CND demo.

## Don't expect help from us

THERE sometimes seems to be an assumption that when Reagan succumbs to the itch and presses the button, we will all fry. This will not, however, be the case. Millions will die, but millions more will be ill or injured.

A chilling account of how they will be treated is contained in a DHSS Home Defence Circular, HDC (77)1, issued 'on a limited basis' in 1977, which starts from the assumption that radiation levels will be high everywhere, so it will not be safe for anyone to move around. Thus: 'for the first 48 hours after an attack, little or no life-saving activity would be possible.... General life-saving operations in areas of fall-out might not be possible therefore until days or even weeks after a nuclear strike.'

Whatever life-saving is possible will be done by 'relatives or friends', because medical staff can't be risked: 'It would be essential that staff, vital to the long-term recovery of the country, should not be wasted by allowing them to enter into areas of high radioactivity and no staff should leave shelter until authorised to do so by the District Controller.'

Like staff, medicine and equipment would have to be carefully rationed. 'All supplies held by chemists, other retailers and wholesalers, would be requisitioned by the health service and made available to the public only in the course of medical treatment through general practitioners and Domiciliary Teams.'

The GPs would be working out of Casualty Collection Centres, where the sick and injured would be taken and selected for treat-

ment. Only severe cases would stand a chance of hospital treatment — but not the most severe of all, for, in its most chilling paragraph, the circular states:

'In general hospitals should, initially, accept only those casualties who, after limited surgical procedures, would be likely to be alive for seven days, with a fair chance of eventual recovery. The more complete the recovery that could be expected, the higher priority for admission. People suffering from radiation sickness only should not be admitted. There is no specific treatment for radiation injury ... and all radiation cases should be nursed in the community.'

To clear the decks for those that do get to hospital, 'all patients ... whose retention was not medically essential will be sent home.... It is hoped there would be sufficient warning of an attack to allow seven days for the discharge of patients, but plans must allow for a more rapid discharge....'

'Discharge should not be held up merely because home conditions were not ideal or could not be checked and it must be accepted that the crisis would entail hardship.... The numbers discharged cannot be pre-determined... it might be expected however that (they) would be in the following order:

'Maternity cases 70%; Convalescents 100%; Acute cases 60%; Sick children 70%; Non active infections and chest cases 50%; Psychiatric cases 15%.'

Most medical treatment will be administered by First Aid Posts staffed by the voluntary organisations. Ambulances are unlikely to be available to get people to these, so 'the transport of casualties would be a matter for the public themselves.' Ambulances will have

BBC Director-General Ian Trethowan's bid to censor the 'Panorama' programme on the secret security services — first forecast in *Leveller 47* — came after he had shown a videotape of the programme and a transcript to MIS.

This was strongly suspected when his amended transcript was returned to programme-makers, with the 19 'suggested' cuts. For the various notes and cuts marked on the transcript of the 100-minute special programme, provisionally due to go out in late February, were in two different hands — one Trethowan's, one of somebody outside the BBC.

The tape and transcript had been demanded by Trethowan early this month — a most unusual procedure, programme-

## Trethowan gets his banning orders

makers point out, since programmes are normally viewed and studied in the BBC itself; Trethowan sat on them for two weeks, then wrote what has been described as an 'extremely abusive' memorandum on the programme to the feeble Director of News and Current Affairs, Dick 'Francis of the Yard' Francis. The memo demanded the 19 cuts. But Francis, along with other BBCTV bosses, had in fact already seen the programme and approved it.

So had the managing director of TV, Alistair Milne, controller

of BBC1 Bill Cotton Junior, and the editor of TV News, Alan Protheroe, who, though a former secret serviceman and active in the Territorial Army himself, pronounced it 'innocuous'.

Francis shat himself when he got the memo. He didn't show it to anyone, but prepared an abridged version, without the abuse, and invited Panorama editor Roger Bolton and John Gau, head of current affairs programmes, to read it. Programme-makers then began to organise their resistance. They are in a strong position. Apart

from the worthless half-support of the cringing Francis, Trethowan is isolated. He is such a far-right Tory that he leaves even other BBC placemen behind; apparently he believes the Panorama team to be a hotbed of Trots, which is not the case.

And Trethowan has known pretty well all along what was coming up. He has followed the making of the programme and only once interfered, telling the reporters, Tom Mangold and John Penycate, not to interview any more past or present MI5 or MI6 officers after discovering they had the tape of ex-MI5 officer Anthony Motion, with its stupendously uninteresting 'revelations' on the activities of Sir Anthony Blunt at Oxford University in the 1950s.

been dispersed to outlying areas, 'so as to provide an emergency wireless network between all the Health Service headquarters and hospitals'.

Much of the circular deals with the structure of the emergency operation. It is stressed that the peacetime DHSS structure is unsuited to war, when a 'close system of control is required', but the wartime set-up outlined is hardly streamlined. There will be Regional Health Directors, Area Health Directors, District Health Directors, Sector Health Directors and Unit Health Directors, all to establish liaison with the Home Defence Regional, County and District Controllers and the Commissioners appointed by them to administer services.

Health authorities have been asked to have all these people appointed straight away, so by now they'll all have their plans for

booting patients out of hospital and sheltering themselves and all medical staff until it's safe to come out.

## Cornish cops haven't a clue

THE BOMBING of a magistrates court at St Austell, Cornwall, has led to a widespread police intelligence-gathering operation against members of 'Left-wing' organisations, and people with known Left-wing views.

This is despite the fact that responsibility for the bombing, and for two other 'terrorist' incidents during January has been claimed by a group which says it is 'nationalist and anti-communist'.

It was on December 7 that someone tossed a single stick of dynamite into the robing room of St Austell magistrates court, caus-

ing severe damage. After Christmas an elaborate hoax bomb was detonated by the Army, and there was an arson attack on a hair-dressing salon at Penzance.

A group calling itself 'An Gof' claims responsibility. No-one has been injured in any of these incidents, although this is as much by chance as it is by design.

After the St Austell bombing, a journalist on the *West Briton* newspaper was telephoned by a man claiming to represent An Gof. The caller said there would be further attacks on 'councillors and communist infiltrators of the nationalist movement'.

Since then police are known to have questioned the Redruth-based publishers of the radical left-wing magazine *An Wern*. Individuals working for the collective were asked their whereabouts on the night of the St Austell bombing, and police took copies of their

magazine for 'further investigation'.

The next known visit was to St. Columb bookshop, where the proprietor was asked if he knew anyone who had ordered *The Anarchist Cookbook* or *Towards A Citizens' Militia* (both contain handy hints on how to blow up the state).

When police visited me — a member of the NUJ, NCCL, and the Labour Party — they knew before they spoke to me that I had a copy of *Towards A Citizens' Militia*. They would not tell me how they knew, though they did ask to see it.

But they seemed surprised when I told them that a recent meeting of the Bodmin Labour Party had been invaded by a group of British Movement skinheads, although the incident was reported in the local press.

There are two 'nationalist' par-

ties in Cornwall — Mebyon Kernow, which is thirty years old, and the Cornish Nationalist Party, which has been going for less than ten.

MK (Sons of Cornwall) split into two camps last June when some of its leaders quit the party alleging 'Trotskyist infiltration' (a handful of members had succeeded in getting through resolutions calling for the closure of American weapons bases in Cornwall).

The majority of MK's 1,000 members are dyed-in-the-wool conservatives, who treat it like a social club. The CNP is smaller, with 250 members, and is slightly more active — occasionally standing candidates in local and general elections. Neither MK or the CNP are a serious political force.

Police have interviewed two well-known nationalist 'characters', and their clothes were sent for forensic analysis. But both have now been eliminated for enquiries.

But one man who is not thought to have been questioned by police is one of MK's Kent-based members, Michael Payne-Jago. Payne-Jago once made a speech describing the racial hatred aroused by the National Front in London. In it he said he hoped 'one day this will be happening in London'.

Payne-Jago is a leading member of MK, and once tried to stand as their candidates in a general election. Like many members of MK, though, he does not actually live in Cornwall, and is regarded by most observers as a complete looney. *Graham Smith*

## Junta's coke-cut

COCAINE has become the backbone of the Bolivian economy, with a cut of all the proceeds finding its way to the government palace in La Paz. Information obtained from Bolivian government sources by *The Leveller* reveals that a levy of 1,000 pesos (about £20) on each of the thousands of barrels of coca leaves produced daily is shared out among the military junta: 100 pesos goes to General Luis García Meza, the president, 400 to the minister of the interior, Colonel Luis Arce Gómez — and there's even 50 pesos for the anti-drug law enforcement agency.

Production has increased at least five-fold since the armed forces seized power last July. Land prices have doubled in the central jungle region of Chapare, where 90% of the land is now used for growing coca, and the leaf is changing hands for three times the price of a year ago. An estimated 60,000 peasants earn a living treading coca leaves — a quarter of their wages goes to the army's Ranger regiment, a sort of Bolivian SAS. One dealer in Santa Cruz, Roberto Suárez, sells cocaine paste to Colombians for £4,000 a kilo — he produces about a ton every month.

Coca leaves have long been chewed by Bolivians to numb the effects of hunger and cold, and



Bolivian Junta taking the oath or taking a snort?

their sale is legal. But the illegal cocaine boom is a desperate economic measure masterminded by Arce Gómez, also the regime's sadist-in-chief. Tin production has been drastically reduced by the miners' courageous militancy — in the new wave of repression the army recently sent in troops to 'clean out' surviving leaders, and occupied factories to try and break workers' resistance. Nine leaders of the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR) were tortured and shot, and another — Gloria Ardaya — has joined the hundreds of political and labour leaders in captivity.

Arce claims — with a monopoly on the country's media, it's not difficult — that a two-day general strike in January was a failure, but as one clandestine workers' document says: 'Our children can no longer disguise their hunger with a crust and a cup of tea, because our wages don't even suffice to buy bread or sugar. The people's only choice is to die of hunger or go out and fight our executioners until we defeat fascism.'

The strike was a protest against a 50% rise in the cost of food and staple goods — a measure designed to impress the IMF. Another is an agreement to pipe the country's natural gas reserves to Brazil for a knock-down price. But the junta is still internationally isolated by all except a handful of countries (West Germany is one of the shameful exceptions), and has yet to secure the stability bestowed by capitalism's bankers. They don't mind dealing with uniformed thugs, but even Reagan, whose own son isn't averse to a snort, finds it hard to justify propping up a cocaine economy.

## Organising for the press...

A UNION fight against the closure of a North London weekly paper, the *Camden Journal* could lead to the most successful alternative local paper to date.

Nine journalists on the paper, together with 15 from other papers in the same group, are on strike in protest at a decision by Heart of

England 'Newspapers to close it down. They have been picketing the group's offices in London and the printworks at Nuneaton, Warwickshire, where scab editions of the other titles, produced by non-union journalists and printers deaf to NUJ appeals, have been produced.

Only one union, SOGAT, in distribution, has tried to support the strikers, but the company took out an injunction and the SOGAT leadership ordered members to work on.

The management have refused to supply any information to back up their claim the *Journal* was losing money. The staff have a few ideas: the paper was being deliberately restricted; pagination, advertising and the print order were kept down, to prevent expansion.

An extraordinary approach for a newspaper management? Not quite so. The *Journal* and its staff have been a continual thorn in the side, not just of its own management, but the whole local newspaper management cartel, the Newspaper Society.

The reason: the Camden NUJ has long been the most militant in struggles against the Newspaper Society, and their paper has built up a strong local radical reputation.

If we can break the *Journal*, muse the NS, we can break anyone. So the union is supporting the journalists — there was a one-day London-wide strike last week — for fear of other closures following.

The union, and thousands of people in Camden, are also supporting the other strand of the *Journal* staff's fight: they're producing their own weekly paper, and have thereby proved much of their point against their masters. The *Journal's* circulation had been limited to 7,000. The *Save the Journal* prints 9,000 and sells at least 6,000 — five issues so far, through their own channels and not the commercial distribution trade. But newsagents are taking it, people are sending donations, and the London Borough of Camden's Council has given an office for a nominal rent.

The Council might also come up with money, if the project becomes a permanent publication.

The journalists aren't thinking that far ahead yet. They are still fighting for their jobs back. But they're perfectly capable of producing a better, more popular, bigger-selling more radical paper, given the chance and some more money raised.

Donations and support messages to Save the Journal, 38 Camden Rd, London NW1 (phone 01-485 8207).

## ...and against it

BIRMINGHAM Trades Council has become the first to put into practice fast developing ideas on local labour initiatives against the right-wing press.

The city is damned with one of the worst anti-people press monopolies in the country, the Birmingham Post and Mail Ltd, riddled with freemasons, which also owns all the weekly papers in the industrial Midlands and a huge chain of newsagent shops called Dillons.

The Trades Council's Media Advisory Group includes members of print unions and the NUJ, who have produced a booklet advising trade unionists how to handle the local media. This is being distributed by the Trades Council to all shop stewards and officials in the area.

The Advisory Group has also set up a research unit to analyse the

*We'd like to increase the number of contributors to this section, particularly from people living outside London. If you'd like to help with this, please send in for a copy of our Contributors Notes.*

output of Midland TV, radio and newspapers, and all union and Labour Party branches have been circularised for information and volunteers to help.

Trades Council-sponsored local media commissions are emerging as one of the most positive proposals to replace the discredited establishment-run Press Council. The aim is to mobilise local labour to take up cases of bias, not just against workers, but other oppressed groups.

The Birmingham group is only a start. It's going to process cases of bias and get the local NUJ to take them up as complaints against the journalists concerned, through the union's disciplinary procedure.

It won't immediately shake the Birmingham Post and Mail, or ATV, BBC-TV or Radio Birmingham, nor BRMB, the commercial radio station, nor the Post and Mail's weeklies. But in the long run it will help working Midlands to find a voice. What they'll need then is their own paper.

On Sunday January 25 three demonstrations were escorted through the streets of Cardiff. The main march was the annual commemoration of Bloody Sunday led by Provisional Sinn Fein. The National Front organised a counter-demonstration and bussed in 350 fascists to protest against the 600 strong republican demonstration. In response the ANL mobilised. A police operation involving 1,650 officers succeeded in keeping the Irish and fascist marches separated, but scuffles between police and demonstrators broke out when police tried to protect the fascists from ANL hecklers. Eleven arrests were made, mainly of ANL people. The photographs show (centre) the Bloody Sunday march, with police escort and a group of local kids who barracked 'Irish out of Wales'; the fascists in public garb (top and bottom right) and the arrest of an ANL supporter (bottom left).



THE FORCED detention of a group of 700 Toba-Maskoy Indians by the military has led to renewed claims of genocide in Paraguay. A decree authorising the tribe to reclaim their land was overturned by three of President Stroessner's ministers under pressure from the land owners to expel the Indians.

Legal proceedings were started last June to restore the 10,000 hectares on the Chaco Plains to the Toba-Maskoy. Due to the urgency of the situation authorisation for occupation of the land was issued last October by President Stroessner, who cited 'the need to establish urgent measures to insure the settlement of this Indian community'.

The area in question has been exploited for nearly 100 years for the production of tannin by an Argentinian company, Carlos Casado, but they lodged no protest at the expropriation decree. On November 2 when the Indians tried to take possession of the land they were stopped by a company official, who said that the affair was in the hands of General Samaniego, the Minister of Def-

ence and President of the National Indian Institute (INDI). The pro-Indian executive director of INDI, Colonel Centurion, was then sacked by Samaniego. The Casado company ignored court orders to open gates to the land until December 29, when the new director of INDI, Colonel Machuca Godoy, handed over the keys and assured the Indians that 'from today you are on your own lands'.

The following day Colonel Godoy returned to announce their immediate expulsion. The Indians were removed to a site 70 miles away which has been described as 'desolate, completely without water'. The Toba-Maskoy are reported to be suffering from malnutrition and in January several children were rushed to hospital suffering from advanced dehydration. Workers in non-governmental agencies serving the Indians say that 'in the current situation, the Toba-Maskoy have no chance of survival. They are clearly prisoners'. In the light of the genocide allegations a protest is being made at the continued funding of INDI by the United Nations.

Nick Hanna



Luke Holland

## US puts Salvador through the mill

US SUPPORT for the embattled junta in El Salvador is set to redefine the knife-biting image of an interventionist force. The age of the micro-chip, lasers and Cruise missiles has brought with it a new battle-cry to echo against the headstones of the Vietnam dead... 'Send in the technicians.'

The first large deployment of US personnel since 1975 has been denounced by one of the five leaders of the El Salvadorean peoples forces Salvador Cavetano Carpio, commandant-in-chief of the guerrilla army Farabundo Marti para Liberacion Nacional (FMLN), in a communique released in Mexico. He stated that 800 U.S. and Panamanian advisers and technicians have left their command base in the south of Panama, heading for El Salvador to be integrated with the armed forces of the military-civilian government of Napoleon Duarte.

The commandant said that, along with fresh arms supplies, this was the way the US intends to resolve the disintegration of the government forces 'which have not yet recovered from the blows dealt by the guerrilla army in the first stage of the current general offensive'.

He also said that napalm, phosphorous, and the traditional 500-pound bombs were being dropped on the countryside villages. 'Just as in Vietnam', says Cavetano Carpio, 'we are not to blame for the violence which is spread over the country. It is the strategists of the Pentagon.'

He said that the military aid which the US has hastily sent to the junta includes ten thousand grenades and additional Huey helicopters.

Cavetano Carpio affirmed that 'the arrival of the technicians and advisors is evidence of the escalation of this filthy war. They are immersing themselves in blood and in fire from which, afterwards, it will

cost them a great deal to get out.'

In Panama City the commander-in-chief of the US army southern command, Lieutenant General Wallace Nutting, strongly denied that 'troops' were being sent in. 'Not one US soldier has been ordered out of this base for El Salvador', he said. Technically speaking, he could be right.

Meanwhile en route to El Salvador the cargo ship *El Cusco* was anchored off Barcelona on January 31 with a hold full of tanks picked up in Genoa. The Spanish dockers are refusing to service the ship, which sailed in under a Peruvian flag, ostensibly bound for Peru. The Peruvian government is reported to be lodging a protest about the use of its colours.

On the economic front, the Salvadorean coffee barons have been given the go-ahead by the International Coffee Organisation to remove the country's coffee stocks 'through force majeure' to free ports in Europe — West Germany (Hamburg), Belgium and Holland.

Under the International Coffee Organisation agreement (1980-81), which is stabilising world coffee prices, the El Salvadoreans had to apply for a special dispensation to remove the coffee stocks from the country. Without the dispensation the coffee, when exported, would have broken the export quota set for the country under the coffee agreement.

The International Coffee Organisation has agreed to move stocks on a strict relocation basis. They will not be released onto the market any earlier than scheduled. However, when the stocks were housed in the free ports, confidence in the coffee exporters' ability to meet contracts was improved.

Coffee represents 60 per cent of the foreign currency earned by El Salvador. The crop this year is expected to yield around 2.5 million bags (60 kilos each). With coffee stocks in hand from 1979-80 and reserves building up through the

restrictions of the international coffee agreement quota system, it is possible that the coffee being shipped out of San Salvador next month will run into a million bags.

Once the coffee is stockpiled in European warehouses, El Salvador's oligarchy will be able to agree contracts and advance payments on future supplies. This eight per cent of the population, which takes 50 per cent of the national income, will result in a useful cash-flow for the kind of 'essential goods' currently sitting off Barcelona.



**WHERE WAS Shirley Williams the night before last week's crucial Labour NEC meeting? Lobbying supporters? Campaigning at the grass roots? Attacking the Tories in some draughty church hall somewhere? Well no, not exactly. She was actually sitting down at the sumptuous banquet provided at London's Savoy Hotel by the Finance Houses Association.**

**The guests, chief among them Trade Minister John Biffen, heard FHA chairperson John Little bleating on about how high interest rates disadvantaged those who'd made fixed-interest deals before the Tories pushed up the Minimum Lending Rate in 1979.**

**Among the fellow-guests whose hearts were bleeding at this tragic news were such well-known social democrats as the Duke of Westminster, Lord Balfour of Burleigh and, you guessed it, Sir Harold Wilson.**

## Labour split: latest

AS THE struggle inside the Labour Party intensifies and the Council for Social Democracy hovers on the verge of resignation, the left is mobilising for full acceptance of the 30:30:40 electoral college agreed at January's Special Conference. In particular the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, whose work over the last few years has done much to initiate the changes inside the party, will be pushing for support for the new arrangements from this summer's round of trade union conferences.

CLPD secretary Vladimir Derer told the *Leveller*: 'We shall be starting immediately. We have more than 250 trades union branches and organisations affiliated to the Campaign and we shall be seeking support from the rank and file in the form of special motions to the conferences.' Although the deadlines for some conferences have already passed Derer is hopeful of support from at least the miners, UCATT and possibly the T&GWU.

In response to Michael Foot's stated intention to try and get the Wembley decision changed to give the Parliamentary Labour Party more say Derer argues that Foot is 'over-reacting'. He isn't in a position to do very much. Any constitutional change cannot normally come up for a year and wouldn't be considered by the October annual conference. All he can do is to lobby the unions and get the National Executive Committee to put the proposals back on the agenda again.

Meanwhile, the CLPD isn't in favour of throwing the Council for Social Democracy out of the party: 'It would impair Labour's electoral chances and, anyway, they've made it obvious that they're going. If we threw them out it would give them a pretext to make a fuss. We are very sorry that some members have decided to leave. But the point is that they are not prepared to ac-

cept majority decisions. No party can function when democratic decisions are ignored — that's one law for the rich and another for the poor. If they do leave they should be identified as liberals rather than as socialists.

## Spanswick on the skids

DISHONOURABLE BEHAVIOUR does not characterise all members of the Jenkins family. Cynthia Jenkins, daughter of Roy, the guru of the so-called Council for Social Democracy, has resigned from her job as legal officer of the health service union COHSE, in the wake of the sacking of Chris Perry, the press officer who helped organised the union's staff (see *Leveller* 47).

Officially, the reason given is that Jenkins wants to 'further her career as a solicitor'. But it is known that she was ordered by COHSE's bombastic general secretary, Albert Spanswick, to prepare legal action against Perry, and after she quit, Spanswick himself had to go round to the union's solicitors, Gillham and Co of Harlesden, North West London, to get a letter sent to Perry threatening an injunction if he did not stop telling people about what's being going on in COHSE head office.

To do so Spanswick had to cancel at short notice a plan to visit the union's Region 4 Council, meeting that day at the Midland Hotel, Birmingham. He had intended to be present to forestall discussion of motions of no confidence in himself, and calling for an enquiry, into the matters behind Perry's departure: the suppression of the DHSS 'sackers' charter' attacking union activists in the NHS, and the resistance to the organisation of APEX within COHSE.

In the event, National Officer Terry Mallinson went instead and succeeded in stopping discussion on the pretext that the matter was *sub judice*, which it most definitely was not.

But Spanswick and his gang haven't been able to hold the lid completely down. Two other regional councils, covering areas of the south-east, have passed 'no confidence' motions and calls for an enquiry. Meanwhile, Perry has no intention of giving up his campaign to get rid of the reactionary bureaucrats who run the union as a first step towards its democratisation.

## Well set up

SPARE A thought in these troubled times for Trust Houses Forte — motto: 'The sickest smile in Europe' — whose year-end profits slipped slightly to £66 million, £2.2 million down on the previous record year. Sir Charles Forte — 'we're one big happy family here and if you disagree you're out on your ear' — told the City that the

# the Leveller

Last week we changed our system of paid workers. Instead of having one person on a full-timer's wage, we're going to have five people working part-time. They'll be paid for a total of 18 days a fortnight. Each of them has a specific area of responsibility such as sales, advertising or production, while all of them are responsible for subscriptions and general office administration. We think this system will be more democratic, as well as giving you a better magazine.

To pay for the new part-timers, we opened a Wages Fund Appeal at the beginning of January. We shall be running the Wages Fund for the time being — until the additional work put in by the full-timers starts to pay back. So far you have sent in £152.50, for which we thank you.

If you want to see the *Leveller* succeed as a fortnightly, then perhaps you'd like to help us with a donation to the Wages Fund. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made out to: *Leveller* (1979) Ltd, Fortnightly Fund and sent to us here at 57 Caledonian Road, London N1, where they will all be gratefully received.

slippage was due to American visitors staying away from his expensive and over-rated five star hotels. Turnover increased by 9% in the hotels sector, helped by a 12% price increase, and actual trading profit increased slightly to £82 million before interest charges were deducted.

Readers might remember Sir Charles' son and heir Rocco Forte telling the Wages Council which fixes the miserable pay rates in hotels backs in 1978 that 'the industry was not profitable today... it hadn't been since 1973'. Rocco received a million pounds worth of shares shortly before that statement as a birthday gift from his dad. He'll have done well out of this year's results for the City was expecting a lower profit level and shares had slipped. When the THF announcement was made last week the markets loved it and pushed share prices back up by 15p, giving Rocco a decent little windfall of roughly-£150,000 — before tax, of course.

## Doubts on siege death

MPs FOR London's Hackney constituency have tabled a Commons motion for an independent inquiry into the death of a diabetic who did not receive insulin in Pentonville prison. Last year 41-year-old Matthew O'Hara was sentenced to

seven days imprisonment for contempt of court on March 12, but four days later was rushed to hospital in a coma, having received none of the insulin on which his life depended. According to hospital records he had apparently been coughing blood for 38 hours in the prison.

After six weeks in two hospitals, Matthew returned home, but in June was found dead in the bedroom of his home in Hackney. An inquest last August returned an open verdict. There is no question of suicide.

Stanley Clinton Davies, MP for Hackney Central, took up Matthew's case within days of his discharge from Pentonville and has been increasingly angered by the 'contemptuous' manner in which the Home Office has replied to his letters. They allege that Mr O'Hara 'concealed' his diabetes from the prison authorities. This amazing claim is only made remotely credible by hints that Mr O'Hara was completely insane. 'Their attempt to portray this unfortunate man as a "nut" has been quite deliberate', Mr Davies told a meeting last week. 'I admit he was difficult, possibly eccentric, but every one who knew him testifies to his rationality and sanity. His own doctor describes him as a highly intelligent, articulate, rational man with a great knowledge of diabetes.'

Dr Michael Smith, Matthew's GP, pointed out to the meeting that

it was in any case quite irrelevant whether Matthew concealed his diabetes or not. He was in fact in such a severe condition when sent to the hospital that any layman should have realised that he was seriously ill long before he received medical attention. Evidence carefully pieced together over the past six months, confirms Matthew's own story that he was left to suffer in a cell for up to two days... vomiting, coughing blood, and getting weaker and more confused as the poison built up in his body from lack of insulin. Now his friends want to know if the warders reported his condition to the prison governor or not. 'It is possible', said one of his friends, 'that they left him to "sweat it out", because of his "bolshy" attitude'.

Doctor Smith's medical evidence and a list of thirty-eight questions were sent to the Home Office by Clinton Davies in November. Six weeks later the Home Office sent him a contemptuous reply refusing to answer any of his questions. 'If there was an innocent explanation of what happened in the prison, they would have answered my questions,' the MP said. 'Their refusal suggests a "cover-up" of quite astonishing proportions.'

Andrew Roberts/PNS

## Southwark segregation

THE LONDON BOROUGH of Southwark doesn't, of course, keep records about the colour of its tenants. Or does it? A reader has sent us a copy of the minutes of District Policy Meeting Number 25, held on Monday January 18. Dealing with the affairs of the East Dulwich Estate, a large pre-war set of blocks which the borough recently took over from the Greater London Council, the minutes note the points that arose from a meeting with the Housing Management Sub-Committee.

Point No. 8 states: 'Efforts to be made to prevent/reduce potential black ghetto blocks by halting allocation of blacks to certain blocks and possibly transferring out genuine black transfer cases. (Policy to be clarified.)'

Tenants on the estate are angry at being classified as a 'potential black ghetto': They note that relationships between the races are very good, that despite being a bit old and in need of repair and refurbishment the flats are very pleasant and peaceful to live in, and they strongly resent any suggestion that people should be barred from getting one of the flats because they happen to be black. Finally they want to find out how come the District Housing Officer, a Mr Harvey (who wasn't available for comment as we went to press), knows what colour people are when there is that long-standing policy of not classifying them according to their race. We'd be interested to know, too.



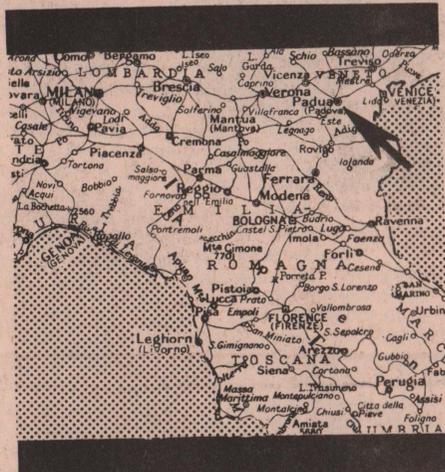
Those who read the interview with the Red Brigades in the last *Leveller* may remember some dismissive references to 'Workers' Autonomy'. Yet the development of an Autonomous Movement in Italy since 1977 (and similar movements in France, Switzerland, West Germany and elsewhere) has marked what many see as a major and positive change in revolutionary politics in Western Europe. In Italy, particularly since 1979, the Movement has suffered massive state repression. Here, Hilary Partridge reports from Padua on the importance of Autonomy for the women's movement and on the experience of one of its militants, Lisi del Re, who was re-arrested ten days ago and is being held without trial.

## A different autonomy

MORE THAN 3000 people are in jail in Italy facing charges relating to the political; most of them for their identification with 'Autonomia Operaia'. Some, including Lisi, are awaiting charges under the Rocco penal code dating back to the suppression of the left under fascism: for decades, and which even the courts are not certain how to interpret.

The absence of legal precedent adds to the feeling of fear and disorientation. There seems to be no limit to the powers of the state and police; no logic in the choice of who is to be singled out next; no way of knowing what their punishment may be. On a wave of public sympathy for a 'tougher line' and wider police powers aroused by the growth of armed struggle — the kidnapping and assassination of Moro in particular — laws have been changed to facilitate arbitrary house searches and arrests and the maximum period in prison awaiting trial has been increased to 12 years. As Lisi pointed out, even this is a false limit, as it is renewed with each fresh accusation: only the word of some 'repentant terrorist' is needed to start the whole thing again, with new charges and another 12 years to play with.

Thanks to Lisi and another comrade, Lucia, and the long discussion we had one morning in Lisi's office in the Department of Social and Political Science here in Padua, I do now see what is happening in Italy as important for women everywhere: not just because of the solidarity we can and must feel for the individual women under attack, but mainly because of the wider meaning of



the 'area of Autonomy' and the state repression of their ideas.

Lisi was arrested along with 15 other autonomist intellectuals on 7 April 1979. The initial charge was 'subversive association'. On 6 June, to her horror, she found herself facing two further charges of participation in armed robberies: a 'repentant terrorist', during his confession to the interrogating judges (his tongue no doubt loosened by the promise of judicial leniency) claimed that his cell-mate had told him Lisi had been his partner on the robberies. The man was later to commit suicide. This second-hand story was believed against Lisi's word. But in October her alibi was accepted and the charges dropped. Lisi remained in jail awaiting trial on the earlier charge until

December 1979 when, after eight months in prison, she was released for lack of evidence.

Her freedom was still, however, heavily curtailed: her movement limited to the province of Padua, required to be at home every night from midnight to seven the next morning and then to report to the police every day. She also had to live with the knowledge that the 'privilege' of liberty might be withdrawn at any moment. Lisi was convinced that she would go back inside again before the trial. She laughed and looked brittle when she said that. She was proved right.

The Italian legal system, based on the Napoleonic code, is different from the British. The trial is divided into two phases: the 'istruttoria' (information/evidence gathering) in which the cases rest today, and the trial proper. In the 'istruttoria' phase the court decides if there is a case to be tried, and also if the defendant should be kept in jail until the trial. The judge presides over an unequal exchange in which the prosecution has complete access to all the information available (police files, investigations, witnesses' statements etc.) while the defence lawyer knows virtually only that which the defendant can tell him. Decisions can be appealed at two higher levels. When I talked to her, Lisi was waiting for the decision of the highest court of appeal.

It's probably still not very clear to you what is actually going on in Italy, why these people are in jail and how all of this is important for us as women.

Let's start with 1977 and the appear-

ance of a loose organisation called 'Autonomia Operaia' (Workers' Autonomy) which claimed to represent a 'new social majority of the proletariat' and which denied the continuing validity of traditional Leninist party organisations in Italy. The events of 1977: the occupation of the universities, the demonstrations and festivals ending in riots and shoot-outs with the police, the growth of 'the Movement' (sharing and/or extending the ideas of Autonomia Operaia) have already been documented.<sup>1</sup>

The Movement's period of gestation began with the decline of the industrial base and the beginning of long-term mass unemployment. Hundreds of thousands of people, particularly the young, found themselves excluded from society. Many sheltered in further education (universities here are open to all those who successfully complete secondary education). In the absence of a systematic 'welfare state' (there's no supplementary benefit for those who have never held a full-time job) they 'get by' in an expanding 'black' sector of the economy, working for minimal wages without the 'protection' of the trade unions.

They are 'the new majority of the proletariat'. The movement of capital overseas to cheaper labour markets, the decentralisation of the big industrial sector, the introduction of micro-technology, have all combined to turn the

largely male productive worker in the factories into a minority within the working class. The Movement responded to their own exclusion by affirming separation ('separ/action') from all the institutions of capitalism as the basis of revolutionary struggle. And in the space created by their 'autonomy', by separation, they experimented with 'alternatives' — new ways of organising, of relating to each other, new languages; in short, *other ways of living*.

For Lisi and Lucia and the thousands of other women and men who sympathise with the 'area of Autonomy', this had led to a concern with the area of *reproduction*: struggles around the production and utilisation of 'services'. These struggles intimately concern women both because of their strong presence in the service sector as nurses, teachers and so on, and become, as Lisi said, a way out of the 'ghetto'. Public spending becomes both a 'wage' for the reproduction of society, and the point of departure for a new form of class struggle.

Lucia and Lisi described to me how the largely 'autonomist' women's collective, the 'Coordinamento Donne' (or Women's Combine) developed from an understanding of all this.

Formed in Padua in October 1977, the purpose of this loose organisation was to unite and coordinate women in struggle in all areas of the economy. It consisted mostly of women who by now identified themselves with the 'area of Autonomy' and who saw their struggles as part of that huge sector on the 'margins' of society.

The need to find some means of coordination had become apparent through a series of fights which had been taken up

individually by a number of organisations in the years leading up to '77. One struggle was extremely important in uniting the women and giving them a taste of their own strength: that for the re-opening of a state-run centre for single mothers, their children and children in care as a women's house/meeting place and nursery. Throughout September and October 1976, meetings were held to discuss both the closure and alternative ways in which the centre could be used. On 17 December the Women's Collective moved in with their children to occupy for a day. Lisi told me of the solidarity that developed between the occupiers, the women working at the centre and the single mothers.

The struggle was a success. The centre was in fact closed down and converted to other uses by the local council, but they first agreed to set up nursery schools in three different areas of the city; a promise which was kept. The nurseries are still operating today.

The Coordinamento Donne which grew out of this was a larger and more 'social' organisation than its predecessors. It met every Wednesday night and was

To conspire means to respire, to breath, together, and that's what we're accused of: they want us to stop breathing because we have refused to gasp out our lives in their suffocating factories, in their individualised relationships, in their families, in their atomised little houses. There's one act of terrorism I'll confess to . . . terrorism against the separation of life and desire, against sexism in our relationships, against the reduction of our lives to a wage-packet. (*Radio Alice, Bologna, later shut down by the police*).



important as a source of solidarity and for the recognition of the community of interests of all the women involved. It included women working in the various hospitals, teachers and students, and fought for the provision of more and better services, particularly in the areas of health and education. For example, some women of the Coordinamento occupied the gynaecological clinic at the teaching hospital as part of the fight for free and accessible abortions. It was also able to coordinate a series of struggles aimed at improving the wages and conditions of female nursing staff in the hospitals.<sup>2</sup>

The Coordinamento was to disintegrate with the right-wing backlash of 1979, signalled by the arrest and imprisonment on 7 April of 15 people: virtually the entire teaching staff of the Department of Social and Political Sciences of Padua University, including

Lisi and Toni Negri.<sup>3</sup> Since then too many comrades to be counted have been arrested or had warrants served on them. The only court case concerning Autonomia which has been brought to a conclusion has resulted in heavy prison sentences. No case relating to the ambiguous notions of 'subversive association' or 'participation in armed bands' has yet been brought to court.

The Autonomous Movement is in disarray. The imprisonment of such a large number of its most important theorists and activists; the closure of many of its mouthpieces: free radio stations, newspapers and journals; the fear of attracting the attentions of the state all contribute to the general failure of 'the area of Autonomy' to organise and defend themselves against the backlash. Just watching Lisi's face when she talked about her own experiences of arrest and imprisonment was enough to tell me why.

The women's movement in Padua has been able to sustain some — albeit limited — level of resistance against the heavy physical and psychological battering the Autonomous Movement has received.

Women from the old Coordinamento joined with those from the bookshop, the counter-information centre and various feminist collectives and groups to organise and mobilise against the movement for the abrogation

of Law 194 which permits legal and welfare-assisted abortions.

Profiting from the new climate of reaction and the weakness of the Movement, the Church and State had combined in an attempt to take back that little which had been gained through the years of women's struggle. Lisi came out of prison to take her place by our sides in the months of debate and initiatives climaxing last November in a demonstration of 3,000 women for free abortion on demand (no mean feat for a town with a population of around 300,000).

Lisi is back in prison now. The prosecution's appeal against her release and that of four other comrades from Padua was successful, and on Friday 23 January they were re-arrested. Lisi was taken to the women's prison of Giudecca in Venice where she remains today — still awaiting trial.

### Footnotes

1. See, for example: 'Italy 1977-78 — Living With An Earthquake' published by Red Notes. For an introduction to some of the theories of Autonomy see 'Working Class Autonomy and the Crisis' from Red Notes/CSE, and the special Autonomy issue of the New York magazine 'Semiotext(e)', available shortly from CSE.
  2. A four-day event around the themes of Autonomy in Italy and elsewhere in Europe is being held in London at the beginning of April. Speakers will include Franco Bernardi, Felix Guattari as well as the authors of this article. For information phone Malcolm on 01-267 5420.
  3. A similar venture in Rome is still going. See *Leveller* 32.
- See *Leveller* 27 for details of the original arrests and *Leveller* 44 for an update on Negri's situation. Some of the original charges on him have recently been dropped, but new ones added, allowing the Italian state to prolong his stay in prison without bringing him to trial.



# The politics of buying British

BRITISH CAPITAL is banging the drum and waving the Red, White and Blue in an attempt to halt its decline. These days even foreign-owned companies are appealing to us to 'Buy British'. And the Labour left, with its 'Alternative Economic Strategy', is getting in on the act. The demand for protectionism, for import controls, in the name of 'saving jobs', is the same message. But it is often only met by the revolutionary left with internationalist rhetoric about 'exporting unemployment'. Many socialists, seeing widespread industrial devastation and a flood of cheap imports, are just uncertain.

Peter Sedgwick looks at the theory and Sheila Smith outlines the principle economic elements of the debate.

TWO OF the major demands which are current in the British Left — the call for import controls ('selective' or otherwise) and the near-unanimous consensus on leaving the Common Market — are symptomatic of a much more deep-seated tendency in mainstream socialist thought, whether Marxist or Social-Democratic. This deeper tendency, which is never far from the surface even in more prosperous times, revolves around the belief that a necessary part of the transition to socialism lies in the insulation of the transitional economy from the international division of labour.

Since the capitalist world may well produce better and cheaper goods than a socialist society beset by all kinds of early difficulties, a 'state monopoly of foreign trade' must be set up to control imports in the interests of furthering home industry. What we have, in short, is the identification of the Socialist economy programme with industrial self-sufficiency, at least in leading manufactured products. It is very hard for Socialists, of whatever stripe, to conceive the future liberated society as one which does not possess powerful and centralised state mechanisms to police the boundaries between the collectivised economy and the outside world.

This identification of import controls with socialism can sometimes be seen as a thrust towards economic self-sufficiency (reinforced by an emphasis on political 'sovereignty'). Sometimes it is less extreme than this. But I want to argue that it is always thoroughly dangerous and dis-creditable.

The debate on import controls can easily run into a morass of economic technicalities compounded by accusations of bad faith. Opponents of import control accuse the protectionists of the left of being in league with the employers in threatened industries, — conveniently forgetting that the main representatives of British industrial capital, the CBI, is resolutely hostile to import controls, so that if any one is lining up with the capitalists it is the free-trade far left.

From the import-control lobby among trade-unionists in depleted industries, we have elaborate arguments to the effect that this or that category of imported goods is specially illegitimate:

anything from America is soiled by hidden government oil-price subsidies (but has British export industry received no State subsidies, in other forms?); or it is produced by cheap and sweated foreign labour (but have not Britain's raw materials and food been produced for centuries by such labour, and should not tariffs of blackings on such commodities therefore extend to our tea, coffee, aluminium and copper?); and in any case the general assumption of this line is that products can be neatly divided into what is 'British' and what isn't.

It is this last assumption which, in the age of the multinational firm and the trans-national processing of products, is the most untenable of all. It would in any case be easy for import businesses faced with some kind of ban on finished products, to ship them in for some final assembly or grooming in a UK factory. This is already what 'Made In Britain' means on a great many labels. If on the other hand, import controls are to extend beyond ready-for-sale commodities to items further down the chain of production, home manufacturing industry will be hit. This has already happened to the remains of the British carpet industry through government-imposed limitation of American fibres.

All this is even without reckoning on the likelihood (very considerable, and nearly always ignored by import-control reformers) of retaliation upon British exports by foreign governments in the event of a protectionist initiative from London. Import-control demands are becoming increasingly common in different national labour movements. If these were all successfully carried through, the depression in world trade and manufacturing would only be accelerated.

It is, of course, possible to construct nationally-protected economies which, under the shelter of a state regulation of imports, expand the manufacturing sector and keep jobs going in the basic industries. That is precisely the shape of the Eastern European economies: there would be no shipyards in Gdansk if Poland had to face the decline in world demand for shipping. The penalty for entering on this course, as Eastern Europe again shows, is a rotten standard of living, with high-priced and scarce consumer goods. The capitalist world

secures its victory over these protected economies by becoming the focus of the masses' aspirations for a better life.

For a trading nation like Britain, not even this appalling course is open. Particularly if invisible earnings, which at present bolster the UK balance of payments, were lost through the expropriation of the City, there is no possible blue-print for a viable nationally-based British economy.

The same glaring failure of the left to consider possible economic alternatives is evident in its insistent

demand for withdrawal from the EEC. As one of the first of the far-left's opponents of the Treaty of Rome, I recall that our opposition to capitalist 'Europe' was in no way founded on a 'Britain alone' perspective. Alternative economic arrangements, with the Third World component of the Commonwealth, and with non-EEC European countries, were then not only a possibility but a reality. In 1980, with an enlarged EEC approaching which enrolls Spain, Portugal and Greece, and with a Third World which has already worked out partnerships with the EEC, there is no alternative trading pattern available to a Britain which has broken with the Rome Treaty bloc. At least, if there is one, none of the EEC's opponents has produced it. Until they do so, they are lending their enthusiasm for a cause of hopeless national self-sufficiency and rampant nationalism.

The deeper logic behind the Left's drift into demands which overlap so obviously with those of the National Front is not hard to seek. The major instrument of social change which is conceived by almost all tendencies of socialism is that of the centralised state: the sovereign Parliament and its bureaucracy, in the case of Social-Democracy, left or right; the directed economy and National Plan, with supporters of the Soviet-bloc model; the state of 'workers councils' which are still orchestrated by the vanguard party, in the various revised versions of Leninism or Trotskyism.

Even if it is admitted that Britain is too small and vulnerable to form an effective Socialist economic unit, the proponents

of international revolution have to admit the impossibility of a simultaneous world revolution. The viable socialist unit of whatever size, be it as grand as the 'United States of Socialist Europe', still has to sort out its relation with the global capitalist division of labour. This relationship is always specified (where it is specified at all) as 'the State monopoly of foreign trade', one of the most bureaucratic and authoritarian monstrosities it is possible to conceive, governing the inputs of even the smallest co-operative in a trading economy.

The State monopoly of imports and exports is a signal example of Marxism's tendency to seek authoritarian and statist solutions, which generally end up by being national (and thence nationalist) solutions. Contrary to legend, Marx himself was an ardent advocate of State-protectionist barriers for the developing countries in the course of industrialisation. His letter to Engels of November 30 1867 specifies *protective tariffs against England* as a key demand that must be pressed for an emancipated Ireland: 'Once the Irish are independent, necessity will turn them into protectionists, as it did Canada, Australia, etc.' Here a policy of foreign-trade statism is endorsed even for England's white colonies (later the Dominions) and as a policy to be urged on Irish, Canadian and Australian capitalists.

At least, however, Marx did not pretend that import-control formed part of the necessary model for the transition to Socialism. The adoption of 'the State monopoly of foreign trade' as a platform for the revolutionary transition stems from the debates in Bolshevik Russia in

the 1920's. As Richard Day has shown in his valuable study *Leon Trotsky and the Politics of Economic Isolation*, the state import-export monopoly was seen by all the main factions as a principal regulator of controlled development in the Soviet Union. At one stage Trotsky wished to use the State foreign-trade agency as a means of integrating Russian production within the logic of international production: the task of socialism was 'to carry the international exchange of goods and services to its highest development', both as an ultimate objective and as part of the work of a transitional economy in a capitalist world environment.

Apart from a brief period of programmatic integrationism in the mid-Twenties however, Trotsky and the Trotskyists left 'the state monopoly of foreign trade' as forming, in its own right and without further specification, one of the elements of the 'nationalised property relations' which are part of the 'conquests of the October revolution.'

In latter-day British Trotskyism, this foreign-trade statism becomes an outright defence of home industry against cheaper foreign goods. Thus: 'Would a state in which the working class ruled control trade? Of course, but the state, the organised working class, would exercise a monopoly over foreign trade to preserve the workers' state from exploitation by international capitalism. It would do so on the basis of ensuring that it exercised those controls against capitalism and not against foreign workers.' (This from *Workers Power*, September 1980, in an article which eloquently attacks import controls under capitalism!)

Here as so often, we are back with the principle that if a capitalist economy adopts a certain measure it is *ipso facto* capitalistic and if a socialist society does exactly the same thing it is directed against capitalist enemies and not against the working class. If such an about-face is possible on import controls, one can hardly expect consistency from such Marxists on, for example, immigration controls, or any of several other questions of a principled nature.

In all the current Gadarene rush of the left towards economic nationalism, there are a few indications of a contrary example. It is notable that Yugoslavia (and, to some extent, Hungary) has broken away from the statist model of foreign-trade relations which has monopolised the socialist mentality as well as (supposedly) the socialist economy. In Yugoslavia the co-operative units of production are free to engage in external contracts, subject to pragmatic intervention from the state planning agencies when such contracts would deplete the

continued on next page



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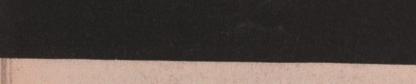
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BL Advertising Planner

resources of foreign exchange. There is no 'state monopoly of foreign trade', and the masses enjoy a higher standard of living in consequence. In the capitalist world, the economic recession has begun to lead to the forging of effective international links among trade unionists. In November 1980, for example, the International Metalworkers' Federation organised a conference in Valencia for workers' representatives from the different national subsidiaries of Ford. It was designed to keep tabs on the multi-national processing and marketing of vehicles by Ford, and to strengthen workers' organisation in the countries (particularly South Africa and the Third World) where bloody repression of trade unions is the rule. This is a small beginning but an essential one. The greatest damage done by the import-control lobby of the Left is to stifle at birth the international organisation of workers. For you cannot assist workers in poor countries to organise and, at the same time, (except in temporary campaigns of boycott, intended

to be called off when successful) conduct campaigns to keep out the goods that they produce. International assistance to the organisation of workers is very often forgotten or discounted. But we should recall that the launching of the Socialist Parties of Spain and Portugal (with their consequent trade-union spinoff) was only possible through massive subvention and support from the Socialist International and its parties. This internationalism of the parliamentarians was of course initiated solely in order to counter the rise of the Communist Parties of both countries. If the international workers' movement devoted to the struggle against the employers the same energy and the same resources which were offered to this anti-Communist crusade, there is little doubt that similar spectacular results would ensue. There is not one national solution offered by any of the breeds of authoritarian statist on the Left which compares with the serious prosecution of these international working-class goals.

## SELLING BRITISH ....

The oil companies are selling images of themselves, rather than a product — and the pictures they use to do it underline their involvement with North Sea Oil.

A recent Texaco ad which was run in the *Financial Times* and *The Scotsman* was headlined 'Now Texaco is rolling out more barrels to boost Britain's oil'. The picture showed Britannia holding up a champagne glass — and the copy was written from Britain's point of view — not that of an American oil company.

'As more oil and gas flows ashore for Texaco Britain gains a great deal too', it said. 'Firstly our dependency on imported oil with all the strategic implications this brings. Secondly, Britain has to pay less of her hard-earned currency to oil exporting countries.'

And Amoco (short for American Oil Company) ran a similar series of TV commercials last year, on the part the company played in drilling North Sea Oil. The response to the ads was remarkable. 'It reminds me that Amoco is a British company' wrote one satisfied customer. 'It was quite clear that they couldn't tell the difference between British and American oil companies', commented one market researcher.

The emotional appeal of 'Britain's oil' is potentially very strong. The oil company ads appropriate the emotion for themselves — and pre-empt political discussion about their role.

Those on the left who back import controls see them as instruments, policy measures which are essential to the success of an alternative economic strategy. This is designed to generate full employment in the short term, restructure British industry in the medium term, and facilitate the transition to socialism.

- Economic expansion only leads to a growth in employment if people spend their money on home-produced goods. If people instead buy imports, the expansion might be stopped by balance of payments problems.
  - In the medium term, it's argued that the decline in the competitiveness of British industry is the result of low investment — which means that productivity has grown slowly. Import controls can be a wall behind which industry can be re-structured.
  - In the long term, a planned foreign trade programme is necessary to a planned economy.
  - Import controls invite retaliation from a country's trading partners. For a country like Britain which is very dependent on trade, this could be a problem.
  - If you put controls on imports and then start making things at home that used to be imported, you'll probably make them less efficiently.
  - Imports of capital (investment) goods would be needed to develop industry. So the controls would fall on consumer goods, which would mean a fall in the standard of living.
  - It's argued that controls increase inflation. But that depends on what sort of under-used capacity there is in the economy.
  - Import controls might be a form of exported unemployment. You protect your own industries, but stop foreign workers selling you their own goods. But if import controls have helped the economy to grow, then imports might grow in volume while falling as a share of the economy.
- But it should be remembered that import controls are only an instrument of economic policy. They can only make sense in the context of a political and economic programme.
- Sheila Smith

If there was anywhere in Europe you would expect to find a revolutionary newspaper that actually sells it would be the Basque country in Spain. There, *Egin*, a socialist and nationalist daily which has recently celebrated its third birthday, has an estimated 200,000 readers. Euan Short reports. . . .

# egin

EGIN EXISTS because while Franco himself went to the worms in November 1975 his political ghost remained to haunt the Basques. The so-called democracy has brought few changes. The hated paramilitary police still remain. A demonstration of a mere hundred or so can still be met with armoured cars, tear gas and rubber bullets. Torture and occasionally death continue in the prisons. The Basque parliament which opened last March is a powerless joke.

And according to Xabier Arcelus, a journalist on *Egin*, the new political groups which sprang up after Franco's death soon found they had no access to the media.

It took a long time to raise the money to start *Egin*. The Socialist and Communist Parties refused to contribute to a paper that would outflank them from the left. In the end it got going with smaller donations, mostly from individuals. Twenty thousand readers contribute financially each year and control overall policy through a committee elected in local assemblies.

This exercise in readers' democracy was particularly important during the first of a series of crises. Some of the journalists wanted the paper to support a Eurocommunist-type nationalist group — a move which upset many readers who supported the far left coalition, Herri Batasuna.

There were angry scenes at the meetings with many people threatening to withdraw their financial support. In the end about one-third of the journalists left, expecting that the paper would close, says Xabier. 'But by some miracle the paper survived. Some days it was dreadful — but the readers stayed with it'.

There was a financial crisis too. The optimism that allowed *Egin* to get going also overestimated the likely sales. Instead of becoming the largest Basque daily with 60,000 circulation, it stabilised around 40,000. *Egin* was overstaffed and though the walkout eased the problem, there were redundancies. 'We live in a capitalist society and unfortunately in order to save the paper we had no choice', says Xabier.

If *Egin* is now more stable financially, it is because as well as receiving £400,000 a year from readers it receives more in capitalist advertising. 'We accept advertising from the multinationals — we need the money. They put no pressure on us to change our politics and there is no

danger of that. The readers would not allow it', says Xabier.

Politically, says Xabier, the paper has become more identified with Herri Batasuna (People's Unity), the party supported by at least half the readers. Though smaller than the conservative Basque Nationalist Party, it won the second highest number of seats in the elections for the Basque parliament — after promising that it would not occupy them.

The reason is clear. The parliament has no law making powers and none to control the police. Its most significant decisions so far have been to condemn 'terrorism' and striking steelworkers. Herri Batasuna is for socialism and self determination. Though it is not easy for them to say so because of 'anti-terrorist' laws, most of its members support the armed struggle of ETA (military).

Yet *Egin* can easily be supported by the entire far left. It does not give the line of any one group, for there are no 'what we say' editorials. After a recent fascist bomb attack on a children's nursery in Bilbao, *Egin* confined itself to a factual report. 'There is no need to tell our readers what to think', says Xabier. 'The difference was that we asked left

groups for their comments.' Left and community groups have even more expression in the open opinion pages. The other sign that this is a left-wing paper is the space given to such things as allegations of torture.

In a survey of readers (a sign of the weakness of the readers' assemblies?) many of the 7,000 replies did however ask for more objectivity. But just as many said the paper did not give as positive a line as it should.

'If we were as radical as many of the readers wanted we would be closed down the next day. We already face eight or nine legal citations and the editor is frequently summoned to Madrid to explain something that we have published. Under the anti-terrorism laws we are not supposed to publish anything that can be considered 'an apology for terrorism'. Even announcing a demonstration over prison conditions can be considered an apology for terrorism. We never know what they will pick out.'

A brother's tribute to a fallen freedom fighter, however, seems to have been overlooked by the authorities. Perhaps because it was written in Basque and they couldn't read it.

But the government did stop *Egin* publishing extracts from the *Little Red School Book*. Still too subversive for 'democratic' Spain, it seems.

Readers' wishes for improved local news and cultural news and more items in Basque (though only 50% can read it) are being carried out. In one respect the wishes for a readers' paper have had to be modified. Xabier explains: 'We have had to professionalise the paper. To begin with we had more reports from readers but we often had to publish apologies the next day for mistakes.'

But he is aware of the drawbacks to professionalism. 'Sometimes I feel we are too remote from the lives of the workers whose lives we represent. And sadly I think that many of the journalists just look on it as another job.'

Despite the problems, there is no doubt that *Egin* is a vital tool for the Basque left and an inspiration to them. It should be for us, too.

## Race Today Review

Edited by LINTON KWESI JOHNSON and DARCUS HOWE

Content Chuni — A short story by Guyanese writer Janice Shinebourne

Some Thoughts on Reggae by Linton Kwesi Johnson  
Poems & Reviews of novels, plays, poetry, music, films and political tracts  
Reviewers include: C.L.R. James, John La Rose, Farrukh Dhondy, Barbara Beese, Akua Rugg and Erroll Lloyd. Price: 80p

Race Today Bi-monthly journal produced by the Race Today Collective. Provides coverage and analysis of events concerning and pre-occupying the West Indian and Asian community here in the United Kingdom. Annual subscription: Britain £4.00 abroad £5.00 or \$12.00

Orders to Race Today Publications 74 Shakespeare Rd. London SE24 OPT



## Albums

**TRUST:** Elvis Costello (F Beat) THE TRUST in the title of Elvis Costello's fifth LP is as ironic as you would expect it to be. It's still the words that we don't say, the damage that we do that we don't know, that scare him so. And he's never said it with so much understanding as he does here. The lyrics speak for themselves. *Bad lovers face to face in the morning/Shy apologies and polite regrets/Slow dances that left no-one enough/Average glances and indiscreet yawning/Good manners and bad breath/Get you nowhere* (New Lace Sleeves).

Life is still a bust, but Costello's stopped blaming his old flames for it. The woman in White Knuckles doesn't 'have to take it when he gets cruel'. And there's no sympathy for the man who 'didn't mean to hit her, but she kept laughing'.

Trust is much more concerned with the personal than Costello's earlier LPs, but he knows that our private lives go on in public places. And he hates the Sunday papers as much as ever (Fish 'n Chip Papers). But if they sensationalise sex, we share their sexism. Shot With His Own Gun starts with the couplet, *How does it feel now you've been undressed/By a man with a mind like the gutter press?*

Trust is full of surprises; if the songs are about deception, the music and lyrics are full of it. There's a twist round every corner, and not a bad track on the LP. Costello used to be disgusted. He's more dispassionate these days. But the things he finds as he dissects the way we feel are much too depressing to cure.

Andy Curry

**CHARGE:** Caged and Staged (Rough Trade or from Charge, 162 Leighton Road, London NWS at £3.00 plus 40p p&p) RECORDED ON TOUR in Germany last June, this is Charge's first album and the last chance to hear them as they were, because after three years together the singer and drummer have now left the band.

The album covers most of their repertoire of uncompromising politics and good music.

Crawling Rebels is about how rebels in the music business are absorbed into drivel. The name of the album comes from the song and the song explains why they are not a 'big name band'.

The album contains a booklet with the words of the songs, not that it's necessary because you can hear them on the record, but it has a lot of good pictures of the band and other things. The picture with Crawling Rebels is Rory Gallagher kissing the Queenie's hand — you can't get much lower than that.

Adam Thompson

## Singles

**SINGLE OF THE MOMENT:** JAMES BROWN: Rapp Payback (Where Iz Moses) (RCA 12") In which JB reminds you who started funk and proves who does it best. No gimmicks for hooks, all the parts are standard, but the thing SEE:THES! This record is quite up to date and



Ellen Baillie

Charge; good music, uncompromising politics. (See album reviews).

## Music

# No need to preach

Not many people know that the Bodysnatchers were, for a short time, a great group.

They were the first self-made all-female pop group, and they didn't sell their intelligence short. Marek Kohn talked to Nicky Summers and Rhoda Dakar.

THE BODYSNATCHERS dressed fashionably ('street' not chic), wore make-up and did dance songs. This was a group with ideas that had come from the non-political, pop culture mainstream instead of the bohemian fringe.

Nicky Summers invented them. 'It took me a long time, it took two years to form but I knew... I couldn't play a note, I couldn't play bass... but I was going to have a band. And the band was going to get somewhere.'

Her biggest stroke of luck was meeting Rhoda Dakar, then a practising mod, and getting her to sing. She also did the patter on stage: very cool, very assured. This was the key: no girlie-group submissiveness and no fawning to the sexual Blimps in the audience. Rhoda's also the only performer I've seen who never turned a blind eye to the Hitler Youth act the bald boys put on wherever you go these days.

It all fell apart pretty quickly — a lot of the best groups do. Once the debut was over and they got down to doing it for a living, the cracks began to show. They got a lot of support slots, and one hit single, but the second failed. They wrote more songs which moved away from the original ska set, but as Rhoda's stage projection became less certain it became difficult to tell whether the new songs were actually about anything. She seemed not to know why she was doing it any more. Supporting Toots & The Maytals at Hammersmith Palais was a low point: 'I thought of all the right things to say afterwards, I was getting scared towards the end because I had to hit out at people and I couldn't be sure that the people behind me were going to back me up.'

The members of the group had only got to know each other after they had become successful. Five of them lined up on one side and Rhoda and Nicky found themselves on the other. They've got the in-jokes and the knowing looks to show for it. There were plenty of differences, which all added up to Personal Incompatibility. One of them was over the content of their songs. The other lot, it appears, tended to think that all feminists are lesbians and that this is not nice, and that their lyrics should steer clear of that sort of thing. This went so far as worrying about a song that suggested that women have an alternative lifestyle to looking after men. Nicky: 'I really like heavy lyrics; the deeper or this-that-

or-the-other they are, the more I get off on them. They were worried about 'Easy Life', they thought it was too heavy. I think you should say things that are relevant and things that affect you. Initially they care for me is to get my feelings out, to say what I think.'

These two are so personal, though! Their view of things is held back by a doggedly individual way of looking. 'I can't really talk about feminism. I never really got into it as such. If anybody gave me shit, I'd give 'em back as good as they gave me so I never really got into it that much. I'm on their side but I don't that much identify with the unit as such' (Nicky). They don't have any time for politics — 'they're all as bad as each other' — and think people who don't understand the issues shouldn't be allowed to vote. They never did RAR gigs either. Rhoda:

'It's too contrived. There's no point in Rocking Against Racism if obviously you are. You don't have to push the point if you've got a mixed-race band (Rhoda's black) that you're not racists.'

Maybe, and maybe not. There's plenty of skinhead gangs with one token black, the one that's accepted because he's hard and he counts as an 'honorary white'. Individuals can have exceptions made but attitudes at large stay racist. You can't just think individual.

Nicky: 'We never had to point out that we were a feminist band because the fact that we were all girls, and getting up and doing it instead of making a big deal about the fact that we were girls, I think achieved a lot more than sitting about talking. I think if you're a mixed band or you've got different races in the band, you're doing a lot more than sitting around discussing things. We don't have to preach. It's a lot more subtle, it's not as obvious, but maybe in the long run it kind of infiltrates more.'

At the end of the Bodysnatchers' career, there was visible evidence that they'd achieved something that way. It pleased them that their audience changed from being all male to including a lot of girls. It's good that those kids have got a different kind of group to follow; one that they can be like, not just admire.

They're looking, patiently, for new musicians. Unlike before, they're not insisting on female musicians only. Just 'people who are intelligent and have the courage of their convictions'. Originally Nicky had wanted something special.

'As there were no all-girl bands that had made it, it would be good to get one that did make it and got the respect from everybody that they should get, which they don't get in this business. That's what I wanted and we didn't achieve it.'

That's the key: respect. It's what they still want most, and what they deserved. The industry leered and patted them on the head; well done, children. Groups with dance tunes are looked up to if they're male — Bad Manners, say — and the same applies if they're visually stylish, like Madness. If girls do the same, they're a joke, or 'people think women couldn't achieve anything like that unless they'd done it on their backs' (Rhoda). If a young man dresses up to go on stage, it's taken as style, an achievement; if a young woman does it, it's halfway to prostitution.

Nicky and Rhoda will be back with a new band. They deserve your attention.

## Cinema

Brave, helpless, symbolic of evil or disgustingly freakish monsters. . . . This week the National Film Theatre in London starts a season of films looking at stereotypes of disablement in movies. Jane Root went to talk to Allan T Sutherland, a co-director of *Carry on Cripple* and himself disabled.

# Carry on cripple

BEFORE TALKING to Allan Sutherland it had never occurred to me that Frankenstein or *Don't Look Now* had anything to do with the way disabled people are treated. But at both of these films I had happily absorbed what Sutherland describes as an 'amazingly offensive assumption' — of a 'natural' link between the disabled and evil of all sorts.

The hunchback of Notre Dame and the grotesque and murderous dwarf in *Don't Look Now* work from the old premise of 'the twisted mind in the twisted body'. They follow in a long line of maladjusted disabled which Sutherland traces back through Richard III, who was falsely presented as a hunchback by his enemies' propagandists to make it seem more credible that he had murdered the princes in the tower.

Frankenstein, who is included in the NFT's season, is another good example. 'Whenever in films you get a character who is basically human in shape but different from the able-bodied norm it almost goes without saying that they are also psychopathic, probably mentally subnormal. It's hardly surprising that people give us funny looks.'

Another persuasively destructive image of the disabled is 'bravery', which usually means a two dimensional war hero clenching his teeth in a 'well-meaning' film. *Reach For The Sky* with Kenneth More as Group Captain Douglas Bader is one of the worst. In the NFT programme notes, Sutherland says 'It hangs like an albatross around the neck of every person who's been conditioned to believe that it would take unadulterated heroism to cope with their disabilities. . . . Being disabled is shown as something almost implicitly brave, while in fact you are just getting on leading your life.'

This is exactly what films almost never show. Like the camp homosexual only allowed on screen to say DECADENCE in capital letters, the disabled only appear in feature films to exploit one of the stereotypes associated with the physical fact of handicap. There is no shortage of the disabled on the screen — except simply as people.

'Films present the idea that we are a small and very distinct group utterly separate from the rest of society. You have doctors, dentists, factory workers . . . and the disabled, who aren't a part of any of the other groups.'

Oddly, one Hollywood film which avoids this trap is the mystical '50s science fiction film *Incredible Shrinking Man*, where the gradually disappearing hero has to cope with the problems of life where the world is designed for people of a size, and with continually being assumed to be stupid or childish. 'In real life the shrinking man would be seen as disabled, but because he hasn't been thought of as such by people making the film all the concepts that usually go with 'disablement' haven't been applied, and it becomes an

*The Incredible Shrinking Man* — coping with a world designed for people of size. An example of the way Hollywood could deal with disablement?



National Film Archive

example of what Hollywood can do.'

In planning the season they have avoided easy targets like *The Ultimate Degenerate* and have tried to air the problem 'that it is often films that are otherwise very good that are most oppressive to us. Very highly praised films can contain stereotypes that if they were racist or sexist would have every liberal in town screaming their heads off.'

Paradoxically it is often the films which seem to be most exploitative which are actually the most radical. Ted Browning's *Freaks*, about life in a circus side show acted by real 'freaks' such as the pin-head man, was praised by Sutherland for showing 'real self-determination' as the freaks fight the evil strong-man and barebacked rider. 'I have a suspicion that this was the real reason it was banned for fifty years. People find the idea of people with disabilities being powerful very threatening.'

He was also kind to Aldrich's gothic horror *Whatever Happened To Baby Jane*, in which weak and wheelchair bound Joan Crawford is terrorised by her sister. Although at first Crawford's performance seems dependency personified, in fact the shocking end of the film depends upon upsetting all our preconceptions about the disabled as eternal victims.

But the real breakthrough in representation can only come with films made by the disabled. 'As with any other oppression, so long as we are not speaking for ourselves, no matter how well intentioned film-makers are, films are going to be oppressive.' Sutherland demands that the disabled need a body of film 'equivalent to the feminist film'.

The one film in the season which fits into that category is *Behindert*, directed by Steve Dwoskin, who is also the co-organiser of the season. Not autobiographical, but drawing strongly on the film-maker's experience, *Behindert* looks at an affair between a disabled man and an able bodied woman. Sutherland describes the film as being about 'the kind of basic and mundane things that people don't immediately see as being connected to disability' and traces their impact on the relationship. They both regret that there are not more films of this type, which would enable them to have a complete season.

For *Carry On Cripple* though, they have badgered the National Film Theatre into laying on special facilities for the disabled, in addition to those usually there. These include sign language interpreters for all the English language films — 'the first time for an event on this scale outside the deaf world, in this country'.

Try and go, or at least think for a moment — before you pity the poor invalid in the tele-weepee, or cringe at what you assume must be the baddie.

Details of programme and special facilities for the disabled from the NFT.

shows there is NO REASON why commercial black American music shouldn't still have life. This man sounds younger than all the smoothie British funk bands full of twenty-year-olds trying to sound like coke-ridden LA session musicians.

Unlike 90% of British funk, this record sounds authentic. THOMPSON TWINS: Perfect Game/Politics (T/Ariola) Perfect Game: orthodox, well produced, unremarkable. Politics: livelier, in a Talking Heads way. It says that the personal is political and takes it no further than that. Except. . . 'he's in love with another man'. . . What's this? A reference to homosexuality in a rock record that isn't sensational or burlesque! I hope it gets on the radio.

THE 101'ERS: Sweet Revenge (Big Beat) Old tapes surface. Joe Strummer doing a Dylan impression ('Desire' period), a hobby the Clash later took up again. Good for maulin closing-times in the pub, or if you ever squatted in Ladbroke Grove. DESMOND DEKKER: Many Rivers to Cross (Stiff)

The choice of this song seems designed to refer to past glories. Dekker almost ruins it with a jerky vowel-strangling phrasing that grates, especially next to the fluid Jimmy Cliff original. Not a disaster, but a little bit sad.

TV SMITH'S EXPLORERS: Tomahawk Cruise (Big Beat) More nuclear proliferation. TV hasn't changed much from Adverts days. He's still declaiming these apocalyptic lyrics over music tinged with glam crossed with punk. He just does it better now. Subjective (*My name is Tomahawk Cruise*), bombastic, but full of character and conveys an effective anti-Cruise indignation. Classy Gerald Scarfe sleeve too. I hate to admit it, but I think this record is great.

Marek Kohn

## Films

COME ON, Elizabeth McRae/Joanne Horsburgh. SOHO, Jan Mathew WATCHING LOOKING, Caroline Sheldon.

THESE FILMS were all made by women, and despite contrasting styles they all deal with the position of women in society and the way that women are still seen as 'objects'. *Come On* is a simple but effective atmosphere-builder. A young woman is constantly harassed, abused and accosted by men on her way home one night. The film has a dreamlike quality, ending with the woman unable to trust even her boyfriend. It's a black and white film in every sense, portraying universal fears dramatically and succinctly.

*Watching Looking* observes the browsers outside a pornographic bookshop. As the film runs, various voices read out a paper on pornography that was first submitted to the Revolutionary Feminist Conference in 1978. It seems a little odd to make a film that looks like a thousand snapshots, but it gets people talking.

Visually, *Soho* is far more interesting. It explores

the activities, besides 'sexploitation', that Soho is famous for, including restaurants, tailoring and the film industry. It includes some inspired shots of cakeshops as the presenter describes how women are seen as commodities in the same way as the cakes — reflected in the patisserie window is the bright exterior of a sex aids shop.

The film's technique — the presenter can always be seen from the back, watching while she does the voice overs — stresses that when we see a film, we see only the director's view of reality. The film's message is that the work women do is almost always low paid, and that because our work is hidden, women can be bought and sold like commodities.

The film was so full of ideas that it could have used more time to have explored some of them more deeply, although its vitality might have been diluted had more time been available. Definitely worth seeing.

All three films can be hired from: **COW Films, 156 Swaton Road, London E3. Tel: 01-515 5547. £8 for Come On and £15 for the other two.**

Sue May

**TIMES SQUARE, directed by Alan Moyle.**

A YOUTH exploitation movie from Robert Stigwood. 'New Wave': the rock'n'roll and good buddies of Grease give way to the teenage girl friendship and what the Americans call punk.

Very dialectical movie, this, all about resolving conflicts. Brat teams up with nice girl, the pair of them go jiving down 42nd Street with the happy blacks and the happy hookers cheering them on, eventually liberal parent is reconciled with nice girl. But the biggest resolution is cultural. This film is a particularly eccentric example of the way the great formless mass of American rock culture assimilates new music and styles, missing the point and keeping the dismal old circus going with fresh blood. It'll be hugely popular on campuses and at the Scala as a camp period piece in fifteen years' time.

Marek Kohn

## Television

**Twentieth Century Box, ITV Sunday 2.30**

**TWO WOMEN** talking openly about their incestuous relationships with their fathers. The last programme in the first series of Twentieth Century Box was simply called Incest. And it was good to see London Weekend breaking some of the 'rules' for making current affairs programmes.

**Rule One:** Presenters must be seen and heard promoting their arguments and authority on the subject.

Here, presenter Danny Baker wasn't seen and his South London accent merely linked the different interviews.

**Rule Two:** The reporter must control the interview by asking the questions. Danny Baker was only heard off camera saying, 'Go on, you're doin' great'. The effect of this was to transfer the authority of the programme to the interviewees. All the same, it showed people can talk about



*Stalker*, Soviet director Andrei Tarkovsky's latest film, opens in London on February 5. A return to the science-fiction format of *Solaris*, the film tackles a question which just about every Western director would avoid like a writ from the Official Receiver — the nature of faith.

The central character in *Stalker* is a familiar Russian archetype — the *yurodivy* or 'holy fool', whose naive faith contrasts vividly with the failings of others more worldly than himself. A kind of out-cast, he scrapes a living taking people illegally into a sealed-off area called 'The Zone', where reality is turned inside-out and a room exists which can make a person's innermost dreams come true. As the *Stalker* and his clients — the Writer and the Professor — come nearer to the room, they reveal more and more of their motives for coming. Finally, both the clients refuse to enter. The risk of self discovery is too great.

Like all of Tarkovsky's films, *Stalker* is hauntingly shot and brilliantly acted. It doesn't give any pat answers, but certainly asks some of those eternal questions.

Nick Anning

Contemporary Films/Prolekt

## Media

# Who rules the airwaves?

The ICA's seminar on television was oddly disappointing. The panel — Stuart Hood, author of *On Television*, Peter Fiddick, the Guardian's TV critic and Brian Wenham, controller of BBC2 — promised wonders by way of clash, interreaction and resultant insights. And it was packed out. But somehow, writes Diane Abbot, the show didn't take off.

HOOD'S NEW book (reviewed in *Leveller* No. 47 is a left critique of TV. It raises many key questions and contains a lot of basic information on how the institutional structures work. Hood himself turned out to be a red faced white-haired Scottish gentleman curiously reminiscent of Lord Reith himself in the firmness of his ideologically based certainties about what is right and wrong in TV. The question that formed in your mind was how such a maverick ever rose to be Head of BBC TV News and Controller of Programmes! The answer must be the establishment's confidence in it's ability to absorb and/or control and/or buy off mavericks. Hood is clearly the one that got away; but by and large their confidence is justified. Chaired the discussion was David Elstein a Thames TV producer. If he was chosen as representing all that is forward thinking in television, it is obviously time the ICA updated its list of forward thinkers.

Some interesting points were made. It was put to Hood that even if you agreed with his critique of the status quo in TV, he did not actually offer a model of doing it differently. He replied that to change television you had to change society. But he did concede that even in an ideal socialist society broadcasting would pose problems of choice for the programme makers.

Hood was less sanguine than Wenham about Channel 4. He pointed out that IBA censorship will affect it just as much as it currently affects the rest of ITV and that the IBA hadn't changed just because a new channel had been set up. His conclusion was that although Channel 4 programmes might be innovative stylistically — politically they would be more of the same. The general lack of fire in the discussion was not for the lack of informed people in the audience. There was Jonathan Dimpleby, Liz Forgan (ex-editor of the *Guardian* women's page and now current affairs superno at Channel 4, Chris Dunkley, TV critic of the *Financial Times*, Carl Gardner of *Time Out* and Sarah Boston, film director and ex-vice president of the ACTT (the film technicians union). And then there was the scattering of BBC producers — easily spotted

by the sycophantic way they laughed at Wenham's jokes.

But things really picked up when Wenham was challenged about why the BBC is far more susceptible to pressure from the right than from the left. Wenham responded by saying that the BBC had to make a distinction between 'genuine outcry' and 'partisan political pressure'. When the audience groaned audibly at such a blatantly subjective 'distinction' he grew red in the face and started to waffle. It was an interesting avenue but unfortunately there was no time to follow it up. Writing in the *Financial Times* the following week, Chris Dunkley typified the audience response and some people's stated objection to sexism and racism on the box as part of what he called the 'totalitarianism of the new left'. But curiously, he did not see anything noteworthy about the political vetting and blacklisting which Hood revealed went on at the BBC and which might reasonably be called the 'totalitarianism of the old right'.

**YOU'RE WATCHING** television and someone says something that riles you; another racist joke on a re-run of *Terry and June*, or *Nation-wide* bashing unions, or *Parkinson* going on again about red-blooded males. You can turn off. But before you do, it's probably worth ringing up the TV station to complain. For they all employ people — they're called Duty Officers — who're employed to take calls from people who don't like their programmes. And then your remarks are written into a report which is circulated to programme producers and managers the following day. **They do read it.** TV high-ups do want to know if people like their programmes and the duty officer's log is more immediate and more informative than the ratings.

The numbers to call are: BBC-TV 01-734 8000; ATV 021-643 9898; Granada 061-832 2111; London Weekend 01-261 3434; Thames 01-387 9494; and Yorkshire TV 0532-38283. If you live in one of the areas served by another company, look them up in the phone book. And although complaining isn't going to transform British TV, it does make you feel better.

## Theatre

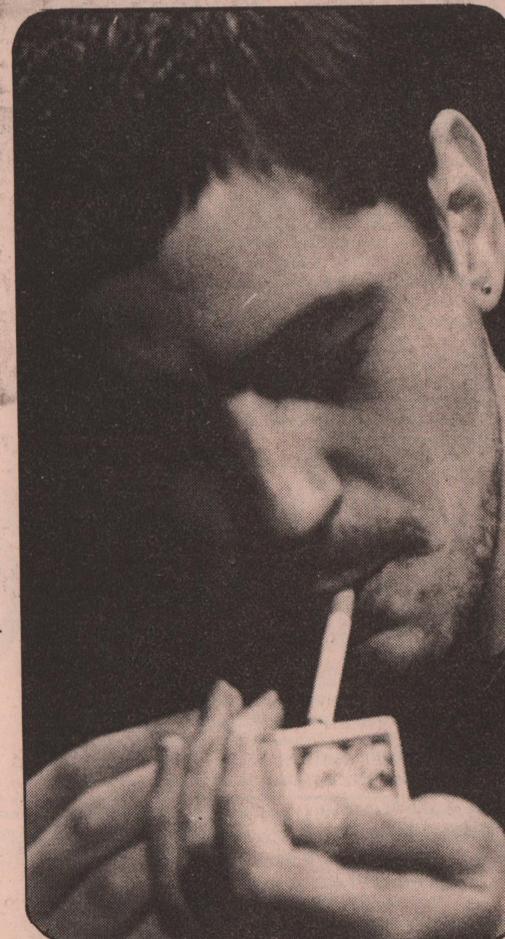
# Family assets

In its decayed nuclear state the family is often painfully grotesque, given to suffocating its weaker members and inflicting lasting wounds on itself, but can it be safely left to wither away, before we produce widespread alternative support structures for the individual? Doug Lucie's new play *Strangers in the Night*, which runs in the Theatre at New End, Hampstead, for the rest of February dramatizes this question in a disturbing way. Lloyd Trott talked to him before the opening.

DOUG LUCIE's elder brother has been entertaining most of the Lucie family recently, by researching and constructing its genealogy. Not so happy is Mr Lucie senior. He remains dolefully silent on the subject at home, but at every opportunity outside is persuading other relations and friends that his son has made a tremendous cock-up. How could it be otherwise? Mr Lucie hates the Irish and what has his son proved? The Lucies are not of exotic French descent as had been hoped, but are common Lucys who arrived in the East End in the 1830s from ... Ireland.

Doug Lucie has enjoyed these discoveries after growing up personally cut off from the past, and this has helped to lead him not only to reconsider the positive values of life in the extended family, but to re-establish personal relationships at the political centre of his writing. *Strangers in the Night* is not the first play that has been motivated directly by concern for the Lucie family. His anti-fascist play *Oh Well* was a reworking of David Edgar's theme in *Destiny*, which had been written for and presented by the Royal Shakespeare Company. As such Doug feels *Destiny*, even when televised, passed by working class viewers without affecting them. Versions of mother and father Lucie appeared in *Oh Well* but with a reversal of one important characteristic. Normally, father does all the talking. The play allowed the mother figure to verbalise what Doug surmises are Mrs Lucie's opinions. She went to see the play, but made no comment on her stage self, and still suppresses her own views.

Recent sighting of Doug Lucie's work: *Heroes*, winner of the 1979 Edinburgh Festival's best Fringe play award and the 1980 follow-up *Poison* would not prepare one for the grimmer aspects of his political philosophy that have been in operation during the improvised composition of *Strangers*. In part this is due to the wide-ranging unfocussed nature of his acute social observation, expressed through a remarkable gift for comic dialogue, and the fact that these plays were written as satires out of his love-hate relationship with Oxford and its bourgeois and upper crust students, where he managed to scrapethrough an English degree while developing his talent as a



Doug Lucie

**ALMOST FREE THEATRE:** Power plays — reviewed issue 47. WAKEFIELD: Fri 6 Feb — Bretton College. ABERDEEN: Tues 10 Feb — St Catherine's Centre. EDINBURGH: Wed 11 Feb — Edinburgh University. STIRLING: Sun 15 Feb — Stirling University.

**BELT AND BRACES. Coming Up by Kate Phelps — reviewed issue 48.** BRIDGENORTH — Fri 6 Feb — Theatre on the Steps, 56 Hodge Bowler. TAMWORTH: Sat 7 Feb — Tamworth Arts Centre, Church Street. EXETER: Mon 9 — Wed 11 Feb — Exeter University. BRISTOL: Fri — Sat 14 Feb — Bristol Arts Centre. LEEDS: Tues 17 Feb — Leeds University. SHEFFIELD: Wed 18 Feb — Students' Union, Western Bank, Sheffield University. ROTHERHAM: Thurs 19 Feb — Rotherham Arts Centre. **Sedition 81 by Roland Muldoon, a new outrageous variety show.** COLCHESTER: Tues 10 — Wed 11 Feb — Essex University Theatre (0206 861946). READING: Thurs 12 Feb — Bulmershe College. WREXHAM: Sat 14 Feb National SANE Conference. DUNDEE: Mon 16 & Tues 17 Feb — Bonar Hall, Dundee University. ABERDEEN: Wed 18 Feb — Robert Gordon Institute of Technol-

## Playlistings

ogy & Thurs 19 Feb — Aberdeen University. **BLOOMERS. Feminist cabaret.** ROCHDALE: Sat 7 Feb — Balderstone Comm. School, Queen Victoria Street. LEEDS: Mon 9 Feb — Osmondthorpe Comm Centre, SHEFFIELD: Tues 10 Feb — Woodhouse Comm. Centre Station Road. LEEDS: Wed 11 Feb — Leeds WEA, Swarthmore Inst., 3/7 Woodhouse Sq; Thurs 12 Feb — Drama Studio, Leeds Poly, Beckett Pk; Sat 14 Feb — Bramley Comm Centre, Waterloo Lane. MANCHESTER: Tues 17 Feb — Manchester College of Higher Ed., Hathersage Road; Wed 18 Feb — Collyhurst Comm Ed. Centre, Willert St (1.30); Sat 19 Feb — Miles Platting Comm. Ed. Centre, Holland Street. **FEMALE TROUBLE (formerly Les Oeufs Malades): The Family Album — reviewed issue 43.** BRACKNELL: Fri 6 & Sat 7 Feb — South Hill Park. STOKE-ON-TRENT — Jubilee Hall. LONDON: Fri 13 & Sat 14 Feb — Battersea Arts Centre. YORK: Thurs 19 — Sat 21 — York Arts Centre. **FOCO NOVO: Snap by Nigel Gearing, Eadward Muybridge, the famous Victorian photo-**

grapher, saw his life in images, galloping horses, sparring athletes, naked ladies ... an early casualty of our 'media revolution'. What price a technology that makes us strangers in our own world? CANTERBURY: Fri 6 & Sat 7 Feb — Gulbenkian Studio. CHELTENHAM: Mon 9 & Tues 10 Feb — Shaftesbury Hall. NONNINGTON: Thurs 12 & Fri 13 Feb — Nonnington College. ST. ANDREWS: Mon 16 — Wed 18 Feb — Byre Theatre.

**MAJOR ROAD: Hurling Days by Graham Devlin — reviewed this issue.** BURNLEY: Fri 6 Feb — Mid-Pennine Arts Assoc, Barrowford Civic Hall (1.45). PRESTON: Sat 7 Feb — Poly. Arts Centre. BRADFORD: Mon 9 — Wed 11 Feb — Theatre in the Mill. LEEDS: Thurs 12 Feb — Bretton Hall College. NORTHAMPTON: Fri 13 Feb — College of Art. GLOUCESTER: Tues 17 Feb — Courtyard Arts Trust. EXMOUTH: Thurs 19 Feb — Exmouth Arts Centre. **PAINES PLOUGH: Beef by David Pownall, based on highlights from the Celtic poem, The Cattle Raid of Cooley.** LONDON: Fri 6 & Sat 7 Feb — Theatre Royal, Stratford. MOLD: Mon 16 — Sat 21 Feb — Theatr Clwyd.

themselves on TV without an 'expert' being there to explain what they really meant. Its only when these 'experts' get used to people talking like this that the rest of us will start to get access to television time on our terms and not theirs.

Mike Craig

## Plays

**HURLING DAYS** by Graham Devlin, Major Road Theatre Company, performed at Essex University, Theatre Underground, 20th-21st January

OUR WORKING class ancestors — the Peasants of 1381 — enjoyed wage restraint set by parliamentarians, powerlessness from machinating multinationals whose predecessors were the rising bourgeoisie, and redundancy, nicely blamed on foreign labour. Sound familiar? Major Road establishes the connections with today, presenting the usually unavailable side of history — the people's — in an effort to capture the spirited rebellion of 1381 in 'Hurling Days', the traditional time when the crops are nearly ripened and there is nothing to do but wait — or revolt!

The script's sketchy characterisation is partly compensated for by fine performances of the rebellion's disparate leaders — John Ball, preacher of a simple communism based on passionate belief in human equality (under God and king), and Wat Tyler, who envisaged a complete immediate overthrow of the social order. Their clash, in a pivotal scene resulting in the unjust execution of a peasant, pressed by Ball, crystallised the alarming 'ends justify the means' contradiction of revolution, sowing the seeds that leave them open to betrayal.

'Hurling Days' is accessible, reclaims our history and provides us with the message of solidarity we need today.

Nicolle Freni

**BLACK BALL GAME** by Don Webb at the Tricycle Theatre, Kilburn, N. London.

BLACK BALL Game makes large claims for itself. 'Firmly rooted in the tradition of the well-made play ... explores with real insight and intelligence racial attitudes and the impact of women's liberation' says the programme. The sub-plot does indeed concern the relationship between a liberal salesman and a woman. But she is characterised as a shrew and the only novel touch is her constant reference to the man's inability to get an erection. The dialogue only takes off when the two salesmen work through their racist responses to a young black would-be salesman. This two-dimensional character is the Sydney Poitier type. He is so nice, so exceptional and so improbably eager to be incorporated into British capitalism that clearly only an idiot would discriminate against him — and the audience is spared the uncomfortable task of considering their attitudes to other, more everyday, black people. The end is disappointingly facile. The liberal leaves with his lady, the black man gets offered a job and the racist boss gets his comeuppance. If only life was as neat as the 'well-made play'.

Diane Abbot

S. V. Caldwell

## Books

**HEAR THIS, BROTHER - WOMEN WORKERS AND UNION POWER** by Anna Coote and Peter Kellner. NS Report 1. £1.50 pb.

THIS IS the first of a new series of booklets from the *New Statesman*. The Reports will be based on the research and writings of NS staff and contributors, updated and presented in a more permanent form.

Hear this, Brother enquires into the reasons why, despite the fact that they've been fighting for an equal voice for almost a century, and doubled their union membership in the last 20 years, women wield so little power in the Trade Unions.

Anna Coote investigates the many constraints on female activism, as women themselves experience them, and assesses the action which some unions are taking to encourage women to come forward. Peter Kellner describes the changing pattern of female employment over the last two decades, charting the attitudes of men and women towards employment, sex roles and trade unions.

The book makes the point that because the union movement is not geared to giving women equal chances, the movement fails, despite the fact that the TUC has a charter of equality for women within trade unions, endorsed by Congress in 1979. It is clear that if unions wish to counter the underlying patterns of discrimination against their women members they must take positive steps to encourage female participation.

Thom Markham

**BLOOD OF SPAIN; THE EXPERIENCE OF CIVIL WAR, 1936-1939:** by Ronald Fraser (Penguin)

THE BLOOD of Spain quickly dismisses the idea that the Civil War was just a rehearsal for World War II. In six hundred closely typed pages, there are thousands of eye-witness accounts, from the whole spectrum of Spanish life. Soon you begin to feel what 1936-39 Spain must have been like, which must be attributed not only to the excellent accounts, but also to the linking comments which unify the book.

The British Government, for example, were prepared to back Franco (if only spiritually) rather than the Left. The Left themselves began internal fighting whilst facing Franco and his German weaponry.

The many conflicts within Spain are explained in great depth and although it is a struggle to remember all the facts (albeit an enjoyable struggle), this is the type of book you can go back to. If anyone wants to learn about events in Spain 1936-39, then a good introductory book (and easier on the eyes) is George Orwell's 'Homage to Catalonia', though there are countless books on the subject (check out your local library).

The book is best summed up by Arthur Miller on the back cover, when he described it as a 'history from within'.

Still, I wish the printing had been larger.

Phil Brett

## Books



WHEN WRITERS and Readers was formed in 1974 it was Britain's first publishing co-operative. Its aims are to act as an inspiration and model for other publishers, and to encourage writers to assume greater control over the production of their own books, and book-sellers and readers to engage in a more active relationship with publisher and writer.

The co-operative started with very little money, publishing the pamphlet *After Deschooling*, What by Ivan Illich. Authors such as Chris Searle, John Berger and Arnold Wesker were attracted to the concepts behind Writers and Readers and the list of publications began to grow. In 1976 they introduced the Beginners series publishing Ruis' *Cuba for Beginners*. These very popular documentary comic books marry text and cartoons in an attempt to make difficult political ideas easier to understand. There are now eight titles in the series, with a further eight in preparation for future publication.

But they don't see themselves only as publishers for the left ghetto, they want to produce books for as wide a readership as possible. Chameleon Books, which rose from the ruins of Penguin Educational and linked up with Writers and Readers in 1978, are determined to produce books which challenge the accepted notions of schooling. They deal with issues that are often complex and controversial - suspension, racism in schools, truancy, the politics of literature - in a clear and non-academic way.

On the fiction side, Writers and Readers are aiming for an international mix of authors. They have an impressive list of titles including Alejo Carpentier's *Reasons of State*, *Men in Prison* and *Conquered City* by Victor Serge, *Journey into Journalism* by Arnold Wesker, and *Pig Earth* by Booker prizewinning author John Berger. The publication of their first children's

dancer, actor, musician and playwright-director. Oxford Theatre Group, part of the fringe Oxford under graduate theatre (the range of approach to theatre in Oxford mirrors in microcosm virtually the entire London stage) served him as well as he served it providing a group of young actors to people his plays. When the OTG committee threw out his *Rough Trade*, in which two gays inveigle two soldiers home with the promise of the two women who live there, he resigned, but has continued to draw on Oxford undergraduate actors and both the recent plays were written around such known casts.

Contrary to the demands made on contemporary playwrights to infuse their creativity with financial stringency and write for small casts, Lucie has written on large canvasses until now - *Strangers* has a cast of 3 - rather overloading his plots. He feels there is a distinct tradition in twentieth century British drama, and would like to be able to utilize it. He admired the staging demands of Trevor Griffith's *Comedians* which made him realize it would be possible to present a play like his own *Torremolinos* whose climax is the sabotaging of a video system displaying eulogies over the death of Franco by a group of workers at a trade fair in Spain. He would like to emulate the stylized David Hare (wouldn't we all?). For a long time Hare was obsessed with the recent past, setting his plays in the forties and fifties. The play that first brought Lucie into prominence, *The New Garbo*, was concerned with this period, centring around film star Frances Farmer and the conspiracy theory researched by Lucie with Hull Truck that she was incarcerated in a mental asylum by the Hollywood moguls which found her socialist beliefs unacceptable.

Most recently, though, it is the significance of Orton in the tradition that has been influencing Lucie, particularly Orton's use of the loathsomeness in

## Writers and Readers

Ever wondered about the people who publish books? They're not all 'fat cats' - especially those who deal in radical literature. Thom Markham has been to see Writers and Readers, and below Nick Anning reviews their latest publication.

books, feminist fables by authors such as Adela Turin, was greeted with media outcry. However, they tell me that the response from children is very encouraging.

Don't get the idea that publishing books is a good way of making money. Writers and Readers started with only £150 and went from crisis to crisis in their early years. It wasn't until 1979 that they made a profit, and this is used to finance more titles and support less popular but politically important books.

It's good that relative success hasn't changed the original ideals and they still regard contact with bookshops and readers as very important. Their list is collectively selected by an editorial group which includes writers themselves, and budding authors send in around ten manuscripts a week. If you want to contact Writers and Readers they're at 23 Nassington Road, London NW3.

## Writers and Readers

### ASSASSINATION ON EMBASSY ROW.

John Dinges and Saul Landau. Writers & Readers, 398 pages, £6.95 (hardback)

Orlando Letelier was a minister in Salvador Allende's ill-fated Marxist government and Chilean ambassador to the United States for a time.

Following the military coup in Chile, Letelier was arrested and imprisoned for a year. International pressure forced his early release and he moved first to Venezuela and then to Washington DC, where he continued to work amongst Chilean exiles for the overthrow of the junta.

It was in the US capital that the long arm of DINA, the junta's secret police, caught up with Letelier. On September 21 1976 a car-bomb killed him and a co-worker at the Washington Institute of Peace Studies.

This book is a tribute both to Letelier and to its two authors. It is minutely researched and gripping account of the way in which the killing of Letelier was set up, carried out and the grisly details very nearly covered up by a much embarrassed FBI. It is also a timely reminder of the way great power politics is played by one of the world's major powers and the fascist regimes it seems doomed to support repeatedly in the name of freedom and democracy.

humans to create comedy. To Lucie it seems that affection is being transferred increasingly to possessions. Possessions from the new technology, which can substitute, seemingly, the need for human contact. Faced on the streets with the image of ingrown zombies plugged into their own head-set radios, he has sought to create through *Strangers in the Night* a feeling of dislocation in the members of the audience, as much as in the characters on stage. It is a bleak theme, but one that should occupy a central place in our fight for a new life, and judging from the humour in Lucie's work to date, one that he will not have dealt with, without compassion. Family life provided me with some very satisfying companionships, two of which have been merely the repeated memories of my grandmothers, both of whom died in my parents' mid-teens, Alice my maternal grandmother at 52 and Cordelia the paternal one at 36. Their mutual resilience and warmth that withstood the oppression of unwanted marriages: Alice sworn to hers on the deathbed of her much loved first husband, and Cordelia's arranged by conniving parents, has been transmitted to me with many of their own childhood experiences, both brought up by their own grandmothers and have proved very vivid sources of comfort and encouragement to me. At the same time I am repelled by a prevalent male argument for procreation: the need to leave one's stamp on succeeding generations. It assumes a power to enforce opinions because of a blood connection, that suggests a lack of confidence in persuading without such an advantage. Doug Lucie's questioning of what we are losing in dismissing the family is valid, but reconstructing family trees may not be the most useful starting point for the much needed personalization of our politics.

# BACK PAGE

## Publications

● **Women & Revolution (No 21)**. Articles on Reagan and religion, Russian feminists, porn and more. 30p + p&p from Spartacist Publications, Box 185, London WC1.

● **Secrecy and Censorship in the Nuclear Industry**. Stencilled pamphlet full of embarrassing info. 25p + p&p from Contaminated Crow, c/o 60 Marlborough Road, Donnybrook, Dublin 4, Eire.

● **Writing on the wall**. New Welsh bilingual quarterly newsletter. 20p + p&p from the Welsh Campaign for Civil and Political Liberties, c/o 108 Bookshop, Salisbury Road, Cathays, Cardiff.

● **Ludd's Mill**. A bumper issue of the subversive arts magazine can be yours for 60p. From Ludd's Mill, 44 Spa Croft Rd., Teall St., Osset, West Yorks.



## Events

● **What is the Future? : Steel-Rail-Coal**. A joint strategy for recovery is presented by the three unions in this pamphlet. Free from Unity House, Euston Road, London NW1.

## Events

● **Red Star (No. 4)**. A Marxist-Leninist journal published by the Nottingham Communist Group. Also available a communique of a recent International Conference of Marxist-Leninist organisations on the world situation. 50p. and 25p respectively + p&p from Red Star Publications, Flat 2, 10 Villa Rd., Nottingham.

● **Marxist Humanism**. New newspaper with articles on Poland, Lenin. 20p + p&p from Box NL, Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, London N1.

● **Can Local Government Survive**. A pamphlet outlining Labour's plans to resist local cuts. 50p + p&p from Labour Co-ordinating Committee, 9 Poland St., London W1.

## FRIDAY 6 FEB

### LONDON

● **The Self-help Organisation for the Unwaged** present a public forum on unemployment. 2pm at Mary Ward Centre, 9 Tavistock Place, WC1.

## SATURDAY 9 FEB

### BRISTOL

● **South-West Co-ops Fair all day** at Corn Exchange. In evening, Sound Party, advance tickets £1 (unwaged 50p). Further details South-West Co-ops Group, Film-makers Co-op, c/o MacArthur Warehouse, Gas Ferry Rd., Bristol 1 (0272) 24714.

### LONDON

● **Benefit gig for the Anti-Nazi League Defence Campaign** at the Factory, Chippinham Mews, W9. Starring Vincent Units, Keith Allen + late bar. Advance tickets £1.50 (£2 on door). From 510 Farrow Rd., W9

### LONDON

● **Can Local Government Survive**. A pamphlet outlining Labour's plans to resist local cuts. 50p + p&p from Labour Co-ordinating Committee, 9 Poland St., London W1.

### LONDON

● **Gay Workshop on 'Love'** 8pm at Cromer St. Community Centre, Sandfield Basement, Cromer St. WC1.

### LONDON

● **ANL courthouse picket** of Highbury Corner Magistrate's Court from 9.30 pm.

Free national listings service. Let us have booklets, pamphlets for mention or review, posters and campaign literature, as well as advance notice of talks, meetings, conferences, films, gigs, theatre or any other events you want publicised.



● **ARTS FIGHT BACK** badge. Available from 16, Chenies St., London WC1. Price 20p/badge plus 10p/order; orders of 10 or more are 10p/badge plus 25p/order.

## Advance notice

### FEBRUARY 20-22

● **Non-violence and nuclear technology** gathering. Details from Box 7, 73 Walmgate, York.

● **Public Rally of the Communist Workers Party (USA)** including film of the Greenboro murders and an address by Dale Sampson, widow of one of the dead. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., London WC1, 7.30 pm.

### FEBRUARY 28

● **Inter-Union Conference** on media coverage of the war in Ireland. The National Union of Journalists is convening the first event of its kind, in an attempt to expose, analyse and prevent the distorted picture of the war that most of the media gives. Speakers from the press and Ireland + workshops. To be held at Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. Details from Ron Knowles, NUJ, 01-278-7916.

### SATURDAY 14 FEB

● **Community Carnival and Cabaret** in aid of the Brighton and Hove Resource Centre. 10am - 6pm at the Corn Exchange followed by cabaret at the Pavilion Theatre in the evening. Further info. phone Titus Btn. 202492.

### TUESDAY 17 FEB

● **Gay Workshop on Lesbian Socialist Feminism**. 8pm at Allan Mawer Room, 3rd Floor S.U., University College London, 25 Gordon St., WC1.

### THURSDAY 19 FEB

● **Nationality, Immigration and Women**. Talk with Elizabeth Ball. 5pm at PCL School of Social Science, Wells St. W1.

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