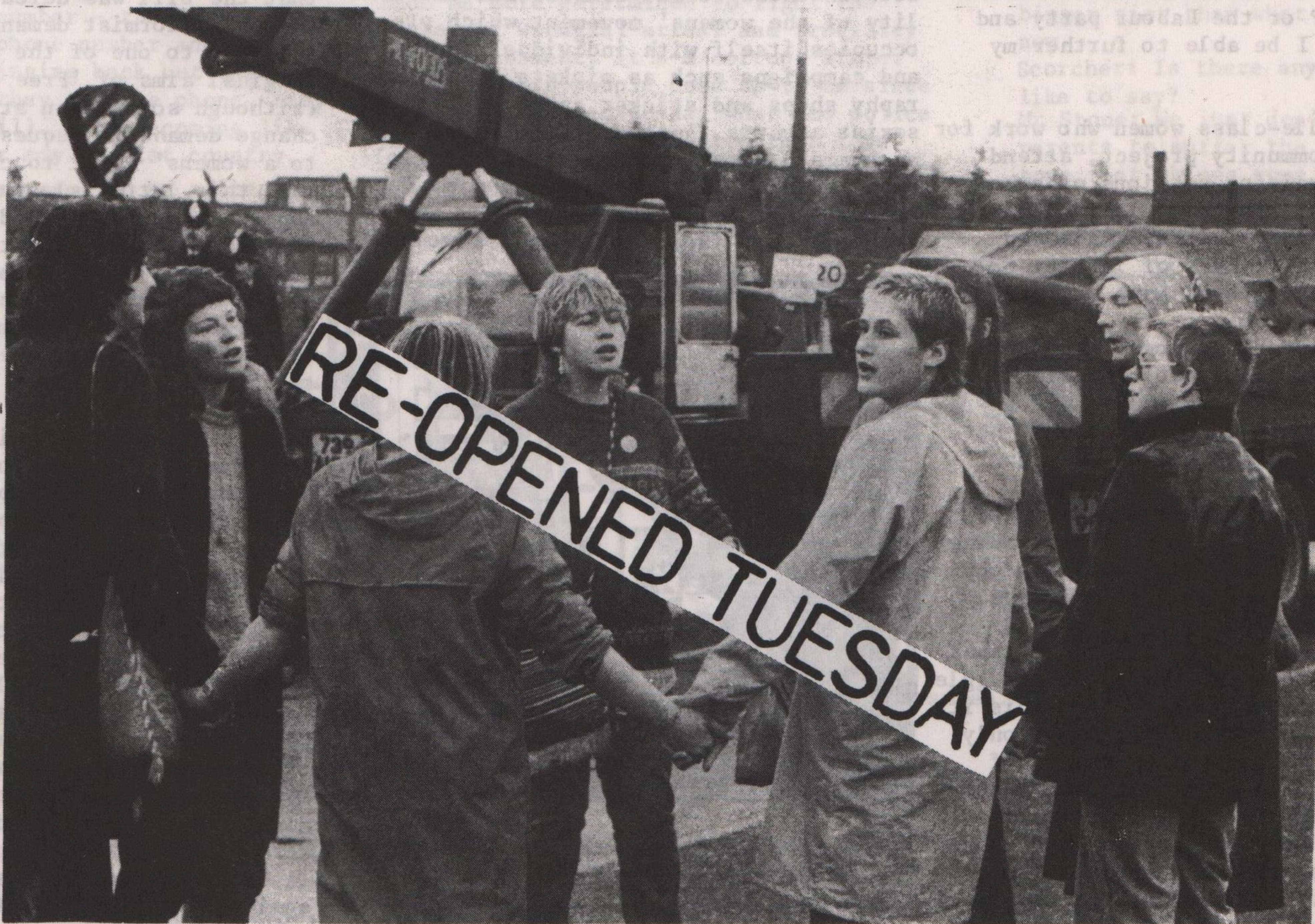


THE SCORCHER

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PROTEST AND DELUDE

EMBRACE THE BASE ON SUNDAY, CLOSE IT MONDAY



Armageddon-out-of-here!

Like a cure for cancer, clean air, feeding the starving millions, nobody is publically opposed to peace. Yet, at present, peace camps, demonstrations and the whole nuclear debate fill the press and TV as the mass debate goes on. Multi-lateral or unilateral, NATO or not NATO bombs or jobs, stork or butter - it is your choice. Many have already decided... Gay bricklayers are hell bent to a man on keeping cruise from this shore. Clog dancers, at Greenham Common during the "Feel up the base" demo, strutted their opposition to nuclear war. In London indignant babies, clad in black romper suits, forced their parents to push them to Downing Street wher they asserted their demand for a future. With this absurd pantomine playing itself out the contention of the Revolutionary Workers Party (that the proletarian seizure of power cannot happen until capitalism has destroyed itself and presumably large numbers of the proleteriat through nuclear war) almost makes sense.

Underneath the circus atmosphere of the above protest lies the mind-fucking belief that if WE don't do something about it there will be a nuclear holocaust.

There are those who really believe this and this makes their sometimes psychotic state of mind understandable. The tragic thing is that the accumulation of massive amounts of people under the CND banner are suffering delusions of success. They cry in the face of history that if only we get rid of the bomb, be nice to each other, everything will be alright. Suckers! The underlying belief of CND and its' predecessors (Rock against Racism, Anything, Ecology rants etc.) of "big issue" causes is that this society is reformable. To make one demand for change, a cause or issue, is to ask evil to give up its' evil ways. In Britain under representative democracy, this has always found its' desperate search arriving at the Labour party. And as they did in the early sixties the hotch-potch of CND support was soon divided and deflated by its' attempts to get a law passed. Recently, Eric Varley (Labour's defence spokesman) has hinted that unilateral disarmament will mean at best refusal of cruise and Pershing missiles and no Trident programme. The enormous revenue of the Defence budget will not be spent elsewhere but 'inverted' in the development and refurbishment of conventional weapons.

Astute, very astute! He knows, as do most sensible people, that CND with its' support drawn from vegetarian anarchists to the church of England is more about the campaign for Real War, rather than about a campaign against all war. Consider the strange lack of dissent during the Falklands.

Jobs

For Michael "I am an ironmonger" Foot this is all well and good. With this maniacal belief in revitalising steel, coal and heavy industry, there will be somewhere to put the steel to use. In other words nuclear war is bad because in the high-tech nature of nuclear weaponry not many jobs are created. Conventional weapons however create tremendous employment - tanks, guns, ships, aircraft - it's the war economy, folks. Politically, this leaves the CND on the shithheap of lost causes. The reason being that all seperate issues look for action within this society, legal reform, a change of heart. They do not have a real opposition to authoritarian capital government. They are safe, hence the media - mouthpiece of power - can give them sympathetic coverage.

cont.back page

FEMINISM A WOMANS' RIGHT TO CHOOSE

Feminism is a viewpoint which sees the fight for womens' rights as a struggle separate from the interests of the class as a whole. Starting from the premise that all women are oppressed, the feminists say that this should be therefore fought against separately. Unfortunately this has not been successful for those who want to transcend the class struggle and isolate the womens' struggle into men oppress women therefore men are the enemy. Working-class womens' interests are more closely linked to working-class men than middle-class women and that is why the womens' movement has failed to woo vast amounts of working-class women to their 'isolated' struggle.

Feminism has become an empty meaningless label which is synonymous with either: All those middle-class women who work for the sunday papers (or some such 'career') with highly paid salaries, nannies at home, who write articles about whether to join the SDP or the Labour party and which one will I be able to further my own career in?

or:
All those middle-class women who work for some sort of community project, attend consciousness raising sessions of some sort or another, try to decide whether they are lesbians or heterosexuals and 'hang round' the fringes of leftist politics. Both these groups have no real interest in working-class women and their struggle at home and at work, their interest lies in their own individual experience of being a woman and how to better their own material position as an individual.

A favourite slogan of feminists is "the personal is political" This is misleading as it offers the idea that solutions can be found at the level of the individual. This is precisely what the capitalist system wants us to think because it means we are dividing and isolating the struggle to our own "doorsteps" Apart from this it is also entirely wrong. Real change only occurs when it is out of the sphere of individual action and put into the context of a unified class struggle.

Most feminists do not deny that the class struggle exists, but they treat it as of minor importance compared to the conflict between the sexes. They see the difference between the genders as being separate from class differences. The oppression of women is put forward in such a way that it is in fact male supremacy that causes our oppression. Political power is NOT determined by gender but by the ownership of capital, the fact men own a large proportion of it is immaterial. The oppression of women is perpetuated by the reproduction of capital, the feminists reduce this to what men do to women.

Autonomy is a watchword of the womens' movement. It is in fact a convenient label for them but meaningless nonetheless. It enables them to pass off its 'exclusiveness' (i.e. women only) as autonomy but it is in fact an artificial unity of women of all classes and opinions. By organising in small groups of individual women this artificial unity is not exposed. This is one of the main reasons the womens' movement has continued to exist. It hasn't come to terms with the real root cause of womens' oppression. If it did its 'autonomous' organisation would crumble. The myth of sisterhood is exposed by the autonomy/separatist debate within the womens' movement. This is an unimportant debate but is basically about whether feminists should organise autonomously or separately from men.



TUC say (and the feminists) "Hang on to what you've got even if it's inadequate rather than fighting for what you really need."

The demands feminists make are in fact preconditions for womens' liberation, equal pay, equal educational and job opportunities, 24 hour nurseries and free contraception and abortion on demand. These demands can only be pursued from an anti-capitalist stance. There is a contradiction between those formal demands and the reality of the womens' movement which pre-occupies itself with individual protests and campaigns such as pickets of pornography shops and sticker campaigns against sexist adverts. Instead of being part of an overall strategy, they are only isolated protests with no unifying aim. These concerns are being put before the real problems that face working-class women.

One of the campaigns that the womens' movement set up was the National abortion campaign. Resistance was organised by NAC against John Corrie's anti-abortion bill in 1979. It managed to get the TUC to organise a march against the bill. Despite this, and the success of the campaign in that the bill was defeated, it was achieved through reformist demands. Instead of sticking to one of the womens' movements original aims of 'Free abortion on demand (although some women at the time wanted to change demand to request) it was changed to a womens' right to choose' They argued that this latter slogan would have more appeal to people in and out of parliament as even anti-abortionists could support this in that although they would never have an abortion themselves they would not prevent others from having one. There is an important difference between the two demands. The first one being essential for real liberation in that it insists it is a right that society must make available for all. The second though is the opposite in that it implies it is an individual choice. For how many does this individual choice exist for anyway? The 1967 abortion act still stands and most women do not have a choice, it is restricted to those who can afford it. One of the womens' movements greatest weaknesses is that it looks to the state to fulfill its' demands, a striking example being in their attitude to the perpetrators of violence against women, instead of seeing the real reasons behind violence against women they demand that the state strengthens its' law and order enforcement in order to punish these men. Violence against women must be fought but not in isolation from the struggle against the capitalist system and the way it violates women.



Would four bricks have been more effective than four cold bums?

The womens' movement is on the retreat, feminists have given up fighting for womens' liberation and are preoccupying themselves with finding their own little 'niches' either in the Labour party or by working in womens' refuges, healthcare groups, childcare groups or suchlike. The state welcomes this as the onus is off them to provide such services for all Women. It is content to give subsidies to these groups as it knows it can do this at the fraction of the cost it would have to if it had to provide these services itself. These women have become just social workers another extension of the state apparatus that oppresses us all.

The notion put forward by women peace campaigners at the moment that peace camps are being 'womanned' by women only because they are more suited to peaceful protest as they are passive by nature is just nonsense and I'm sure a lot of women would find that insulting. We are not passive by nature and we have nothing to be passive about. Peaceful protest and passivity has got us nowhere for too long. we are angry and should be prepared to take part in violent protest in order to win our true liberation alongside men in our struggle against capitalism.



Peaceful protest and passivity has got us nowhere for too long.

DEFENSIVE OR OFFENSIVE

WHICH WILL IT BE?

3

We have seen over the past year two attempts by the state to silence political activists by the use of the conspiracy laws. The first one being the trial of the Bradford 12 and the second (which hasn't come to court yet) being the Welsh Republican Trial. The first attempt by the state in the case of the Bradford 12 was fortunately unsuccessful.

It is imperative that the second attempt by the state is also unsuccessful. For that to happen it is important that a strong defence campaign is built in support of those people.

The Bradford 12 defence campaign had its teething difficulties on what the line of defence would be. Despite consultation with the defendants who wanted their line of defence to be self-defence, that petrol bombs were made and stored ready to deter racist attacks against their community. This was translated by certain people in the defence campaign to the line that it was a frame-up by the police. This defensive position failed to mobilise the kind of support the 'self-defence' position would have done. The defence campaign eventually adopted the self-defence line but only after the trial was half-way through and it was clear the defendants would be adopting that position. It was successful and led to their acquittal.

Before we look at the Welsh Republican trial and how to build a successful defence campaign in support of the defendants it is important to look at the popular myths the left adopt on which they decide to either give or withhold their support to specific campaigns. Support is not guaranteed from the left to individuals or groups who take actions against the state whether it be an arson campaign against second homes or a bombing campaign against selected targets. Their support will not be forthcoming if they think such acts are in isolation from a mass movement. If they think they are, they label them as "individual acts of terrorism." Such acts have taken place in the past which have generated mass support. So is it just an argument for which comes first or, is it that 'armed struggle' is only appropriate in the final stages of a revolution when the mass movement is ready and the material conditions are right? Surely once you accept that armed struggle is necessary then you have to accept that it has to be prepared for now.



Parents of the Welsh Republican accused outside the court after a remand hearing.

There seems to be a great confusion about what the left can accept as legal and illegal. Firstly they seem to accept the state's definitions about what is legal and what is not. If they do go out of the state's confines it is with trepidation. It is alright to attack police on picket lines, demonstrations, or even throw smoke bombs (as long as it is someone else of course) and occupy buildings but once you plant a bomb you suddenly become someone indulging in "individual acts of terrorism" This sort of action compares with such acts as industrial sabotage and the throwing of petrol bombs, it is just an extension of an offensive against the state. In the case of the Bradford 12 who were charged with the making of petrol bombs, the left gave it's support, but in the case of the Welsh Republicans who are charged with the making and planting of bombs their support is withheld.

Their support will always be conditional and centred round "Did they do it?" "What are their politics?" and "Do I know them?" Support should be forthcoming to all political activists facing either continual harassment or charges against the state, whether they be innocent or guilty, bombers or not. Humanitarian grounds are not enough to base a campaign on. The campaign (of support for the Irish hunger strikers) in this country was centred around humanitarian demands of "Don't let them die" rather than the political nature of the hunger strike, hoping this would attract

more support. Of course it didn't as unlike the left, people were all too aware of the political nature of the hunger strike. After our homes have been raided, our phones tapped our relatives and friends harassed and we've been followed from meeting to meeting restricting ourselves to polite protest is just not enough, moaning on about the lack of our civil and political liberties and then making demands of a state that has just imposed these restrictions on us, is a joke. The state must be laughing. Civil liberties organisations pose no threat to the state and they have consistently failed to win back any civil and political liberties taken away from us, so how will they be able to

demand more! We must not meekly react and expect the state to give us room to win back ground from them. We have to resist and fight back against this repression they force on us.

The whole idea of the role of legality is to silence us and pass it off as 'democracy' You will have a fair trial but unfortunately you have to spend 1½ years in prison before you get it and then we can't guarantee that the jury isn't vetted and the judge hasn't got strict orders to instruct the jury to send you down, but we tried and of course it is the best system in the world. This is capitalism's way of ensuring that those of us who try to live outside its' confines are brought back into line through its' police force, law courts and prisons.

"Respect for the law means respect for the present structure of society." It is also important that we don't let the legal profession (solicitors, barristers) take over OUR fight for us. They are being paid to represent us, they are not fighting for THEIR freedom and political beliefs. We are and we must either defend ourselves in court or give strict instructions to our lawyers to put the case the way WE want the jury to hear it. It is not too late for us to build a successful campaign in support of those presently facing conspiracy charges in Wales, on the following basis:

Our Fight

Whether we are Nationalists, Socialists or whatever, our defence is we are oppressed and we will fight for our right to put our politics to people here in Wales and abroad, and whatever form our fight takes is fully justified and that is no crime in OUR eyes. So let's defend our right to fight back and show those bastards once and for all.



Some of the Bradford 12 outside the court after their acquittal.
"Self Defence is no Offence"

THE CRIMINALISATION

Unknown to the left, incapable of original thought because of their dead weight of history and ideology, the major point of class confrontation has now shifted away from the workplace onto the streets and into the realms of everyday life outside of work.

The official labour movement, which has always excluded all but wage earners, is now disintegrating before the eyes of its leaders. A majority of the 'working' class are not now engaged in producing anything. As trade union membership dips below 11 million so the number of unemployed creeps closer to 5 million. The campaign against redundancies in the old industries - power, steel, transport, engineering - is lost and the unions are busy trying to reconstitute their power base by recruiting among the civil service, management and the professions. White collar unions like NALGO, TASS, CPSA gain in strength as the giants of the past, TGWU and AUEW, lose theirs. By recruiting among middle class groups, such as social workers, the left will have a better long term chance of power in the union bureaucracies - the Militant Tendency now control the CPSA. But in fact both the Unions and the Left are getting further away from the majority of the revolutionary class. Only a small section of the working class has been able to sustain its job security and living standards while the rest get relegated to menial, insecure and part-time jobs. To ignore these fundamental changes in class relations and continue fighting the battles of the past is absurd. The only experience common to all sections of the working class is not unemployment but poverty. The working class fight in the short term is not about struggling for employed poverty, it is about fighting poverty itself.

Everyone knows, whether single people or families, that it is impossible to survive on dole money - you would either commit suicide or starve. So people find ways of getting more money. This takes many forms. Working while on Social Security and not declaring your earnings; members of your family working - wives doing part-time bar work, cleaning, canvassing - and not declaring it; payment for such work will often be 'off the cards' ignoring statutory deductions like tax or insurance; straightforward fiddling of the social security by fraudulent claims - false addresses, extra rent, special claims for bedding, furniture you already have, cashing 'lost' giro's etc; theft - from robbery, burgling warehouses, nicking lead, shoplifting; selling stolen goods; fraud - running up huge debts on hire purchase, credit card and mail order catalogue rip-offs; fiddling your gas or electricity meter or reconnecting your supply when cut off; not paying your rent or rates or fines. Of course it's not just the unemployed who do this. Many workers take second jobs where there's no tax or insurance cards; they act as sales agents for goods, stolen or otherwise, in their factories; they steal goods or money from the factories or shops where they work; often they steal parts and reassemble the finished product in their own homes e.g. washing machines; they make things for themselves at work using the bosses' materials and the bosses' time.

The stealing of time from the boss is more important than stealing actual

goods. When you sell your labour power to a boss his profit is gained by paying you less than the value of your work - hence the permanent struggle to get as much back from him as you can, whether through wages or fiddling. But you also sell your time to him - 40 hours a week, a huge chunk of your life - and the struggle at work to re-possess this time is the one that leads to the most class-conscious activity. Thus during the ASLEF dispute the press discovered that many train drivers would be in the local rather than on the loco - their mates having clocked in and done their work for them. Clocking in for others, fiddling time and overtime sheets, sleeping on the job, playing cards, sabotaging the assembly line are all ways workers collectively seize back their time from the boss.

illegality

Thus many people have developed their own ways of getting money outside of the official economy. All of them are illegal and labelled criminal by the state. Millions of working class people are now forced into illegality by the state by the simple daily struggle to survive. The only 'crime' of the claimants sent to gaol by the Oxford magistrates was to be homeless and unemployed. Whole working class communities now face similar threats every day of their lives.

In the past people have kept quiet about this illegality because of the ever-present fear of the nark - the 'good

citizen' who phones up the SS to tell them your wife's working in the local pub. Thus things are kept private, with accompanying feelings of fear and guilt, rather than made collective, with accompanying feelings of solidarity and aggression. But now things are changing - West Indians are breaking down the fears and setting the example of everyday insubordination. The culture of young blacks means living your life out on the streets - not tucked privately away in your house, divorced from your neighbours. Having already seized back their own time - through unemployment - the blacks seize back their own space as well by permanently occupying the streets. The blaring of sound systems and blatant flouting of the law by conspicuous dope smoking means they are systematically harrassed by the police because they are supposed to be either at work or at school. Brixton sets an example for anyone looking for enjoyment without the sacrifices of official employment - the compulsion to sacrifice your life at work in order to buy it back after working hours. It's a positive culture which denies the necessity of a job for either identity or enjoyment. Although the police choice of target is obviously racist it is also the public character of black people's response which marks them out for special police attention.

1981 'no-go' areas

The 1981 riots saw the first breaking through the surface of this underground economy in its new collective rather than private form. The largely selfish, individualist character of everyday mass illegality was left behind by a more social seizure of goods - indeed by a collective grabbing back of the entire neighbourhood and its resources. The "no-go" areas not only excluded the police but began to include wider layers of the surrounding population, who having been trained in illegality through work in the black economy were now emboldened by the example of others to seize back collectively what was theirs in the first place. After the riots the authorities and the Left were bemused to find no organisational trace of the movement left behind. It had gone back into the struggle for survival in everyday life - a struggle which the state is determinedly criminalising in all its aspects.

S.S attacks

Besides the obvious increase in police powers and activity the main areas the state has chosen for its attack are through social security and employment legislation. The number of unemployment benefit review officers, fraud officers, liable relative officers and special investigators attached to local SS offices continually increases - as the number of people actually capable of paying you any money decreases. The latest innovation is the Special Claims Control Unit. These are teams of investigators (often ex-policemen) who move from office to office to 'blitz' claims. They systematically investigate one in every twenty claims, looking particularly at women, long-term claimants, people with skills who might be fiddling etc. Houses are watched, neighbours are questioned and so forth. If they have any



Kids learn early these days the ways of the S.S.

OF EVERY DAY LIFE.

grounds for suspicion, however feeble, you will be called for interview where they will try and intimidate you into making a statement or withdrawing your claim. Their main stick is the "non-prosecution interview" where you will be told that you could be prosecuted for a fraudulent claim but, out of the goodness of their hearts, if you agree to withdraw your claim for 6 months they will not prosecute. The purpose of this is to force long-term claimants off the register to join the 17% of unemployed people already not bothering to sign on. New social security rules are increasingly designed to keep people away from the offices themselves, so as to avoid the possibility of violence or collective action - thus the introduction of the new postal forms for your first claim. Though there is a high incidence of attacks on individual S.S officers it is amazing that S.S offices have not yet been the scene of even one riot yet alone continual disturbances as they should be. The purpose of the design of the offices, the long waits, the way they continually fuck you about, is to keep you demoralised and divided. How many times do you see people moaning about the claimant in front of them who is, quite rightly, arguing for ages at the reception interview - rather than taking collective action against the S.S office itself. In September, in Stockwell, south London, a black walked into his local D.H.S.S. office with a large petrol can and started splashing it all over the floor and seats. Other claimants realised at once what he was going to do. Instead of moaning about their turn in the queue they said "Yeah, right man, we've been fucked about too long" and threw matches at the petrol as they made a speedy exit through the doors.

Siege at Fort Dole

BRITAIN'S inner-city social security offices are being turned into "forts" against violent clients. This year alone 192 assaults have been made by the public on social security officers. Last year an officer was murdered visiting a client.

Many social security offices now have reinforced glass panes in the cubicles to protect civil servants, grills on the windows and furniture bolted to the floor.

"Bouncers" are frequently used to break up trouble. And special closed-circuit TV cameras are being installed in many offices.

The problem of staff being attacked by members of the public is recognised by both the DHSS and the unions as a national one.

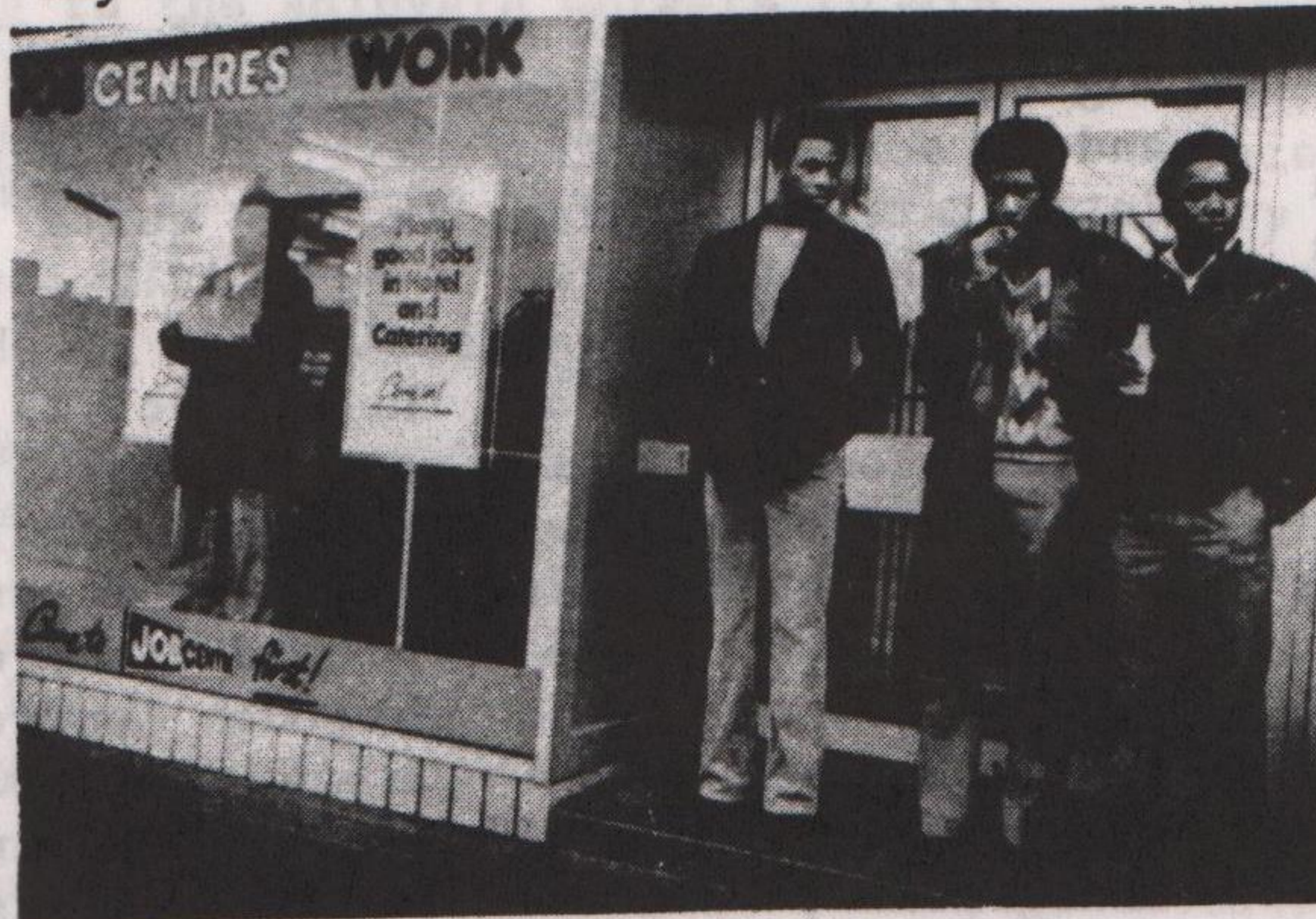
Worst hit offices are in London, Birmingham, Liverpool, the North East, Bristol and Manchester

A DHSS spokesman said: "Some people get very stroppy. We often have to deal with drunks, vandals and hooligans."

As for those leftist CPSA members who work in SS offices and when taking industrial action recently said, "We're on strike for your benefit" - well if you really want to take action for our benefit, then just start giving out the large discretionary payment giros to all claimants - then we might begin to think we're on the same side! As for those claimants union jerks who are after careers as alternative social workers and think they can represent us - you can fuck off too - we don't need anyone to mediate our anger.

Tebbit's Law

Through its large number of youth training and MSC work schemes the state further aims to divide and criminalise the unemployed from employed members of the working class. Tebbit's latest proposals to guarantee all school leavers "some experience of work" aims to isolate the youths who remain ungrateful for this wonderful opportunity. The aim is to dragoon people into acceptance by offering them "the everyday discipline of work" at poverty wage rates while making it more difficult for them to claim S.S. This would politically strengthen the police in harassing those who still insist on "hanging out" and refusing work as they could be portrayed as criminally work shy.



It is fundamental to the state's strategy to try and keep these new forces in opposition to it marginalised, to try and keep the traditional division between, on the one hand, the employed and "respectable" unemployed and, on the other, the workshy and criminally inclined unemployed. But, as we have already seen, millions of people are now forced into illegality for everyday survival so that these divisions are disintegrating. The criminalisation strategy has the reverse effect to that intended - it not only fails to isolate the few but, instead, vastly

increases their numbers. The division that has been created is between, on the one hand, the unemployed and the low paid employed, and, on the other, the small elements of the working class who aspire to middle class status, fearfully seeking to maintain their job security and living standards, looking gratefully at the police and the trade unions to protect it from lawless elements and the abyss of poverty into which it might fall.



The forging of the link between the common interests of the unemployed and the employed at work is now vital if we are to go beyond mere survival and contemplate the possibilities of going further than the 1981 uprisings. In 1981 there was no instance of rioters calling on the employed working class at work to join in, bringing the strike weapon into play - when the smoke cleared there were no occupied factories in sight. In the nights of rioting a spontaneous coming together, particularly in the Northern cities like Manchester, Hull and Leeds, of rioters and people at work was a distinct possibility. In Toxteth for example on July 4th the police were clearly losing the battle for control of the streets. The rioters were moving towards the main arteries of communication, used in the early morning by tens of thousands of workers. If the police hadn't fired C.S. grenades around dawn contact would undoubtedly have been established between the rioter and these early morning shift workers. Solidarity between the employed, and hostility towards the police is probably more out in the open in Liverpool than any other British City. We can only guess at what would have happened if such contact had been made. What we can say is that when it does happen riot will be turning into insurrection. The day to day experience of working class communities based on an illegal struggle to survive makes the prospect increasingly likely.

THE SCORCHER

HIPPO AWARD

The Scorchers HIPPO AWARD will be given from time to time to people who are stupendously hypocritical. If you want to win this coveted award, take a leaf out of our first winner's book - MIKE PETERSON. A stalwart of the National Council for Civil Liberties and the Welsh Campaign for Civil and Political Liberties, Mike attempted to keep four people out of a public meeting on December 3rd to defend Robert Griffiths and other Welsh Republicans facing explosives and related charges. Mike's move was particularly spectacular as one of the people barred is herself a defendant in the case! Another was barred merely for selling The Scorchers outside the meeting. Thanks to protests from other people there, Mike's attempt failed. But Mike won't want to be greedy: we know he'll share this award with Robert Griffiths, Gareth Miles and Antony Evans who were all in on the attempt. The incident confirms what we knew - the middle-class "civil liberties" lobby are just soft cops.

WORKERS AGAINST THE

Solidarity and Poland



"The workers must have no doubts that they are the ruling class"
General Jaruzelski, 28th October 1982.

Introduction

As with the struggles of workers everywhere, you can't expect a clear view of what's been happening in Poland from our papers, television or politicians. For most of them the workers are simply incapable of constructing a rational human society here and now: this attitude goes right the way along the political spectrum to the far left. What we want to know is what Polish workers thought said and did in their fight against a self-styled socialist "worker's state". What the media here tell us about is the supposed nationalism, Catholicism, anti-Sovietism, anti-Russianism of the Polish workers, anything to cover up the Polish workers march towards what used to be called socialism or communism, if those two words hadn't become symbols for the suppression of workers east and west. The excessive focus on 'the leader' Lech Walesa is no surprise: who can believe that workers can do anything without a leader, a party, a programme, or closer to home, 'agitators'? This attitude unites Jaruzelski, Thatcher, the TUC's Len Murray and the SWP's Tony Cliff. Once martial law was introduced, the West could breathe again - send in the food parcels, look after the 'refugees', and pray the military can get the workers working again to pay off Poland's debts. The working class has proved though that it is long past needing middle-class vanguard parties: its struggle is to throw off the suffocating bureaucracy that feeds off it, whether the unions, Labour Party and radical left in Britain, or the Communist Party and state in Poland. Polish workers were grappling with concrete problems of living standards, organisation of work, the socialist state democracy and so on, all at once. The obstacles they faced and still face, and what they did to overcome them are important to us all. It's no wonder that people in Britain are unsure about Solidarity - this article aims to contribute to setting the record straight.

Socialism?

One fundamental issue here that causes a lot of trouble is this - are the Soviet Union and the "People's Democracies" of Eastern Europe socialist countries? The 57 varieties of radical left groups in Britain really do tie themselves up in knots over this one, taking their position from the particular cult figure - Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, Mao or whoever - that they adhere to. Ask them, and you

will get answers ranging from 'socialist state' 'states in transition to socialism', to 'deformed workers state', 'degenerated workers state' and so on. The trouble is they're either taking someone's word for it from 1940 or earlier as gospel, or else they're looking at the state institutions or the socialist sounding names that the ruling parties give themselves. The way to look at it is to ask questions like: what is the experience of the worker in those countries? what is the relationship of the worker to production? is the particular society divided into order-givers and order-takers? in a country with 'socialist planning', who does the planning, the workers or someone else? These questions get to the root of the matter, and when we look at workers' struggles against the 'workers states', the answer becomes clear: these countries are not in the slightest way socialist, nor are they moving towards it. They are the particular form capitalism has taken there, just as fascism was the form capitalism took in Germany in the 1930s.

Russia 1917

Some Marxists today categorise the eastern bloc as 'state capitalist' which is more realistic, but they persist in arguing that Russia was socialist in 1917 and at some point thereafter degenerated into state capitalism. This is quite wrong. The Russian workers in 1917 set up two kinds of organisation all of their own (no socialist told them to do it) - Factory Committees for economic organisation and Soviets for political organisation. The workers intended the Factory Committees to create "new conditions of work" and to organise "thorough control by labour over production and distribution". Lenin, who believed in "one-man management", wasn't having any of this, nor was Trotsky, whose view was that "the very principle of compulsory labour is for the Communist quite unquestionable". The Factory Committees were gradually wound down by the Bolshevik dictatorship, not without resistance from the workers. The Soviets were emasculated even quicker by Russia's new capitalist rulers. Within 15 days of seizing power the Bolsheviks dissolved a soviet and continued to close down others.



Doubting workers about to ask the militia if it's true they are the ruling class.

Hungary 1956

After the Second World War workers' discontent has been a constant feature in the eastern bloc. Violent struggles took place in East Germany in 1953, Poland and Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, Poland again in 1970, and all of the 'socialist' states have been hit by strikes and poor production. Space does not allow more than a few words on what happened in Hungary in 1956, but the working class there showed the way forward with great courage, vision and creativity. In a matter of days they brought a Communist government down and took over the country, setting up Workers' Councils in every workplace, with delegates to a national council, in effect creating a national government of Workers' Councils. In the course of this the workers united the rest of the population behind their leadership (the peasants kept the towns and factories supplied with food at great risk to themselves), and fought Russian tanks with bare hands. Everyone (as far as possible) was armed and everyone 'governed'. The state and the Communist Party were smashed, and the hated AVO (secret police) driven underground when not actually just killed outright. A Workers' Revolution succeeded - and was then destroyed by Russia's armed might. Workers' resistance, both active and passive, continued for months: thousands died, were executed or exiled.

Poznan

Only a few months earlier, Polish workers had risen in Poznan. It started with a strike, where workers demanded an end to piecework, criticised the way factories were run, and organised demonstrations. The Polish state isolated the trouble quickly before it could spread to other parts of Poland - but the ruling faces changed in an attempt to present a more liberal face. The Polish workers learnt quickly that strikes and demonstrations, even when defeated by bloody repression, did get results. It's no wonder that Polish workers were driven to revolt. The official trade unions (the CRZZ) had as their main responsibilities the enforcement of factory dis-

WORKERS' STATES

by
Rod Jones



The slogan says "We will move off the walls when we get access to the media!"

cipline and making sure that production went up continuously: the theory behind this attitude is that workers have nothing to fear in their 'own' state! The Polish parliament (the Sejm) had passed laws in 1950 to keep workers at specific jobs and established a strict disciplinary code over time-keeping. Polish 'Stakhanovites' (scabs who worked extra hard to outdo the piece-rate norms for party propaganda purposes) were hated by Polish workers, and often done over as well. Although the state's "success" publicity claimed rising living standards, the workers knew better. The significance of 1956 was that Polish workers did not turn to capitalism as an alternative to Stalinism. However the state managed to keep the lid on while the Hungarian Workers' Councils went down in blood: the Party helped to set up state-run "workers' councils" in large factories. Despite the name, these had nothing in common with Hungary, being an attempt to integrate workers more into management's way of thinking, rather like joint union/management consultative committees here. Even these were soon given up.

Riots

December 1970 saw riots and strikes in Gdansk, with workers burning down the Communist Party headquarters and police shooting unarmed demonstrators. In Szczecin, the inter-factory strike committee effectively ran the town, keeping order and organising supplies during the strike. The workers demanded - no price rises, free elections, workers' commissions to run the shipyards, and an end to lies in the papers. The government backed down on prices and pulled the old trick of changing the face at the top. Gomulka was carted off to a hospital and Gierk took over, pulling off a truce with the workers by frankly admitting that they had been 'provoked beyond endurance'. Feelings still ran high because of the deaths - when anyone at a Party meeting started a speech with the word 'Comrades', they'd be shouted down. The workers proved again that decisive action could stop price rises and change the government in a Communist state. In 1976 planned price rises were again met by demonstrations and strikes, and this time Gierk backed down so fast, the wind was taken out of the workers' sails. Despite this, the police came down hard, with vicious beatings and jail sentences for strikers from the Ursus tractor factory. But the workingclass wasn't just

angry about prices - many had taken Gierk at face value when he'd said in 1970 that he wanted to involve workers more in decisions on the economy. For the next few years Polish workers were thinking hard about their experiences, and how to organise to defend themselves.

Gdansk

New price rises announced in July 1980 led to work stoppages all over Poland, but this time without riots or demonstrations. Plant after plant managed to negotiate compensatory wage increases. Workers in Lublin started to make demands that went further - no press censorship and trade unions that wouldn't "take orders from above". On August 14th the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk came out on strike, and the next day all the other yards there and in Gdynia stopped. I don't intend providing an account of events from that day to the present, rather, I want to pick out the solid achievements of the Polish workers in that period up to the start of martial law. The shipyard workers' demands were at first economic, then grew wider and more political - free access to the press the release of all political prisoners, and free trade unions. Sharp negotiation by the management backed up by the government narrowed the question to wages, but the stakes were forced back up by other workers in Gdansk who had been looking to the shipyard workers to win something for them all. Indeed the strength of the drive behind Solidarity was the desire of workers for change now.

Demands

The occupation of workplaces (known in America in the 1930s as the 'Polish' strike) showed the workers knew where their strength lay: this time they were not going to be shot in the streets. Their demand for free trade unions, to defend themselves against managements and state alike was a refusal to accept responsibility for the economic condition of the country. The shipyard loud-speaker system, normally a tool of management, was used to broadcast the workers' delegates' negotiations with the government so every worker could hear what was being said on their behalf. Every time the government tried to make 'general' points, the workers forced them to answer their specific demands point by point. In Szczecin, the workers' chairman Jurczyk didn't engage in any small talk with the government negotiators, not even



The Zomo riot police moving in to remove workers' doubts.

SOLIDARNOSC

to say hello, merely repeating "these are our demands...". As the strikes spread elsewhere, the demands of local committees started going further than Gdansk, calling for the removal of hated Party officials. In many places demands were local, practical and to the point - safety protection, wage rises - but mixed in were calls for the police and militia to be curbed, and for police funds to go on building schools, for example. The leveling instinct of the workers was clear: "We demand that the earnings of the Party and government apparatus should be limited to the level of average industrial earnings." (from the Szczecin demands). It went further though: better paid workers were striking to get things for the lower paid, understanding clearly that the hierarchy of wage differentials helped the state divide the working class. The Gdansk agreement also tackled the problems of women, demanding pre-schools, workplace nurseries, and three-year maternity leave.

Solidarity

Solidarity came together out of the inter-factory strike committees (MKS) in different locations. Sometimes whole branches of the state-run CRZZ changed overnight into independent self-governing unions (NSZZ). The structure of Solidarity was a regional one, where every worker of every type of job was together in the same union: this was the complete opposite of the CRZZ which had separate 'branch' unions for each trade, with a centralised headquarters in Warsaw. This is very similar to the way unions operate here, dividing workers, and competing for their subs. Solidarity's organisation was way ahead of 'our' TUC, far more democratic, and it made the regional leadership far harder for the state to coerce or manipulate. Unfortunately, the Gdansk agreement threw away some of this advantage by agreeing to negotiate wage increases branch by branch rather than region by region. The regional set-up allowed the health services and transport to continue operating normally while other workers struck for them, so the government couldn't invent stories about chaos caused by strikes. There's a lesson there for us.

Future

Other sections of Polish society were staking their claim to a future as well. Schoolchildren in many parts of Poland demanded 'pupil power'. Solidarity hotel workers joined with Solidarity actors to protest against "pseudo-entertainments" and organise their own. The small farmers and peasants, rightly regarding themselves as being state agricultural labourers in effect, formed a trade union of their own - Rural Solidarity. Just as in Hungary in 1956 the peasants and the workers stood together. All the while the Polish workers, seeing the weakness of the state and conscious of their own growing strength, were going beyond trade unionism, to an extent that worried the Solidarity leaders, whose generally moderate stance was being overtaken by justified rank and file extremism. At a mass rally in Szczecin, workers demanded the

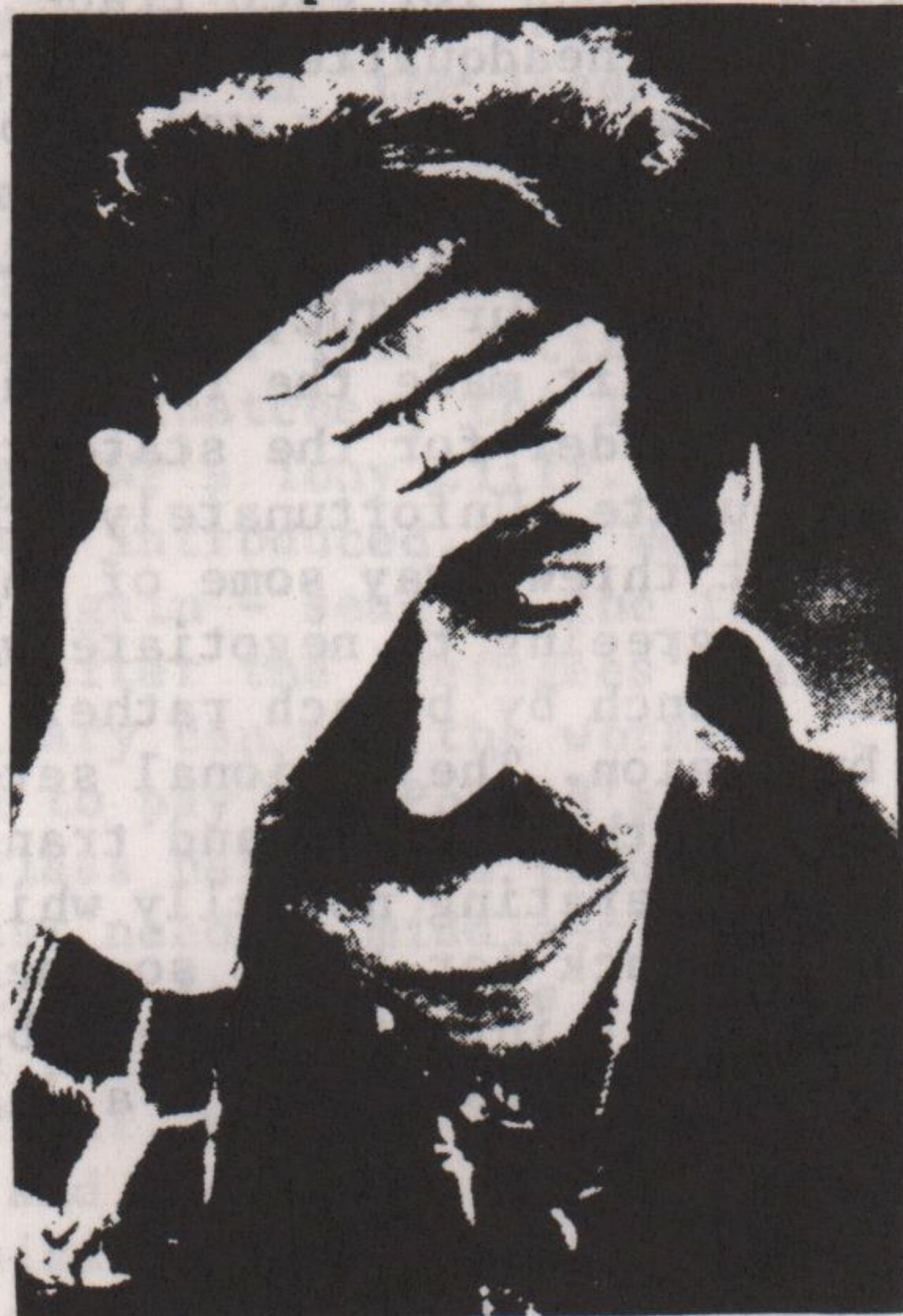
WORKERS AGAINST the WORKERS' STATES



Communist leaders be punished: at the Ursus factory a speaker who said "It's better to die on our feet than to live on our knees" got an ovation; the spontaneous militancy of the workers, looking for immediate answers to all their problems, was being held in check with difficulty by Solidarity's leaders.

Walesa

The leading figure here was Lech Walesa, who the western press continually focus on. Walesa's role over the 15 months between Gdansk and martial law was one of holding back the workers movement, and this was realised by many workers. When Walesa accepted the idea of branch rather than regional pay deals, a worker commented "we made a mistake giving Leszek so much power!"; when Walesa let the government write a clause into the Gdansk agreement that the Communist Party was still to have the leading role in society some workers were disgusted; during the row over the registration of Solidarity by the Courts, Walesa's talent for compromise came under fire from his colleagues in Gdansk. There's no doubt the regime sought to separate Solidarity's leaders from the mass movement, to give them a taste of power in the hope it would corrupt them politically. Walesa met Kania, the Party leader at the time, alone in November 1980 for talks - a far cry already from the idea of open well-publicised democratic negotiations - and when shortly after he called for an end to 'wildcat' strikes, workers had good reason to be suspicious. Walesa's view



was that the working class had to take responsibility for Poland, but so long as the Communist state, Party and armed forces were intact, this could only mean taking the whole weight of the crisis on their own backs - and they'd set up Solidarity to do the exact opposite. Walesa's moderation certainly pleased the government, but even he couldn't stop the workers' anger.

Bydgoszcz

Probably the most crucial decision Walesa took was over the Bydgoszcz incident. Two hundred police had attacked union activists and Rural Solidarity members, making them run the gauntlet while beating them with clubs, injuring 27 and hospitalising three. Bydgoszcz was filled with riot police as Solidarity announced a general strike. On March 27th 1981 Poland saw its biggest strike ever, a solid four hour

general strike. A total all-out indefinite stoppage was planned for March 31st. Like never before, Solidarity had to take the firmest action to defend its members. Union members knew this was a decisive issue: the state was ready to use its vast repressive apparatus to crush the workers if they did not fight back with industrial action. Walesa went into lengthy sessions with government ministers, and called the strike off with hours to go, without consulting the rest of the Solidarity leadership. Workers, aware of the sell-out, were stunned. From hospital, the injured said "Walesa has bungled. We can compromise on supplies of onions, but not over spilt blood." There is evidence that it was at this time that General Jaruzelski decided to prepare the military crushing of the workers.

Experts

Walesa of course was not to blame for everything: I've picked him out because he was (and still is) a figure of such attention in the Western press, and because he's a representative of the compromisers in general. A similar role was played by the so-called experts and intellectuals who 'advised' Solidarity's leaders. Again there's evidence that many workers realised that these people were diluting their struggle. Part of the Gdansk agreement was going to be left to 'experts' on both sides to draw up, but three workers on the negotiating team decided to leave them out, and got a better deal for themselves out of the state. Szczecin was totally different to Gdansk. The workers kept the press, media and intellectuals out, and just got on with getting what they wanted. The MKS there was "a pure workers movement". In the Gdansk negotiations the experts on both sides of a working party were from the same Warsaw background, and got on well together, so well that they deliberately did not inform the workers exactly what was being decided. This sort of atmosphere was to envelop union leaders later as they came to know the government ministers they were talking to. The experts for their part had little confidence in, or knowledge of, the workers. They were astonished at the workers' insistence on having independent, free trade unions: they themselves wouldn't have dared ask. One intellectual saw the workers' incredible patience in striving for what they wanted. Time and again the workers proved to be clearer-sighted than all of Solidarity's would-be advisers and conciliators.

Martial Law

The declaration of martial law revealed once and for all in the starkest terms the class nature of the Polish state: it is the (literally) mortal enemy of the working class. Yet despite the repression, the use of the ZOMO (riot police) thugs, military takeovers of factories, internment of union activists and so on, the workers have fought back in any number of ways. Occupations and strikes in the early days were crushed: workers turned to passive resistance on a spectacular scale. Go-slows and obeying rules and regulations to the point of stupidity have hit production, the junta's weak point. Its whole effort is to get the workers back to work doing as they're told on the state's terms. At the Fiat works by Warsaw, production of cars fell from 350 to 10 a day. Polish workers found other ways to make their



feelings known outside the workplace - switching house lights off and lighting candles, or, as in Swidnik, going out of their houses while the TV news is on. The authorities simply couldn't do anything about these sort of protests. The youth of Poland too have come into their own with rioting and street-fighting in their thousands against the ZOMO.

Realism

For the British state, the scenes must have been all too familiar to those in Ireland and in Britain in summer '81: the British media has been cautious about being too enthusiastic at the sight of workers and youth taking on the state, even if it is a communist state. The West's real fear has been of 'disorder', and if it takes martial law to restore order, then that's fine - crocodile tears will suffice for the fate of Polish workers. Just like the Polish Catholic Church, it 'backs' the workers' demands, but not the actions necessary to achieve them. The common concern of ruling classes East and West is production - get the workers working: new Soviet leader Andropov has called for an end to "shirking" by Russian workers and increased productivity; the Polish government says that it will not hesitate to use "the necessary means to protect peace, security and undisturbed work"; the British Government demands 'a new realism' from workers, while tooling up the police to crush workers, youth and unemployed, who might display a different sense of realism.

Freedom

For the Polish workers, the experiment of a free trade union in a Communist state is over and cannot be repeated. Solidarity as an organisation is finished. The Polish Communist Party too has had it, relying on military crutches to stand at all. The solution to Poland's problems is back firmly in the workers' hands once they recover from this defeat. Zbigniew Bujak, a Solidarity activist in the Ursus factory, wrote before martial law: "Our movement is weakening. At the beginning it was based on an implacable hatred for the regime and against the Party. But today that is not enough. Completely new motivations are necessary. ..only when I explained that this self-management leads to a taking of power did people understand and agree with me." The Polish workers knew what they were against, and were learning through setting up Solidarity what they were for: self-management of every aspect of life. Next time they'll smash the Communist state and its security forces first before creating their own organisation of society to get the freedom for which they have struggled for so long.

LETTERS

RIOTS - WELSH ROCK - FREE WALES?

To contact "The Scorcher" write to:
Box 100, c/o Neges Bookshop,
c/o 108 Bookshop, Alexandra Road,
Salisbury Road, or Swansea.
Cardiff.

Dear Scorcher,
Doesn't the assertion that the Brixton riot "was deliberately provoked and stage-managed by the police" play into the hands of the lefties? ('The Fire next Time...') Ah, they say, what we need is more community policing, thus missing the point that the riots were against (if they can be said to be against anything) the very existence of the police. To say the police 'provoked' the riot by their particular actions is to deny that the rioters were attacking them for what they are, what they represent and not just what they do. The riots were not 'caused' by the police anymore than they were 'caused' by the white anarchist photographers and CB users that the top cops made so much capital of.
'The Scorcher' is good. I hope you sell many copies and get through to a lot of people. One thing though, not once did I read the word 'anarchist'. Do you deny the label, or are you just trying to keep it tucked away?
I look forward to issue two.

Pete, Cardiff.

Ian replies;
You've misread the article, it only suggested that the November '82 riot was deliberately provoked by the police. We reject all 'labels' There is no 'pre-packaged' ideology free with each issue.

Dear Scorcher,
The articles in issue one of The Scorcher on Welsh Rock and on the S4C have provoked some strong reactions.
The boring old farts (so called pop stars) who drink at the 'Halfway' were seen reading about themselves, moaning and groaning about anarchists. What a load of old tossers! Can't they understand the article was a genuine reaction to the boredom they have created.
The Never mind the Bollocks article was an outline of the problem we face and now it's time to be a bit more constructive. We know what we're up against so what are we going to do about it?
The media don't really care so there is a need to build up on what they cover in the way of pirate radio stations, national and local magazines, records and tapes. In other words we need to build a relevant communication network which will make the options given to us by the boring old farts syndrome irrelevant; they could be used but would not be the only option. This has already started; Amser Siocled is a free fanzine from Ystradgynlais which covers subjects like Cruise and Animal Aid as well as new bands such as Y Sefydliad. Amser Siocled is published by Lola who are also involved with releasing and distributing tapes. Of course if you don't speak Welsh you won't understand written material so there is a need for an English fanzine on Welsh bands.
This brings me to an important point, such a fanzine and a magazine like Scorcher should only be a way of eventually achieving a Welsh speaking Wales. Before people can learn the language they have to know what's what, but an English language magazine in Wales is not to be welcomed unless its' aim is to promote a transition back to a Welsh speaking Wales.
Promoters of English culture have no place in Wales and should Fuck off as soon as possible. I believe that if Welsh material is accepted by non-Welsh speakers then

they are far more likely to be sympathetic to the cause and may learn the language.
As well as Lola, Y Sefydliad are involved with their own label and are releasing material by 'new' bands. There are many other worthy projects which could be checked out on the tape and fanzine front. However an alternative radio scene is lacking in Wales at present so maybe someone can do something about it.
The article on S4C was wrong on one important point even though S4C at present may be "bland, twaddle and rubbish" a lot of people enjoy it. There are lots of people who watch S4C and the article seemed to suggest that there were none. In the same way a lot of people like Jarman, Derek Brown, Crys, Eliffant. I'm not against people enjoying such programmes and bands but I am against the media's policy of confining our choice exclusively to these programmes and bands. If you don't like Pobl y Cwm don't watch it, if you don't like Jarman don't go to his gigs but plenty of others will. But if you happened to be into a punk band like Yr Anhrefn then you won't get a chance to see them on the telly, or if you wanted to see a programme on the Holiday Home Arson campaign you won't. It's this which is wrong. Radio Cymru can justify playing English records on their shows while totally ignoring new bands and even ignoring successful establishments like Sgrech. What we need are more shows and more programmes which cover real life, cover real issues and feature bands like Sefydliad, Enwogion Colledig, Treigladd Pherffaith, Rhyw Byw, etc. These bands can get on Ser but are confined to appearing on Ser's terms even if they don't realise it.
Ser are also known to have featured bands who don't normally sing in Welsh. Geraint Davies and Derek Brown justified a review of Neil Young in London on Radio Cymru's Sosban. Geraint Davies allows prickheads to slag off bands like Anhrefn who have played over 50 gigs in Wales without even getting an offer for a session on sosban or an appearance on Ser. Why? Because we tell the truth about them. We have never been commercial muzos we're a confrontation and we're confronting them!
Aled Samuel is known to have played Joe Jackson on Radio Cymru and a star choice type programme featured Welsh rock stars playing English records. Geraint Lovegreen won my respect by only playing Welsh records on his show. We have enough records, tapes and talent in Wales and certainly don't need to look towards England for material. We need more and lots of it, what we've got is OK because people like it that can't be denied but what we've got must be challenged when they play or feature English shit before Welsh material. A shit Welsh band is more relevant than fucking Yanks and English. The so-called shit bands are out there doing it - so fuck your criticisms. Anhrefn for one will be around whether Sosban and Ser like it or not.
The media must not be allowed to dictate and manipulate us. If you like it fair enough but if you can't get what you want maybe things are not so good!
Finally if you don't understand Welsh don't be put off going to see Welsh language bands - after all for the majority it's the music not the lyrics which are most important. There are some ace bands in Wales who should be on Radio One.

Rhys Mwyn Manager of Yr Anhrefn.

The Scorcher says: Rhys Mwyn seems to be backing down from what he said last month - maybe the Halfway's pop-stars have got to him and induced a new easy-going tolerance of Pobl y Cwm. The idea that 'The Scorcher' should "only be a way of achieving a Welsh speaking Wales" is ridiculous: we're not really interested in promoting fantasies about a 'free Welsh Wales'. The attitude that any old Welsh rubbish is better than anything English is pathetic, especially when the height of ambition seems to be to get an airplay on (English) Radio One!

Dear Scorcher,
What's the difference between living in a British state or a Welsh state? None, when it comes down to it. I don't want to be governed by a Welsh State so I see no point in supporting Nationalist demands for an independent Welsh State. I want freedom not a new set of rulers and bosses. What's the difference between being exploited by a Welsh boss or Brit-boss? None. Is it more pleasant to be locked up in a Welsh prison or a Brit-prison? Life in a Welsh State could be even worse than life at present under a British government. A Welsh government could con us into working harder for less money by appealing to our patriotism. "Work harder for Wales" or "Buy Welsh" could be the new slogans. I remember the way the Garda beat the shit out of the people who were demonstrating in Dublin against the murder of Bobby Sands and co a while ago. Can we expect a nicer police force in Wales. Do Polish police treat Poles kindly these days?
P.C. Jones; Well, Mr Morgan we've decided not to remand you for 6 years because you're a Welshman like me and proud of it.

The Nationalists say they want to give more power to the Welsh people. What they really mean is they want to give more power to Welsh politicians and bureaucrats. Don't be fooled. The Welsh people will be as powerless as ever. The only way there will be a free Wales is when the people of Wales decide they've had enough and destroy the power of the government and bosses. A mass withdrawal of co-operation and support between ourselves and our rulers would leave them powerless. We would need to set up our own organisations to replace the State ones.
The new centres of decision making would be the neighbourhood/shopfloor/office. Mass meetings of all the people in a neighbourhood or shopfloor would share in making decisions. Larger decisions affecting say Cardiff or the coal industry as a whole would have to be made by strictly mandated delegate meetings. These delegates would have no power themselves they would merely be spokespersons for the neighbourhood or shopfloor. Each neighbourhood/shopfloor would be independent but free to co-operate with other neighbourhoods/shopfloors.
Something similar to the above actually happened in the Spanish Revolution in large areas of Iberia. Communities and workplaces were placed under the direct control of the people.
A Welsh State is just another illusion of freedom. If you want freedom you might as well go all the way and have an anarchist revolution. It's happened before. I hope it happens in Wales one day.
Paul Richard, Cardiff.

SCORCHER INTERVIEW

10

Mr and Mrs Stone are the parents of Adrian Stone who is currently charged with conspiracy to cause criminal damage along with 7 others. He is out on bail, although he spent 6 months on remand in Cardiff prison. Mr and Mrs Stone live in Penyrheol, near Caerffili.



Adrian Stone.

Scorcher: Have you had any dealings with the police before Adrian's arrest?

Mrs Stone: No, not any.

Mr Stone: None whatsoever.

Scorcher: What did you think of the police before Adrian was arrested?

Mr Stone: Good.

Mrs Stone: Not a lot.

Scorcher: Has your attitude changed since Adrian's arrest?

Mrs Stone: No, I still think they're a lot of thugs in uniform.

Mr Stone: 100% the highest form of vermin that you can find.

Scorcher: Can you describe briefly how many police officers came to the house to arrest Adrian, what was their attitude toward you and how did they treat you?

Mrs Stone: There were 12 police officers. they pushed their way in and they were very abrupt, rude and I was downright disgusted with them. They went through the house like a tornado. They didn't say what they wanted, they just came in. We had no choice. Two officers ran up the stairs and said "Come on we've got the bomber". I was already up getting ready for work and I'd seen them pull up by the side of the house, but Adrian was still in bed. They searched the whole house, six of them upstairs and six of them downstairs. They took away 66 items and never mentioned what they were looking for. They didn't explain anything and when I asked them for a warrant they didn't show one. They didn't say they were going to arrest Adrian, but when they did they said they'd take him to Caerffili. but he landed up somewhere else. They were in the house for 3½ hours all told till about quarter to eleven. They came back in the afternoon and asked me if I wanted protection. Said they'd had permission off somebody called Mr Stone to talk to me.

Mr Stone: They had no permission whatsoever.

Scorcher: They dug up the garden I heard as well.

Mrs Stone: That was Friday, the second day but all they found was a dead kitten. They said that one of the neighbours had seen Adrian digging in the garden. The only one who digs the garden is me.

Neighbours Questioned

Scorcher: So, did they question your neighbours?

Mrs Stone: Yes, I believe so.

Scorcher: What's their attitude to this?

Mrs Stone: Disgusted.

Mr Stone: They asked one bloke if Adrian was a communist member. On the Friday

there were two police officers outside the house and a van full of police officers. When I asked them what they were doing, they said they'd come to dig up the garden - I said ok but while you do that I'm going to phone for somebody. I rang HTV to get the cameras up but one of the police sent the man away. Lyndsey Whittle, the councillor, came up and asked the police to stop harrasing us and if they didn't he'd get a street collection and put a stop to it. The police officer said do you expect to get neighbours to pay money if they're laying incendiary bombs. Lindsey Whittle asked if he'd make a public statement - the police officer said nothing and just walked away in the end.

Scorcher: Did they ask you questions about Adrian's friends etc?

Mrs Stone: They asked me who his friends were and who'd been to the house, how many times he'd been out, where he went to, what time he came in - had I seen anything suspicious.

Scorcher: Did they say how long they'd be holding him?

Mrs Stone: They didn't say.

Mr Stone: I rang the station the first day he was in when I came home from work at 6 o'clock and I rang all evening till 11 o'clock. Every time they'd say "Mr Hill is away or out or busy or something". I rang for two days like that. The only way I had an answer was by ringing the BBC in Cardiff on the Friday afternoon.

Scorcher: Did they give the impression that they think Adrian was up to his neck in it?

Mr Stone: They told me he had the knowledge to make a bomb because of his qualification as a chemist.

Mrs Stone: They said he had the knowledge to make a bomb and that he'd made one and he'd shown it to me and I'd given him permission to take it on a bus to Cardiff.

Scorcher: Did they ever suggest they might arrest you then?

Mrs Stone: No

Remand

Scorcher: What do you think about the legal system in Britain and the fact that people can spend up to two years in prison before coming to trial?

Mr Stone: Terrible.

Mrs Stone: I think it's disgusting and something ought to be done about it, and done quick before more lives are ruined.

Mr Stone: Police officers - what they get away with doing is absolute murder.

Scorcher: How do you feel about Adrian's bail being rescinded and then given back to him a week later?

Mr Stone: Very, very bitter. For one judge to give bail and another judge to discharge bail and another judge to give bail back again it just shows it's definitely been fixed by the police.

Scorcher: Were you expecting Adrian to go back inside after committals?

Mrs Stone: We were told from the first day of the committals that bail would be rescinded, so we did have prior warning, but I'd also like to know how the prison officers were expecting Adrian back into the prison before the judge had decided on his bail being rescinded and how the escort police were making bets on it. It was all decided before.

Scorcher: Do you think Adrian is going to get a fair trial?

Mr Stone: I would like to think so, but whether it'll be the same as the remand hearings and committals remains to be seen.

Scorcher: The jury is going to be vetted - how do you feel about that?

Mrs Stone: Well, I think they're vetted in most cases, aren't they?

Scorcher: Did the police ever ask you about your political views?

Mr Stone: They wouldn't ask me because they'd get no answer.

Prisoners

Scorcher: How do you feel when MPs say there are no political prisoners in Britain?

Mrs Stone: I think they're talking a load of codswallop.

Mr Stone: They're bleating about Poland - they've only got to look in Wales and see what's happening.

Scorcher: Do you feel writing to MPs etc is constructive?

Mrs Stone: No, because they read them and put them in the waste bin. They will not and do not take notice.

Scorcher: What do you think you ought to do?

Mrs Stone: No, I won't say.

Scorcher: Do you feel you've had a lot of support?

Mr Stone: Individual groups, yes. Plaid Cymru could do a lot more.

Scorcher: Do you think a lot of people are making political capital out of what has happened to Adrian and the others?

Mr Stone: There's always someone willing to jump on the bandwagon.

Scorcher: Have you had a lot of support from friends and neighbours, more than, say, MPs and councillors?

Mr Stone: 100% - they're disgusted with the case.

Mrs Stone: The ordinary people know exactly how the police treat them, but MPs and councillors don't walk the streets at night and they're not picked up and searched and harrassed by the police.

W.C.C.P.L.

Scorcher: What do you think about civil liberties organisations such as WCCPL, have they helped?

Mr Stone: They haven't helped, I don't think much of them at all.

Mrs Stone: They didn't want to know the boys, did they? Because it would have dirtied their name if they had agreed to support them all.

Mr Stone: I say support them all or support none and if they can't support them all they should leave it there.

Scorcher: What do you think about the treatment Adrian got when he was in prison?

Mrs Stone: Well, I was really disgusted to know there were mice and cockroaches in the prison, and the way the prison officers have been calling them bombers before they've been tried or convicted. They're being treated as if they were guilty.

Scorcher: How often did you see Adrian when he was in prison?

Mrs Stone: Every day for six or seven months.

Scorcher: Were you observed by the police before Adrian's arrest?

Mrs Stone: Yes, we were. We were watched for quite a number of days. On Saturday 26th February at 9o'clock in the morning, there was a blue van, then there was an orange car and a red car. They parked on the corner of the junction, and neighbours rang the police on the Saturday morning saying there were these blokes of a very suspicious nature hanging round the streets.

Mr Stone: I was followed from the court to the bus and when I got on the bus I let the bloke get on behind me and said to the bus driver 'he'll pay behind', the bloke jumped off and ran away.

Mrs Stone: For the first six weeks that Adrian was out on bail there were police cars coming up here every other night. They've followed me to the shops and back. I believe my telephone is tapped. We get a lot of interference, a lot of wrong numbers. People have difficulty in contacting us. You pick the phone up and you get voices before you dial. You dial the engineering number - the last four numbers of your phone number and you should have it ringing back but there's no response. If they tap the phone, they should pay the bill. It's becoming like another Russia or any fascist country.

Scorcher: This is meant to be a free country though.

Mrs Stone: You're joking. There's nothing free in this country not even your breath.
Scorcher: How would you say your day to day life has changed?

Police Harrassment

Mr Stone: The neighbours have made no difference to us - they are the same as they were before - 100% the only thing that has changed our life is the police through their harrassment.

Mrs Stone: I gave up my job and I just work one day a week now which means my finances have gone down, and my savings have gone. Families suffer, but I think it's the individual that counts the most, they've had their freedom taken away. They've had the stigma of people pointing them out in the road when they come out of prison - that is the boy that was connected with so and so - it's a mark you can never get away from once you've been to prison.

Scorcher: Do you think people might have been pointing the finger at you and saying you're the mother.

Mrs Stone: Yes, I know they have. It has made me more determined to fight the system of wrongful arrest and brutality and harrassment. It's a corrupt state. I've had more people come up to me since this has happened to say what the police have done to their children than I've ever known - I was surprised by what they were telling me.

Scorcher: Have those friends complained?

Mrs Stone: No, they are afraid of what the police might do - pick on their children more, harrass them if they do.

Scorcher: What did you think of the riots in 1981?

Mrs Stone: I think it shook the police up and showed them people are not going to be trodden on.

Scorcher: What about community policing?

Mr Stone: There can be no community policing till they drop the attitude of Brixton and Liverpool. They will never get the understanding of the public and certainly as far as we're concerned as parents we don't want to know the police with their attitude - the way they conducted their methods of search and the way they conduct themselves in court. They will never get our support until they show us they can behave much better.

Scorcher: Would you be surprised if you saw more riots?

Mr Stone: The way they are going I wouldn't be surprised if there was a bigger riot than what they are having now.

Scorcher: Is there anything else you'd like to say?

Mr Stone: We just don't want other parents to suffer the way we have. We hope that things come out right and if they do come out right we want the police involved brought to order.

ALL WALES MALE FEMINIST CONFERENCE

(MEN ONLY)

10a.m. - 4p.m. Saturday, March 5th
St Phillips Community Centre, Bathurst Street, Swansea.

WORKSHOP ONE Free castration on demand - A Woman's Right to Choose.

WORKSHOP TWO Hidden from Herstory: The search for male timidity through the ages.

PLENARY The struggle for a submissive identity.

WORKSHOP THREE Male Identifiers - Is Thatcher really a man?

WORKSHOP FOUR Matriarchy: Almost as different from Patriarchy as Coke from Pepsi.

FINAL PLENARY Is Sex Sexist?

DEMANDS Interruptus all Coitus!

CRECHE

(run by Swansea Feminist Separatists)

NO BOYS

Rock Against Men Gig
(men only)

8p.m. - 12p.m.

I didn't get where I am by being a WOMAN



cont. from front page

They are safe because they pay rates, get the dole, protest within the bounds of the law. They are safe because they appear a bit twisted "but their hearts are in the right place." They are well spoken and polite, indeed one can imagine a daughter from a nuclear family sit-com going to join in the protest. At Faslane locals direct lorries to the nuclear submarine base by saying "Go down the road and turn right at the peace camp." The demonstrators have got planning permission from the local council for their caravans. As such, their protest has become an institution by itself, a permanent spectacle of opposition totally safe, as dangerous and radical as the Right to Work campaign.

The Left

The left - SWP, Big Flame, Militant etc - are very involved in the peace movement. Should the CND come a political cropper through the electoral gymnastics of a Labour party planning a working majority the left will scream "betrayal" "sellout" - indeed, they're pretty much incapable of saying anything else. Out of the shambles they will recruit a few of the disaffected who realise that single issue politics is more fodder to authoritarian commodity capitalism's cannon. Then, we all have to learn from our mistakes. The only trouble will be that the disaffected from CND who join the leftists will have made two mistakes in a row. Very unfortunate. Of all the aspects of the renaissance of CND the mutually inclusive growth of the Peace Camps and the role of women are at the centre of the "radical" element in the Peace movement.

Peace Camps

The womens' peace camp at Greenham common first began when a group walked from South Wales to the Newbury air base and chained themselves to a fence (an interesting combination of Marching against the Bomb and Bondage against the Bomb) Having formed the peace camp they have been there for eighteen months. The council have moved them, lorries have dumped rubble on their tents and some have been imprisoned for invading a sentry box. One cannot doubt their determination - what is at question are the methods, aims and beliefs. Earlier this year a group strolled into the base and sat down in a field. This exposed a few things - primarily the gap in security which could have been used for sabotage. But the main point is that they are there and they don't know what to do about it. If nuclear war is so insane, why not attack lorries going in? Why not destroy sentry boxes rather than attempt to set a new Guinness Book of Records achievement for so many people in a confined area? Ultimately, singing at a mechanical digger that is destroying your belongings takes the biscuit. The methods are akin to the passive direct action of Ghandi, but India was de-colonised because many realised the futility of maintaining it. Their methods are to do with modification of society and society is only modified when those in power see that it would benefit them. The aim is improvement at great personal sacrifice, but the improvement will merely mean a new form of stifling oppression. The Greenham Common Camp is an assertion of women against male-power, the patriarchy that is the root of all wars - so they claim - the women may deny feminist leanings - the label is irr-

levant. It is the belief that female 'virtues' of caring, understanding, suffering - all innately sexist sentiments - that is being proposed. Matriarchy or Patriarchy? Yet another false choice in a movement full of them. Either way somebody is still trying to dictate terms, even if it is dressed up in the soulful impassioned protest of the Womens' peace Camp. At present they are involved in a struggle for the right to vote (surely, a different struggle, the name of Pankhurst springs to mind) but perhaps this is to hasten the return of a Labour government to recuperate their actions.

Reformism

The peace debate and its' call for disarmament, dissent, dis 'n' dat, is another separate cause. A pseudo-radical reform to a society that needs reform like it needs a new car factory. Cause politics feeds the monster of consumption and production that should be put to the sword. It is only through total opposition we can achieve a pleasurable and meaningful life. Ironically the CND make much of the insanity of nuclear war, the insanity of the society that fosters it - they are perpetuating the same lie. Protest and Survive, Protect and Survive - no difference. We don't want survival, we want life - a vital and satisfying life. This aim will not be got until we meet the oppression that makes us stupid while its' managers get rich, with the complete rejection of their codes, their methods, their rituals. To do any less is to assist in the manufacture of our own coffins.

BLEACHED WALES

Atop a wild, wind whipped hill wispen, white-haired Wynford Vaughan Thomas casts an affected glance across the sheep strewn valley, turns back to camera and intones with a voice full of nostalgic mucus "Wales!..My Wales!!!" A tear pollutes the eye of the ham and we're back to childhood days when the idea of making a fifty three part series about the Blaenau Ffestiniog Railway first dawned on him, like the sun rising over the National Westminster Bank. Anecdote over a smile crawls across his cash register jaw and a tale of his old school chum Dylan Thomas, comes to script.....Well folks, most people don't know the real Wales of the TV travelogue if indeed it ever existed outside the banal ramblings of Wynford's terminal nostalgia. Most people live in the industrial towns, human wastelands where shitty housing, high rents and boredom are the issues rather than the vague Celtic melancholia the hacks and the Welsh Tourist Board make their money out of.

Welsh culture has become to a large extent a commodity, packaged for the consumer in it's glossy travel brochure image. Where Wynford parades the lie on TV, Jan Morris makes a fortune by peddling her variety of mystical bullshit through literature. Both combine under some vague notion of Welshness, a kind of cross between national verbal diarrhoea and congenital stupidity wrapped up in a flimsy nobility of spirit in suffering, in other words, a pack of lies.

Further afield in the media Wales is presented in similar ways through the figures of George Thomas, Speaker of the House of Commons, prattling on in the same nebulous spirit of Welsh politicians that have made the country what it is: Geraint Evans ambassador of Welsh arts to the world, his robust appearance preserved in the same embalming fluid as his view of the country. Then there are the media sports presenters, careerists to a shit, Tony Lewis, Peter Walker and Gareth "Adidas" Edwards. All of them are part of the dominant "sellable" Welshness that there is so much money to be made out of, custodians of the banality that is meant to keep us in submission to traditional second class status. None of this is done for our benefit, but for their's. They get rich on the lies while we get shat upon. They are the performers, the celebrities. We are the spectators, paying with the passivity and inaction on which they thrive.

Meanwhile Wynford and the film crew have to find a different location because one of the nice little cottages in the background has gone up in smoke. What's this got to do with the real Wales after all?



25 years on - still the same old story.