

THE SCORCHER

Issue 3 March 1983 Price 30p

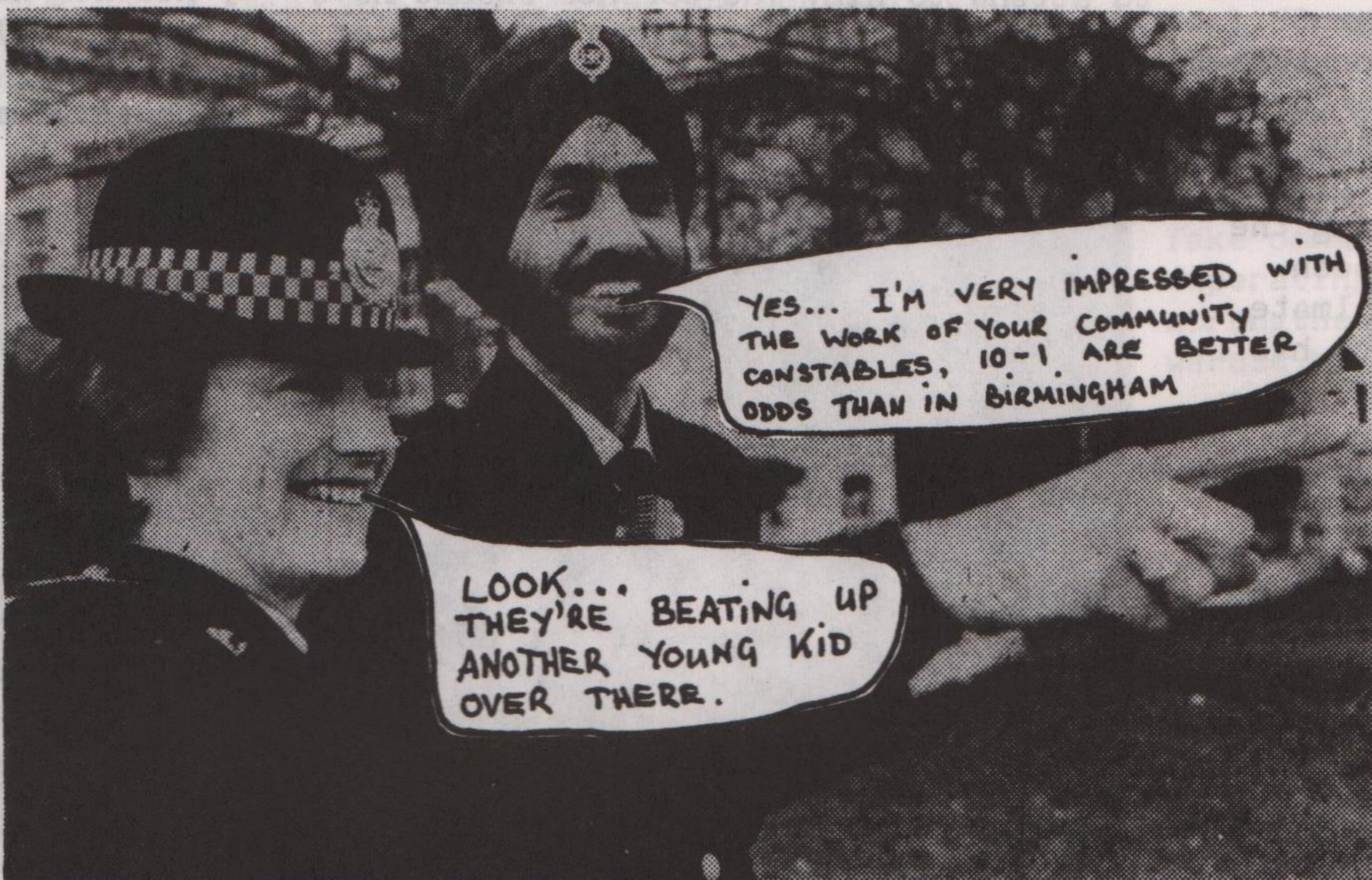
PRISON DEATHS

CARDIFF ASHFORD SHREWSBURY

SEE PAGE 2

COMMUNITY
POLICING

see page 8



South Wales police import a Sikh police-man from the West Midlands for two weeks footslogging in Swansea and Cardiff.

POLICE
HARASSMENT
OF
NATIONALISTS

see page 4

IRELAND:
SHOOT TO KILL

see page 6



Britain's liberal democracy in action in Ireland.

also:
THE RECUPERATORS
LETTERS
& lots more!

MICHAEL ROBERTS M.P.
SCORCHER TRIBUTE
PAGE 13

WITHIN THESE WALLS

There has been a disturbing increase in the amount of deaths in police cells and prisons recently. The police and the prison authorities seem to have a licence to do what they like with us behind those "walls of secrecy". Events like the shooting of Stephen Waldorf make national headlines and there is a huge outcry, events such as the death of a man in Cardiff jail do not.

Anthony Manetta

Anthony Manetta, a 35 year old from Cathays in Cardiff was remanded in custody on December 15th on a charge of obtaining £40 by deception from former Cardiff Lord mayor Mr. Bill Carling. Manetta was told at reception when he went into Cardiff prison that he would get 18 months. That night in prison he committed suicide.

Suicide Attempt

He tried to smash the window in his cell by banging his head against it. He succeeded on the third attempt. He grated his neck on the smashed window and then pulled pieces of glass from the window and stood there gouging his neck with them. He told his cellmate that he was going to "top" himself. His cellmate tried to get help by pressing the buzzer. It wasn't working. (It is common practice for screws in all prisons to put pieces of cardboard between the buzzers, so they are not disturbed. When the Senior Medical Officer went round at 6a.m. the same morning the buzzers were working and they've been working ever since.) Manetta's cellmate then tried banging on the door with his fists and shouting for help - still no one came - he then hammered on the door with a plastic bowl - no reply - so he took the drawer from the table and banged this against the door. Eventually after 5-10 minutes the night watchman came, he turned the lights of the cell on and looked in, he was told that Manetta had cut his throat. The night watchman didn't have any keys so he went away. Another 5-10 minutes passed before he returned with a screw who also had no keys. He looked through the door and then went away again. Between 15-20 minutes later the Senior Officer, a screw from the hospital wing and three other screws came and looked into the cell. They didn't enter the cell immediately, they waited outside. When they eventually opened the door, Manetta's cellmate ran out. Someone went in and felt Manetta's arm, no immediate attempt was made to stop the bleeding. "It was as if they didn't care." The other prisoners on the wing timed these events. It was 40 minutes from when the alarm was raised by Manetta's cellmate till Manetta was let out. Manetta did NOT cut a main artery in his neck he just gouged himself under his chin. He was slowly bleeding to death, while the screws were leisurely thinking about doing something. He was still alive when he reached the Cardiff Royal Infirmary, but died there later that morning - December 16th.

Prison 'cover-up'

The prison authorities said, "He was given immediate treatment by staff from the prison hospital while the ambulance was coming." If Anthony Manetta had been given immediate medical treatment from the time his cellmate raised the alarm, he would still be alive. Of this there is no doubt - he did not cut a main artery - he slowly bled to death.

Inquest Whitewash

The inquest of Anthony Manetta was held on February 3rd and the jury returned a verdict of suicide. Their chairman said, "We are well satisfied that everything that could have been done was done." This verdict was returned despite the fact that Simon Tookey, Manetta's cell mate gave evidence saying that it took 38 minutes before the screws entered the cell. The prison authorities say they were only delayed 15 minutes in finding Manetta and that was because of a faulty alarm bell. Senior Trades Officer Mr. D.M. Jones examined the cell call system and found the dome on the bell was loose and that once this was tightened the bell system worked again. The Coroner said, "That after conversations with the prison authorities he was satisfied that a new prison cell alarm system would be installed and this would prevent a repetition of this unfortunate incident in the future." The Coroner admits in the above statement that death could be prevented in the future if a new alarm system is installed. Death could have been prevented in the case of Anthony Manetta if the bell in his cell had been working and the screws had been quicker to attend to him. The Coroner should have instructed the jury to return a 'lack of care' verdict which would have implied a charge of negligence on the prison auth-

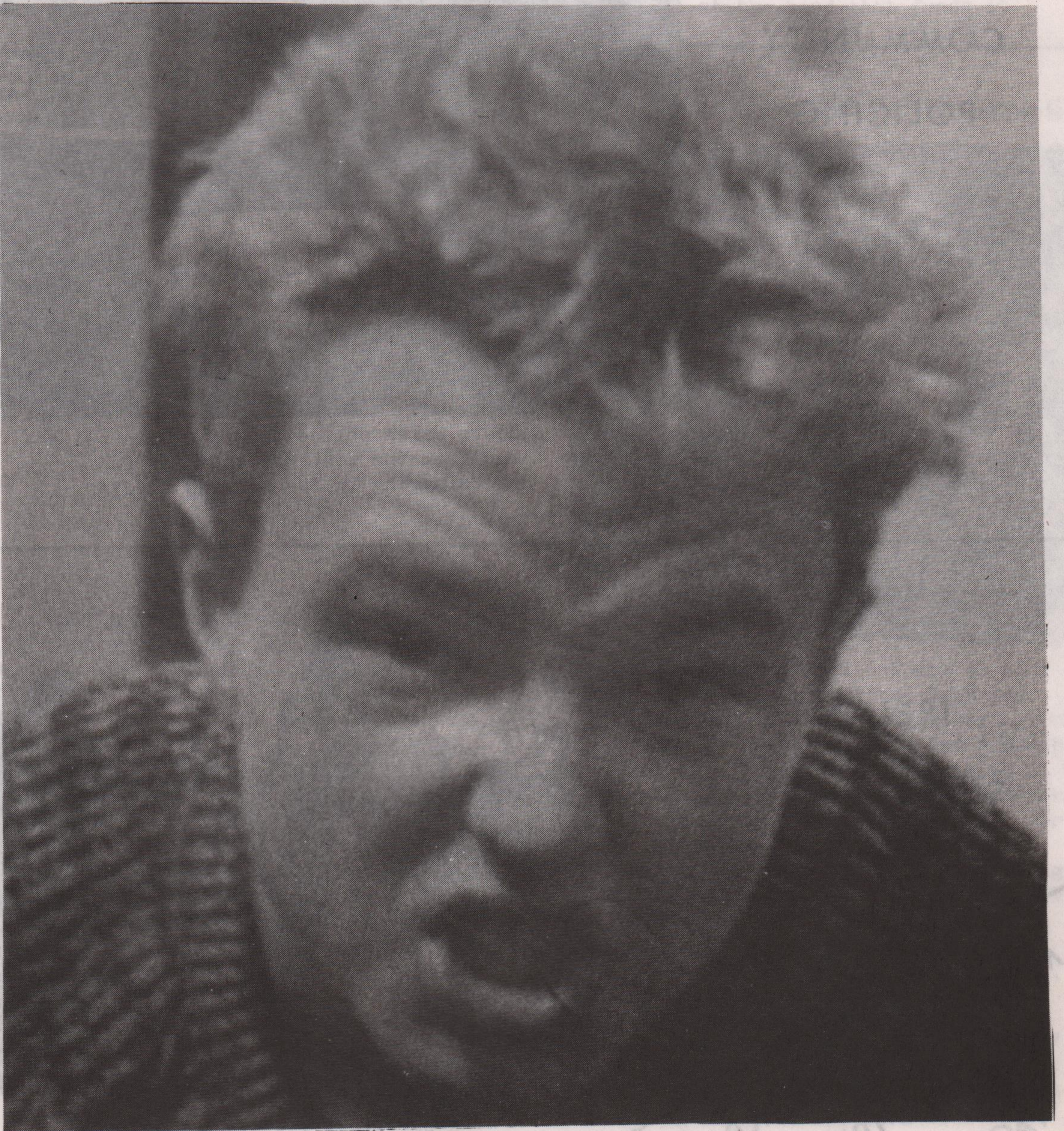
orities. The inquest was a whitewash of the true facts of the case.

Keys

Apparently there is only one set of keys in the prison at night and these are held by the Senior Officer in the control room. This raises all sorts of questions - What happens when there is a fire in the prison at night? What were the circumstances surrounding Andrew Clifford's death? Andrew Clifford a 23 year old was on remand in the hospital wing of Cardiff prison. He hung himself from the small bars in the door of his cell with his socks on December 13th (3 days before Anthony Manetta) The hospital wing houses disturbed prisoners or prisoners on serious charges such as murder. They should be checked every $\frac{1}{4}$ of an hour by the screws on duty. Did this happen?

Lack of Care

The family of Richard 'Cartoon' Campbell an 18 year old Rastafarian who died at Ashford remand centre, established that a 'lack of care' verdict was available through a High Court action. This unique verdict was brought in by a jury at Jimmy Heather Hayes' inquest. This verdict was previously rarely suggested as being available by the Coroner to juries at inquests. Jimmy Heather Hayes also died at



Jimmy Heather Hayes.

Ashford remand centre. This was on July 7 1982.

Resistance

Jimmy Heather Hayes is an example of a lot of young people who find themselves in prison or Borstal as a result of their frustration with the world they live in. In some cases this is manifest in petty crime in others as J.H. Hayes an act of resistance showing the desperate anger felt. On March 3rd 1982 J.H. Hayes with three friends hurled two petrol bombs over the counter at Teddington police station. He was arrested two days later at home and charged with "arson with intent to endanger life". He was remanded at Ashford for 17 weeks and when the case came up at the Old Bailey he pleaded guilty. He was remanded again for reports. Two days later he was found hanging in his cell.

Negligence

The day after his death a 100 people marched through Teddington chanting his name. They gathered outside the police station and surrounded a police van. The police charged out and attacked them. Fighting broke out and several people were arrested. One of the arrested, Mark McDonagh said in court, "It was a march of respect for Jim and against Ashford Remand Centre. It is the second death there. There must be something wrong with the place, if people can kill themselves." The police even turned out in force at Jimmy's funeral when over 200 marched in silence behind his coffin. Several of his friends absconded from Feltham borstal for the day to attend. Jimmy called himself an anarchist and a CND supporter and was prepared to fight back against a system he felt was crazy and had nothing to offer him and other people like him. But in the end, his time on remand and the prospect of a long prison sentence finally drove himself to despair and to kill himself. He was 18 when he died. Though obviously depressed whilst at Ashford, he was kept in a cell on his own and on the day of his death he was sentenced to extra solitary on the punishment block. The lack of care verdict brought in by the jury rather than the suicide verdict the Coroner had suggested meant that the Governor and the Senior Medical Officer were negligent and broke the prison rules laid down by the Home Office. Family and friends of Jimmy Heather Hayes are now demanding an inquiry into conditions at Ashford to make sure no one else dies there.

Deaths

Deaths like those of Anthony Manetta and Jimmy Heather Hayes have been sparked off by depression which is intensified by being in prison and carried out because of the 'lack of care' by the prison authorities about who is in their charge and what happens to them whilst there. Other deaths that have occurred either in police custody or jails can only be ascribed to injuries received whilst there which have been the major cause of death. Such examples are numerous and often the real truth about them is never told.

Cremation

Steven Walmsley was in a remand centre near Shrewsbury. His first visit to hospital was with a broken jaw - apparently received when "he slipped in the shower" His second visit to hospital was for appendicitis. His family allege that this was brought on by being punched in the stomach repeatedly. He was eventually found dead in his cell. Two or three days after he died the prison authorities had him cremated. His parents had no chance to see his body and the inquest had not been carried out. Extraordinary! I wonder why?

In Custody

Two Londoners died after being taken to hospital in mysterious circumstances from police stations. One, Simeon Collins, a 17 year old with a black father and a white mother lived on an estate which is notorious for racial attacks. Simeon experienced a lot of harassment, like the other youth in the area, from the police. On the 9th December, he visited a friend had a drink and left. At 2 a.m. he was picked up by the police who 'apparently' thought he was drunk. Sometime later he was taken to hospital and died at 5 p.m. the same day. A post mortem found "massive internal bleeding" Police have appealed for witnesses - none have come forward.

John Sugrue, a 70 year old was arrested on 12th October 1982 and taken to Hayes (Middlesex) police station where he was charged with being drunk and disorderly. Two days later he was taken to hospital where he remained until December 1st when he died. He died of broncho-pneumonia due to bruises on the head.

Either these two men received their injuries in police custody, or were seriously injured when arrested. If the latter is true it took a long time to notice this, especially in the case of John Sugrue. He was in custody for two days. The inquests for these two deaths have not been held yet and no doubt when they are there will be a cover up of the truth by the police.

Colin Roach

The death of Colin Roach, the 21 year old who was found shot dead in the 'notorious' Stoke Newington police station on January 12th, did not come to national attention until January 22nd when a march attended by over 700 people went to Stoke Newington police station to protest about it. Colin Roach was not even in police custody when his death occurred. Colin was seen going into Stoke Newington police station shortly before midnight. No one knew he was going there and nobody knows why he did. He was carrying a shoulder bag but nobody saw him go in with a gun. He died in the foyer of Stoke Newington police station from gun shot wounds in his mouth. A sawn off shot gun was found near his body. Colin's father James Roach went to the police station to look for his son an hour or so after Colin was seen going in. He was held and questioned for three hours by police before he was even told that Colin was dead. The police then took him back to his house, raided and searched it - nothing incriminating was found. Why, was this done, if, as the police claim Colin committed suicide by shooting himself in the mouth with a sawn off shot gun?

The police are pre-empting the verdict of an inquest and are also saying that Colin had a history of 'mental instability'. This is news to Colin's family and friends as he never had been to a psychiatrist or mental hospital in his life. A youth worker Delores Williams claims that police admitted to her that they had shot Roach after a struggle. She was detained at Stoke Newington police station herself for allegedly receiving stolen goods. She says that a plain clothes detective told her "the only reason Colin Roach died was because he didn't want to give evidence to us."

The death has caused great anger through out Bethnal Green the area where Colin came from. It is the final straw in a long series of events of police harassment of the local community. Nobody believes that Colin killed himself and his family and friends have formed 'The Roach



Family Support Committee'. Supporters of Colin have already experienced extra harassment from the police, 27 have been arrested after demonstrations on the Friday and Monday evenings following Colin's death. The inquest of Colin Roach will be contested and family and supporters will fight for what they believe is right and hopefully go some way towards breaking up the power and control the police and prisons have got over people in their custody.

Jimmy Heather Hayes expressed very clearly the frustration and anger that he felt and many others in similar positions feel, in the poems he wrote while on remand in Ashford.

Here is one of them:

I'm locked up in here
With 200 of my kind
Rejects of the system
Rejects of the mind
A restriction of the freedom
It cuts like a knife
Crushing me so slowly
Eating up my life

The cell's walls enclose
Cutting out the light
I feel myself cracking
I know this isn't right
But I declared war
On a system with no heart
And now it's decided
I no longer play a part

All you lot out there
Don't make the same mistake
That revolution glory
It's all a bloody fake
Know the system before you fight
Suss out what it's like
'Till then just bide your time
Wait before you strike.

HARASSMENT OF

The Welsh Republican conspiracy trial now seems likely to begin in Cardiff sometime in the early summer. It is expected to last for up to six months which means that several of the defendants will have been in custody for 1½ years before a jury has a chance to acquit them. Not content with this however it is now blatantly obvious that the police are intent on setting in motion another two conspiracy trials in Wales before the end of the year. They have already decided on the people they are going to charge - the only doubt is on the timing of the arrests. It seems likely they will wait for the 1st trial to end before beginning their second wave of arrests.

W.A.W.R

On November 16th a bomb exploded outside the Ty Nant tax office in High St, Swansea. Responsibility was claimed in a phone call by WAWR - the same organisation to which the defendants in the present trial are alleged to belong. This was doubly embarrassing for the authorities as at the opening of the committal proceedings of the Welsh Republicans, Gareth Williams prosecuting had made much play of the fact that there had been no WAWR bombings since the arrest of the defendants.

W.S.R.M

The clear purpose of the original arrests was to destroy the Welsh Socialist Republican Movement - most of the defendants were members of the Cardiff Club of this movement. Now the police have turned their attention to members of the Swansea Club of the WSRM. An obvious and clumsy observation and surveillance exercise has been carried out on at least four members of the Swansea Club. The surveillance has been so blatant as to be intimidatory. The police are saying - look we're gathering intelligence on you - who visits you who you know, where you go and we're going to charge you sometime in the future and we don't care if you know because there is nothing you can do about it.

Targets

The choice of targets has been obvious. One is Dave Burns' election agent during the Gower by-election. He has been systematically followed and all visitors to his house photographed by a police camera in a building opposite. He informed his solicitor of what was happening and we quote below 1) from a letter sent by his solicitor to the Chief Constable of South Wales' police and 2) from the reply by Deputy Chief Constable Kenneth Lee.

"Our client is concerned at what he considers to be police harassment of him during the course of his every day business. We would inform you that on Thursday the 16th December 1982, our client was followed by men whom he considers to be police officers most of the day. A man, or men followed our client on each and every occasion that he left his premises at Swansea, and in addition parked outside our client's premises on that day was a light blue Ford Escort motor vehicle, Registration Number CKG 236V. One of the followers that we re-

ferred to earlier in the afternoon was a passenger in that vehicle. At about 2.45, on the 16th December 1982, our client was walking up Walter Road, at that point there were 4 men standing on the pavement and when our client approached them two men got into a light blue van and sped off. Our client ran towards the blue Escort motor vehicle, the registration number which we gave earlier, and in this vehicle were one of the two men whom had been following him all morning. Our client asked if they were police officers, and one replied, I'm not going to say. Our client noticed a radio transceiver/receiver fitted to the car and a handset on the floor, and this is the reason that we write in these terms as our client then formed the view that this was an unmarked police vehicle. The two men refused to give their identity and refused to confirm whether they were police officers or not. A passer-by also witnessed these two men's reluctance to give details of their identity. We should be grateful if you would inform us whether the Ford Escort motor vehicle we referred to, namely, vehicle Registration Number CKG 236V, is in any way conn-

ected with the police, and whether in fact these men are officers of the South Wales Police Force, or in fact whether to your knowledge they are officers of any other force. If our client is being followed then it is being done in a very amateur fashion and is obviously causing upset both to himself and his family. We should be grateful if we may receive a reply to this letter as soon as possible."

Self Confidence

The self confidence of the police is seen in the ready admission in Lee's reply. Since then the Head of the South Wales C.I.D. Don Carsley has visited a Swansea barrister and shown him 4 photos and said that the people in the photos were responsible for the Swansea bombing. Did the barrister know anything about them? The surveillance continues up to the present time and anyone visiting these four could well end up on a conspiracy charge with them.



SOUTH WALES CONSTABULARY

2-283-238

K.S. LEE, O.B.E., Q.P.M., F.S.I.M.

Deputy Chief Constable

All communications should be addressed to:
'The Deputy Chief Constable'

Our Ref. DCC.HDD.sk.32.1247/82

Your Ref.

4750/L/LN/GB

Police Headquarters,

Bridgend,

Mid-Glamorgan.

IN CONFIDENCE

4 January 1983

Messrs John Morse and Company
Solicitors
35/36 Walter Road
Swansea SA1 5NW

JOHN MORSE
5 JAN 1983
RECEIVED

Dear Sirs

Your Client:

I refer to your communication dated 20 December 1982 and my letter of the 23 December 1982.

As a result of inquiries I can inform you that extensive police activities were taken following an explosion outside the Tax Office, High Street, Swansea, on 16 November 1982.

It was also necessary for observations to be maintained on a number of persons in the Swansea area, whom it was thought may be able to assist the police in pursuing their inquiries. It is possible that your client was one of these persons.

In view of all the circumstances I do not intend that this matter should now be treated as a complaint under section 49 of The Police Act, 1964.

I trust that the above information will clarify the position.

Yours faithfully

Deputy Chief Constable

NATIONALISTS

Arson Attacks

Over the period of January 4th-5th arson attacks were made on two holiday homes, one near Aberystwyth and the other at Boduan near Pwllheli. Responsibility for these and another attack on Christmas Eve was subsequently claimed by Meibion Glyn-dwr. Immediately the Boduan attack was discovered the police set up road blocks in the area, stopping and searching cars. D.C.S. Gwyn Owen, leading the hunt for the holiday home arsonists announced to the press that he believed the police were on the verge of a major breakthrough. His optimism was based on the fact that the arsonist was thought to have been badly cut breaking into the house as a lot of blood was found at the scene. Search warrants were immediately obtained from the local magistrates courts and a number of houses on the Llyn Peninsula raided. D.C.S. Gwyn Owen was obviously hoping that a door would be opened by somebody with their arm in a sling! The interesting point is why these people in particular were raided. There is no doubt that the police are still acting on the same intelligence as prompted Operation Tan in March 1980. They believed then that they knew who the arsonists were and they still believe that the same people are involved. They admit only their "lack of luck" in being able to prove it. This accounts for their pre-selected targets for raids after the Boduan attack.

Cofiwn

That this is the way they are thinking and acting was proved beyond doubt by the remarkably frank evidence given by D.C. Pat Malloy during the case at Swansea Crown Court where Huw Lawrence sued the Dyfed Powys police for wrongful arrest and detention. This arose from his arrest along with 33 others by the Dyfed Powys police on March 30th 1980 during Operation Tan. The previous day March 29th Lawrence had attended a meeting of Cofiwn at Machynlleth. The meeting had been closely observed by the Dyfed Powys police. Molloy said that Cofiwn was "a rallying point for arsonists" and was attended by people "with criminal records" and again "was a rallying point for extremists." The police had noticed, said Molloy, that after Cofiwn meetings holiday homes in the vicinity would be burned down. He clearly believed that Cofiwn was nothing more than a front for the arson campaign. Phrasing it carefully he said, "All the original suspects were people who might have conspired to burn down holiday homes." "All the suspects were members of Cofiwn though not all members of Cofiwn were suspects." On cross examination he read out a complete list of the Cofiwn membership and those arrested and admitted that some were merely relatives of Cofiwn members - or friends! But he said, he still believed that this was correct. After the Machynlleth meeting a holiday cottage at Talybont was burnt down at 2.30.a.m. Huw Lawrence, and two others travelling with him, was suspected of the attack. And yes, said Molloy under cross-examination, he still suspected Lawrence and the two others of carrying out this attack, but 3 years later still had no proof for his allegations. The jury showed what they thought of Molloy's fantasies by finding that the Dyfed Powys



police had detained Lawrence for too long. He was awarded £600 damages against the police who were also ordered to pay the costs of the action estimated at £25,000.

Conspiracy

The police are determined that the eventual arrests for the holiday home arson campaign will be those people they have suspected all along. With over 80 acts to attribute to one conspiracy. It should be the trial of the century. The police are

using tactics of blatant harassment, illegal and legal detention to hammer any organisation with a republican outlook into the ground. Having failed to smash Cofiwn in March 1980 they turned their attention to the WSRM and people associated with Cofiwn. Truly there is one huge conspiracy underway in Wales today - by the police against Welsh Republicans engaged in any kind of political activity.



Dave Burns, one of the accused in the Welsh Republican trial, has just been released on bail after nine months in prison on remand. Judge Bristow, hearing an application in chambers, gave bail with the conditions that Dave sign in at a police station every night and keep to a 9 o'clock curfew. No sureties were needed for his release. Why couldn't he have had bail before? The four remaining defendants in Cardiff jail should get bail immediately, and put an end to this backdoor internment without trial.

REBEL VOICES - HARRI WEBB

Harri is a father figure of republican politics in Wales, taking a leading role in the Welsh Republican movement in the 50s and 60s and now we are pleased to say writing and working with the Welsh Socialist Republican Movement in the 80s. His poetry has always been committed to Wales, and her people and for years has stood out as a political beacon in the world of Anglo-Welsh poetry. Known well beyond the Borders of Wales, Harri has always written accessible poetry, to be read and enjoyed by all.

"Welsh Republic", Spring 1982

A royal concert invite to all

THE public will be able to buy a limited number of tickets for the concert at St David's Hall, Cardiff, on February 15 being attended by Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother following her official opening of the building.

The concert, which begins at 6.45pm, after she has unveiled a commemorative plaque, will feature international names like Petula Clark, Sir Geraint Evans and Osian Ellis.

Other artists appearing are Welsh National Opera musical director, Richard Armstrong, the BBC Welsh Symphony Orchestra, the Cory Band, Owain Arwel Hughes, tenor Dennis O'Neill, Pontardulais Male Voice Choir, Angharad Rees and Elizabeth Vaughan. A special text for the evening has been written by Welsh poet Harri Webb.

R.I.P.

HARRI WEBB
WELSH REPUBLICAN

15

FEB

1983

IRELAND SHOOT TO KILL: SO WHAT'S NEW?

Death

On December 27th 1982, 19 year old Patrick Elliott was shot dead running out of a chip shop in Belfast by British soldiers of the Black Watch regiment. The death sentence, with no right of appeal, is now in force for petty robbery in the Six-County statelet of Northern Ireland. Patrick Elliott's fatal mistake was being a Catholic, poor and unemployed in occupied Belfast. Jervais McKerr, Eugene Toman and Sean Burns, all shot dead at a police roadblock near Lurgan, county Antrim on November 11th 1982 committed a far more serious crime in the eyes of the British state and its loyalist supporters - they were daring to fight back against the oppression and occupation of Ireland by Britain, in the Irish Republican Army (IRA). Similarly, a month later, two members of the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) were shot dead in Armagh. All five were unarmed when shot. Two Catholic teenagers were shot in late November merely for carrying hunting rifles, permits for which are held by thousands of loyalists. The new year has seen more deaths.

Tit-for-tat

While Britain officially denies a new 'shoot to kill' policy, the Sunday Times refers discreetly to a "grim new mood" amongst the Army and the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), and the Daily Express positively revels in "Ulster's Shoot First Death List", gleefully printing pictures of Britain's latest Irish victims. While portraying a recent bout of killings in the Six Counties as 'sectarian tit-for-tat murders', the Express and like-minded papers draw a veil over the real nature of 'the Troubles': it's a war. Of 19 deaths during last November, nine were in the Army and RUC, one was an RUC officer's girlfriend (a member of the Militant Tendency, no less), one was a loyalist paramilitary, one was Lenny Murphy, leader of the 'Shankill Butchers' who tortured and carved up Catholics at random: these were all killed by the IRA and INLA - hence the retaliation by the security forces. Four others were killed by loyalist murder-gangs, purely because they were Catholic: a Sinn Fein election agent, an unemployed joiner, a mechanic and a shopkeeper. Britain's policy is now twofold - shoot suspected Republicans on sight, when they're unarmed, and carry on using loyalist thugs to terrorise the Catholics.

Free Derry

The nationalist working-class will only wonder - so what's new? Ever since the establishment of the six-county statelet of Northern Ireland, they've experienced pogroms, random killings and discrimination in every field of social, political and economic life: their persistent attempts at freedom have always been branded as criminal by Britain. Even the mild democratic demands of the Civil Rights Movement in 1968 (demands such as one



British troops introducing a "Better Life for All".

person one vote, an end to Unionist election-rigging, fair housing allocation, no more discrimination against Catholics) proved too revolutionary for the six-county police state. Peaceful protest was met with police batons, water cannon and attacks by loyalist thugs. In January 1969 the RUC rampaged through the Catholic Bogside in Derry, smashing doors and hurling sectarian abuse: some Catholics apparently tried to ring the police station for help till it dawned on them it was the police outside. When the RUC tried again in August 'Free Derry' resisted and kept them, the 'B' Specials and other loyalists out. Catholic youth and teenagers were at the forefront of the fighting, throwing petrol bombs and paving stones, erecting blazing barricades, taking the police on hand-to-hand. Only when after three days the state could not break this resistance by unarmed people was the British Army called in. In Belfast, when the Catholic ghettos tried to take the heat off Derry by preparing their own defence, the loyalists responded as they had in 1920 and 1935 - massive house burnings and attacks: the RUC rode up and down the Falls Road firing machine guns.

Guns

People today forget that the Provisional IRA didn't exist then. There were virtually no weapons at all in the Catholic ghettos: the IRA was dormant, having sold most of its weapons to the Free Wales Army. For the defenceless Catholics IRA came to mean "I Ran Away", when they were crying out for guns to fight back against the loyalists and the armed police. In early 1970 the IRA split into two. The Officials, having adopted a 'stages' theory of socialism (first reforms, then a united Ireland, then socialism), have become irrelevant in the North. The Provisionals were those Republicans who recognised two crucial things: that Britain was the real power behind the totalitarian police state, and that armed struggle was essential to destroy the six-county statelet and get Britain out of Ireland once and for all. The situation the Catholic working-class was faced with demanded armed defence,

and the Provisionals were the creation of that demand.

Lies

Britain has always lied in public about the Provisionals. The last decade has seen the policy of criminalisation - saying that every Irish man or woman fighting for freedom is a criminal - applied relentlessly. The deaths of Bobby Sands and nine other hunger-strikers, who died in great suffering denying the tag of criminal, did not deter the British state. The media has played its part in full: every successful Irish attack is greeted with rage and abuse, while im- between making out that defeat for the IRA is imminent. The Daily Express once called the Provisionals "Ireland's green bog-fascists", but fails to explain how "the best army in the world" cannot defeat them.

The I.R.A.

However Britain takes quite a different attitude in private. In 1979, a British Army Intelligence report prepared by Brigadier Glover acknowledged the "politically inspired violence" of the IRA, and said that "Even if 'peace' is restored, the motivation for politically inspired violence will remain." The IRA is described as "essentially a working-class organisation based in the ghetto areas of the cities and in the poorer rural areas. Thus if members of the middle class and graduates become more deeply involved they have to forfeit their lifestyle..." As for the 'God-fathers of crime' stories put about, the report says there's no evidence at all that Republicans are somehow making money out of the war. The IRA's "military code of ethics" is noted. The damning conclusion is that "the Provisionals' campaign of violence is likely to continue while the British remain in Northern Ireland. We see little prospect of political developments of a kind which would seriously undermine the Provisionals' position."

Socialist

Despite the assertions of the British left that the IRA and Sinn Fein are "petit-bourgeois" (one of the milder insults used by our very experienced British revolutionaries), the IRA's mass working-class base, and the struggle it has undertaken against a major imperialist power, give it a clear socialistic character. When Bobby Sands was buried, his funeral procession was 100,000 strong (the equivalent would be two million marching through London). The young rioters of the late sixties and early seventies are the volunteers - and H-Block and Armagh prisoners - of today.

Hypocrisy

Britain's two-sided view of the Republicans is paralleled in the way the war itself is fought. The hypocrisy of British condemnation of IRA violence is



Scene from the Six Counties - or somewhere in Britain?

staggering. Since the Second World War, Britain has fought endlessly against peoples struggling for freedom - in Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus, Aden, Oman and many other places as well as Ireland. No one has too much to teach the British state when it comes to violence, terror and brutality. In Malaya, they cut guerrillas' heads off; in Oman they burned down villages; in Kenya, the State of Emergency in October 1952 allowed the killing of thousands of Kenyan freedom fighters. Internment, suspension of any pretence of democracy, random shootings, mass intimidation, all the constant features of British 'democracy'. In the face of oppression such as this, those who expect the oppressed to fight back cleanly and politely so as to make life easy for British 'socialists' are expecting the impossible. Given Britain's treatment of Ireland the Irish have every right to fight back as they see fit, both in Ireland and Britain; those who think the British army has a divine right to be in Ireland are less keen when an Irish army fights in England.

Apology

As it happens, the restraint of the IRA is remarkable: other more fashionable national liberation movements in the world are far less cautious. By the standards of war this century, as set by the USA (in Vietnam), or France (in Algeria, for example, the IRA has fought cleanly. It also, in marked contrast to the British, apologises for its mistakes. When they blew up the La Mon Restaurant in 1978, with 12 dead and several injured, they stated: "There is nothing we can offer in mitigation bar that our enquiries have established that a nine-minute warning was given to the RUC. This was proved totally inadequate given the disastrous consequences. We accept condemnation and criticism from only two sources: from the relatives and friends of those who were accidentally killed, and from our supporters who have rightly and severely criticised us". Compare this with British statements after the Paras shot 13 unarmed civilians dead in Derry on Bloody Sunday 1972. First they claimed they'd been fired upon - but no one, even among the British journalists there, witnessed such a thing. Then they said they'd aimed at known 'gunmen and bombers': those killed were proved not to have been such. Then a whitewash report was produced, and the Paras' colonel received an OBE for his work. At no time did Britain express regrets or apologise to the victims' relatives.

Blood

The fact that Ireland is right next to Britain has made it easy for people not to see the issue as one of colonialism: Britain as the imperial power, Ireland as the oppressed nation. Britain's forc-

ible occupation over the centuries has prevented any possibility of free development in Ireland. Ireland's population has been more or less static since the Great Famine last century, when one and a half million died (while Britain carried on taking food out) and a further one and a half million fled to America to avoid starvation and death. Ireland has never been free of British troops to preserve Britain's interests. The northern statelet was born in blood and has been maintained that way: the northern Catholics have never been free of the fear of pogroms, assassination, army and police raids. Army forts have been built in their housing estates. Discrimination, poverty, mass unemployment, harassment and sudden death have been the daily experience of northern Catholics for decades. The British Government's Fair Employment Agency won't publish its latest findings - because it shows that nothing has changed in the last decade, despite all the promises of reform. For anyone with half an ounce of scepticism towards the outpourings of the British media and the slightest willingness to do so, the facts are easily got at.

Unite

You'd have thought that 'socialists' could get the message, but apparently not. The last few years have seen a definite trend among the radical left group groups and parties: first they make their peace with social-democratic capitalism in the shape of the Labour Party, then they make their peace with the British state over Ireland. This takes the form of echoing ruling-class attacks on the IRA. Two arguments are used to justify it. Firstly, say the socialists, the Catholic and Protestant working classes should unite. It sounds authentically socialist, but there's one flaw: reality. The Protestant workers are totally reactionary and have backed up the Unionist ruling class all the way. The 1974 Ulster Workers' Council strike supported increased repression of the minority. Protestant workers have periodically driven Catholics out of factories and shipyards. The Six Counties simply won't fit reformist ideas about Trade Unionism bringing Protestant and Catholic together. The Protestants are backing imperialism, like the white South African workers: who suggests that black South African workers 'unite' with those white workers who support apartheid?

Ballot Box

Secondly, British socialist argue that the IRA and its supporters should turn to politics and away from the gun. This is a call to a national liberation movement, with mass popular support to surrender. It's in line with the general attitude that any kind of resistance



Can't beat the IRA? Then take it out on unarmed civilians.



Proving who you are.

will only make things worse: the 1981 British rioters were at fault for provoking the British state to tool up the police; similarly the Catholics are at fault for getting up off their knees. It's no coincidence that the British state encourages this faith in the ballot box and 'politics'. However, the Irish can be excused for cynicism towards it. The 1919 General Election gave Sinn Fein a massive majority for an independent Ireland: it was ignored. The British said the hunger-strikers had no support: when Bobby Sands got over 30,000 votes, they fixed it so no one like him could stand again. His victory was ignored of course. British socialists, for whom a left-wing Labour Government would be nirvana, still retain this faith in voting: the British ruling class takes it or leaves it according to its own interests.

Solidarity

Yet the Troops Out Movement carries on stumbling from one feeble Labour Party orientated stunt to another - this time against the use of plastic bullets: one small part of Britain's repressive armory. Tackling the real issues - Britain's domination of Ireland, the Irish Republican movement, the nature of the war - is too difficult for them. The Irish Freedom Movement is merely a sectarian front for the Revolutionary Communist Party, self-appointed vanguard for British workers. The Irish Solidarity Movement claims to support the Irish people, yet the main group involved, the Revolutionary Communist Group, approves of the Polish state interning Polish workers and shooting Polish miners. (Ironically, the Polish authorities accused the Solidarity union of adopting 'IRA methods'). The real solidarity movement showed its face in 1981 in Britain.

Support

When the people of St Pauls, Bristol took the police on in April 1980, the Daily Mail said "It was like a scene from Belfast without the bombs", and the Sun said "These are things that we have regarded with horror when they happen in Ulster...It must never, never happen again". Well, it did happen again thankfully, and on a much wider scale, in summer 1981. The parallels with Ireland were obvious to all. When British youth, unemployed and workers rejected the police, the left, the politicians and all the meaningless panaceas offered they showed a solidarity with the Irish not seen before. Just like the Irish, they were labelled 'criminals', abused by the establishment, ignored by the trade unions, and criticised by the left. The British state cannot face the slightest prospect of unity between British workers and the Irish. That is why it moved so fast to isolate the riots, and is rehearsing its tactics for the next outbreak. To overcome what is in store, British workers have everything to learn from the Irish people's long war, and everything to gain from supporting their struggle.

COMMUNITY POLICING OLD WINE, NEW BOTTLES

When the modern police force was created in 1829 it was met with great hostility. Crowds surged round central London crying "No new police! No standing armies!" The first constables on patrol were accompanied by abusive crowds. The gaining of the 'consent' of the working-class to be policed since then can only be portrayed as a process of attrition, and it is acquiescence rather than consent that has been won. During the riotous summer of 1981 it was clear that even this acquiescence was disintegrating as city centre police stations were put under siege and petrol bombs cascaded over police riot shields. The only common link the press could find was that the riots were 'anti-police'.

Scarman

Lord Scarman was told to find out what had gone wrong. In his report of November '81 he concluded that the police had indeed "lost the confidence" of many young people in inner urban areas. Urgent measures were needed to put this right. They were:

1. More consultation with the public;
2. More community policing;
3. An improved police complaints procedure.

Community policing and police accountability became the issues of the day - the way a consensus was to be re-established to enable the police to have a free hand to get on with the job. The Labour Party became passionate advocates of both community policing and police accountability, and enthusiastically received the Scarman report. Those who had been rioting didn't waste their time stealing it.

Alderson

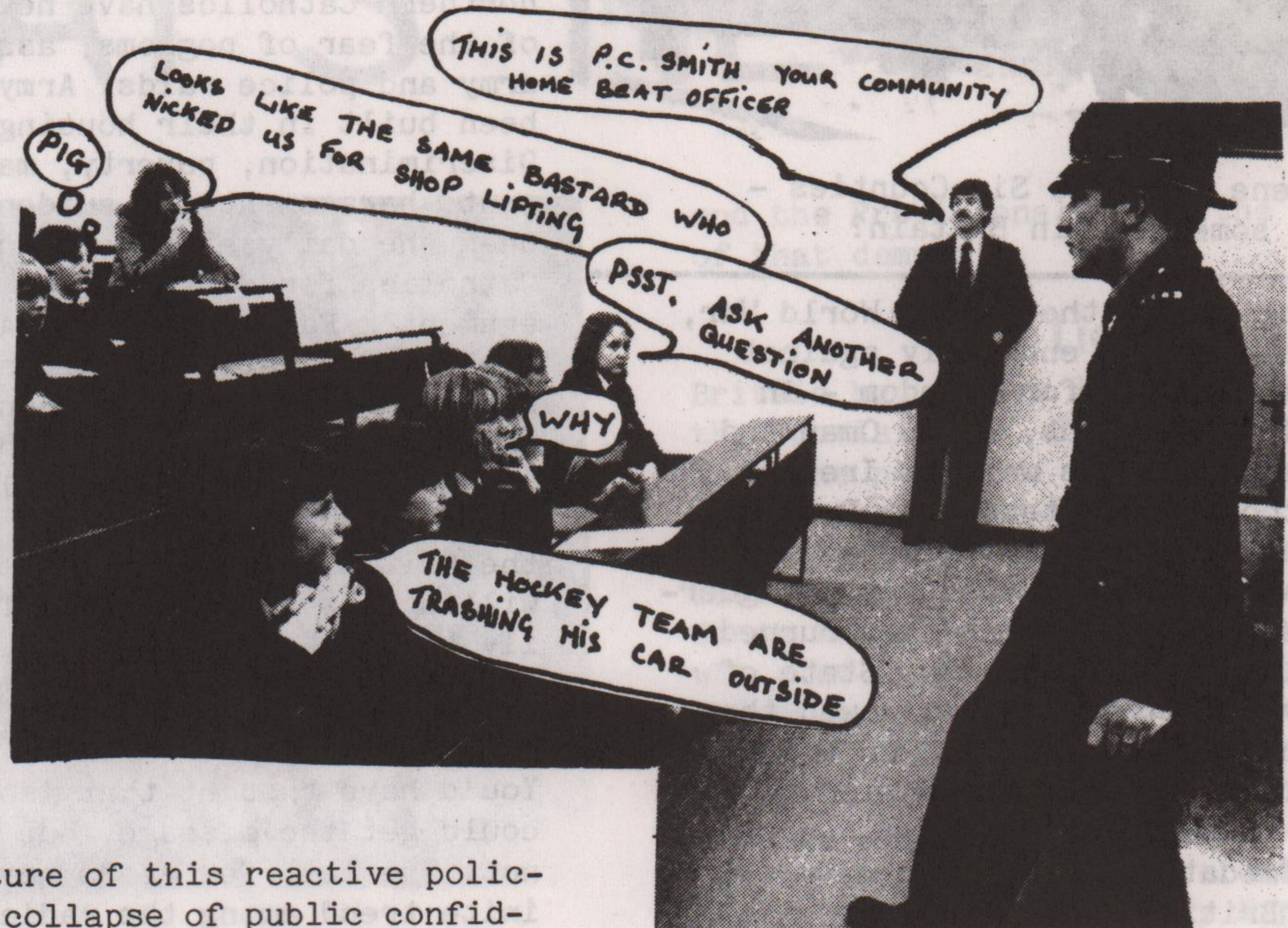
The two leading exponents of community policing have been John Alderson, chief constable of Devon and Cornwall, and Supt. David Webb of Handsworth in Birmingham. Both have recently resigned to pursue careers as SDP/Liberal parliamentary candidates - which should reveal everything about the so-called radical nature of their theories. Scarman himself said that Alderson's evidence seemed to be "essentially a re-statement of the traditional theory of British policing", which indeed is all it is. In the 1960s there had been a move away from the traditional 'bobby on the beat' to mobile patrols - this was known as 'reactive' or 'fire brigade' policing where mobile squads could be rushed to trouble spots. Alderson blamed the im-

Crimebusters flee town

THE National Campaign for Law and Order has been driven out of town . . . by vandals and burglars.

The group, which calls for tougher jail terms and the restoration of hanging and flogging, abandoned its offices in Toxteth, Liverpool, following a spate of attacks.

The last straw came for chairman Charles Oxley after a meeting at their HQ. "When I went outside, my car had been stolen," he said.



personal nature of this reactive policing for the collapse of public confidence. The wisdom of his views is now widely accepted: there's probably not a Chief Constable in Britain who does not now extol the virtues of putting more officers back on the beat. In South Wales Chief Constable John Woodcock had made this his force's policy even before the riots. The police hope this 'Bobbies on the beat' policy will appeal to all kinds of nostalgic sentiments they hope people have about the supposed nature of policing in some simpler Dixon of Dock Green golden age. In the new Police Bill now before Parliament, Whitelaw has made it a statutory obligation for all police forces to have some community policemen. Is the Tory law and order brigade going soft or are these Labour Party hacks who see something progressive in community policing going soft in the head?

Infiltration

Community policing can more accurately be described as infiltrating the community in order to police it. It is part of the community policeman's training to gather intelligence on the people within their 'patch' and to pass this on to the 'collator' at their station. 'Intelligence collators' have now replaced the old-style station sergeants like Dixon. Thames Valley have just installed a new £1½ million computer to correlate all the information brought in off the streets by their community constables. Community policing is a double-edged tool to penetrate the community under the guise of offering a protective, friendly approach. Consent is thus to be engineered and in case this fails, intelligence is gathered in an attempt to pre-empt dissent. With their local knowledge the community policemen are expected to be able to foresee any local 'aggro situations'. In future riots the Instant Response Units snatch squads will dive straight into the crowds to seize the ringleaders identified in advance for them by their local community policemen.

PC Walker

Our community coppers do not of course act alone. They are still backed up by all the old specialist squads which of

course, far from being dismantled, have been steadily reinforced. Reactive and community policing are seen as complementary by the police. This was evident for example in Stoke Newington, London even before the recent death of Colin Roach in the local police station. Estate residents watched as their "community home beat officer" PC Walker tried to arrest a teenager for swearing at him. Failing to catch him, he summoned 30 local police support unit officers who ended up in the boy's parents' flat arresting five people - who were subsequently acquitted of assault and obstruction. One witness told the court "Nobody likes the police. They keep pulling us up for no reason. Especially PC Walker, nobody likes him." The names of the policing methods change but the faces remain the same.

Agencies

But of course community policing has become a lot more sophisticated now. To quote Alderson: "Community policing sets out to penetrate the community in a multitude of ways. It seeks to reinforce social discipline and involves the breaking down of barriers between the police and other agencies - probation, social services, education etc." In other words those in the pay of the state, but whose alleged function in the past has been to serve their clients or to educate children, are now to be openly harnessed to help police the community. A circular to this end was sent out by the Home Office in 1978. Thus besides popping along to the local primary school once a year to talk about road safety, our community policemen now run sports clubs, discos, reggae concerts, festivals, football matches, seaside outings for slum children etc etc.

Grass Roots

South Wales police are well to the fore in this respect due to the enthusiasm of Chief Constable John Woodcock for the community policing approach. He imported from America the idea of giving his

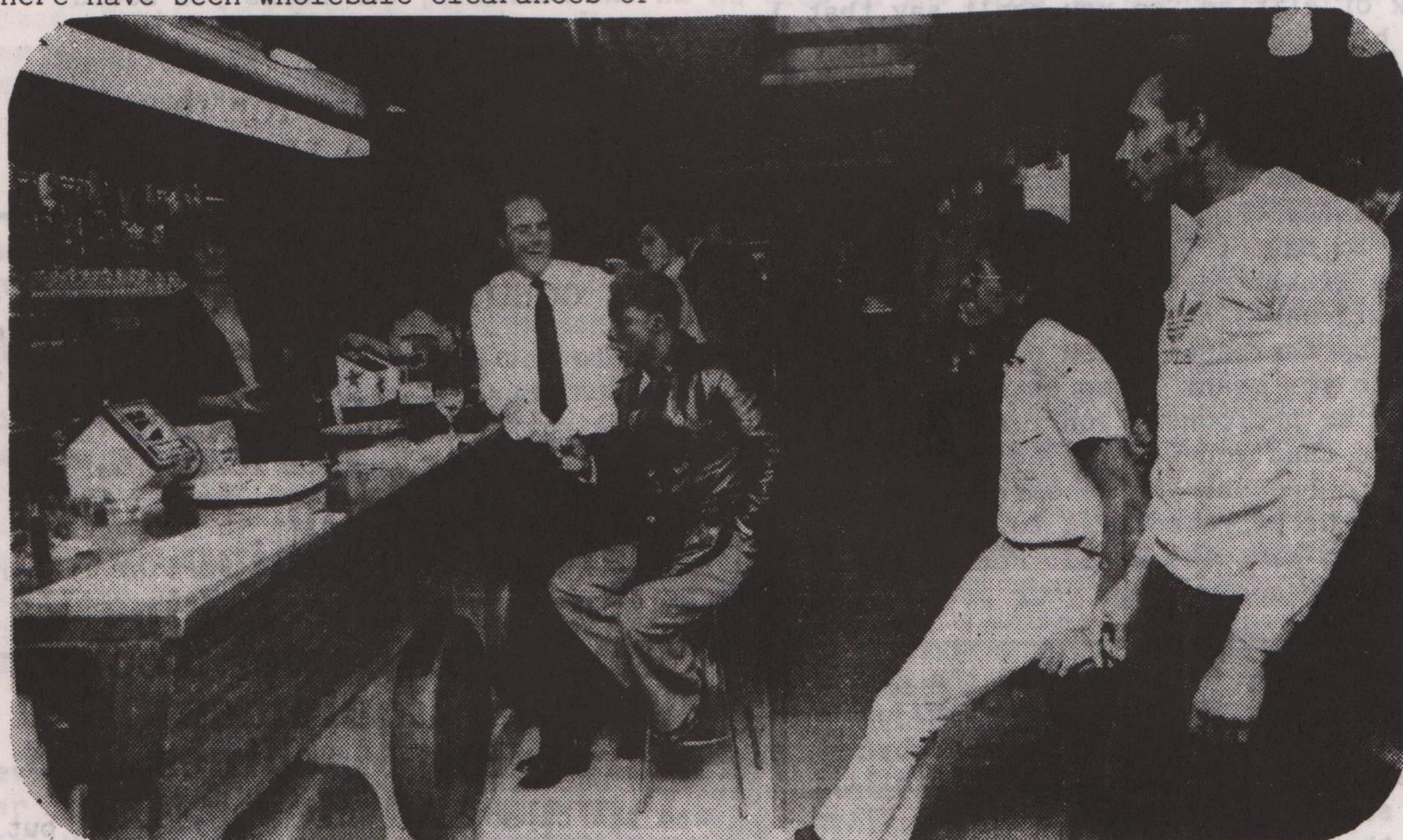
policemen cards with famous sports personalities on, which they hand out to small children in a pathetic attempt to ingratiate themselves. The cards contain ridiculous slogans such as "The policeman is your friend" and invite kids to grass up any members of their family engaged in illegality in the hope of obtaining the full set. The more subtle aspects however are handled by the South Wales police community relations officer Inspector David Hatch. He himself is on the management committees of many youth and community centres, including Grass Roots in Cardiff. He ensures that the police now play an active role in the supervising of such centres by gaining places for community policemen on the management committees of those in their areas. They get themselves onto organisation, arranging local carnivals, drawing up lists of local sports clubs, playing cricket with the locals etc. Hatch regularly lectures on community policing to local groups of teachers, social workers, advice centre workers, 'community activists' etc. He recently addressed student community workers doing the one year diploma in community work at Swansea University. These pathetic pseudo-radicals turned up to politely listen to his garbage. Community policing means there is no longer any distinction whatsoever, even if there ever was one, between hard and soft cops. These community workers have in the past been able to delude themselves and others that they are engaged in some kind of radical activity as they stagger off home with the £10,000 a year pay check. But time has now been called on the charade. Just as the kids who wrecked St Saviours school in Liverpool could see that their teachers were cops so this whole shithheap of community workers social workers, advice workers and local voluntary activists are seen as the essential allies of the uniformed police in a desperate attempt to re-assert discipline and authority on the streets and in the communities.

What Community?

One of the major problems with community policing has been 'What Community'? Post war town planning and urban redevelopment has meant that the kind of community the cops refer to no longer exists. There have been wholesale clearances of

traditional neighbourhood housing and their replacement with anonymous high rise blocks or the re-housing of people in new towns or estates well away from the older city centre areas. Traditional working class communities have been deliberately destroyed and the authorities are now reaping their own whirlwind. In these older communities there was a kind of social mediation by a local 'unofficial authority' which normally made low-key policing sufficient, an unofficial network of vigilance by local figures of authority - publican, teachers, shopkeepers etc, most especially through people who had a financial interest in the area through ownership of private property. But since 1945 there has been the virtual elimination of anyone with any financial stake in the inner urban community. The professional classes, such as teachers who used to live in the communities where they worked now live in middle class suburbs. Local councils have bought up, often compulsorily, anyone with any financial stake in the community - homeowners, shopkeepers, landlords, small businessmen etc - to proceed with the re-development schemes. Thus this 'secondary control' which the traditional bobby on the beat depended on is no longer there. A major problem for the state now is how to reconstitute this kind of secondary control by the community. Michael Heseltine as Minister of the Environment came up with various plans for private enterprise investment on Merseyside. He has taken steps to encourage black investment in inner city housing and shops to give them a feeling of having a stake in the community which they will defend against criminal elements. A ruling class journal The Economist has come up with the 'radical' proposal that the government should institutionalise squatting, by re-establishing classic squatters rights on public property freed from any controls - to give people the same feeling as homeowners of having a stake in their community. The major thrust in the re-establishing of social discipline and control comes however from all manner of community development projects.

Below...from the Western Mail.
See what we mean.



● Basketball players from the Butetown Community Centre have a drink at police headquarters in Cathays Park, Cardiff, with Inspector David Hatch after a training session.

THE LONG arm of the law is stretching out the hand of friendship in Cardiff...

When Insp Dave Hatch, the South Wales force's community relations officer, found that Butetown Youth Club teenagers had nowhere to play basketball he was determined to help them out, writes BETH CUNNINGHAM.

And, with the blessing of the chief constable, Mr John Woodcock, they can now make use of some of the best sports facilities in the city - at central police headquarters.

For a couple of hours every Friday, the lads, aged from 14 upwards, are allowed to play in the gym at the top of the

building, rounding off their evening with a quick shower then coke and crisps in the police bar.

And, under the coaching of a young constable and three police cadets, including top Welsh basketball player Steve Virgin, aged 18, they now hope to take on teenagers from other clubs.

Father-of-two Insp Hatch, aged 32, said, "Part of my job involves just sitting and talking to the kids. And when they mentioned one day that they had nowhere to play, it grew from that.

"One of the things I'm trying to do is encourage contact between the police and the kids, and one of the best ways of doing this is through sport."

Since the late '60s the Home Office has seen as essential to its law and order responsibility for it to take on an explicitly social planning role. Since 1968 urban aid schemes have been financed and controlled by the Home Office rather than the departments of Environment and Education which would seem more appropriate. The urban aid schemes finance everything from community centres, adventure playgrounds, landscaping derelict areas, etc. Even if community activists on these schemes have deluded themselves about the radical nature of their work the Home Office has seen it clearly as a social control mechanism for the maintenance of self-discipline amongst the working-class. All manner of one-time revolutionaries have been seduced into self-rationalisation of these schemes by fat pay-checks.

Funding

An experiment now going on in the Lozells (Handsworth) area of Birmingham shows clearly the way things are moving. The local community police officers have been given the money (£70,000 per year) to finance various community schemes in the neighbourhood - this besides the setting up of their own police run community centre! All applications for finance go directly to the local police rather than the local authority or the Home Office. All groups who receive funding are required to have police officers in their organisations before they get any money. To preserve their jobs many community workers or community leaders have gone along with this shit. Those black and Asian organisations who have refused to take part have been systematically harassed or closed down. This is the community policing of the future.

Leftists

Despite the obviously repressive nature of community policing many leftist intellectuals have been giving great thought to it over the last year. Their discussions can be seen in the pages of Marxism Today, New Statesman, New Socialist etc. Leftist sociologists like Ian Taylor argue that the Left must urge the 'progressive' new forms of policing on the police. Those who join him in this debate do so either in the bureaucracy of the police authority or the elite of the universities or the academic journals. Many leftists now regularly lecture at the Police Training College at Bramshall.

Abolition

The debate about policing methods has never taken place among those who rioted. Nobody went on the streets demanding more community policing - it is properly seen as the insidious cosmetic it is. People can see the same officers in the streets or police stations as they did before, the same commanders at HQs, and the same politicians in charge of law and order. Let it be clearly said for those who still have doubts. The police are not only unreformed but irreformable. Policing as such is repressive, no matter how it is organised or what its ideals - and is there to protect the privileges of the ruling class. There is only one item on the policing debate agenda for the working class - the abolition of the police force.

The Scorcher
Box 100
108 Bookshop
108 Salisbury Road.
Cathays
Cardiff.

LETTERS

Dear Scorcher,
Referring to your Hippo Award for stupendous hypocrisy, I would like to nominate yourselves. Issue 2 of the Scorcher asserted somewhat earnestly that "we reject all labels" and that "There is no pre-packaged ideology free with every issue" Yet a symptomatic reading of the Scorcher discloses all the classic hallmarks of Anarchism (e.g. a predilection for violence and the paranoid castigation of the Marxist Left) and your publication is 'homogeneous' in this ideological direction. You patronisingly underestimate your (potential) readership if you think they will not notice your own particular 'pre-packaged' brand of ideology. Or perhaps you aspire to an easy eclecticism - a string of discrete theoretical bits and pieces with no common thread - which, as history has shown is the precursor of opportunism?

Anybody with an iota of political acumen realises that ideology is always 'pre-packaged' though this is not to say that an ideological position should not change as the result of practice. And your ideology is a certain recipe for disaster and defeat in the struggle against capitalism. You reject the big 'causes' because they are reformist. Whilst this is undoubtedly correct, this is to misunderstand their importance and purpose.

To take the example of Rock against Racism

and presumably the ANL as well; they were instigated for two main reasons:

- 1) To communicate anti racist/fascist ideas.
- 2) To combat racism and fascism physically.

How successful they were is arguable but their purpose was clear: defend 'immigrants' against racism whatever its form and simultaneously defend a liberal democracy against a potential right wing coup. The lack of such a broad anti fascist organization was one of the primary reasons for Hitlers triumph. And surely it is better to live in a bourgeois Britain than a fascist one? As you suggest racism, fascism and war etc. are inherent in any capitalist society. They will only be eradicated with its destruction by the working class. Such an occurrence is, unfortunately unlikely in the near future and will require a particular conjuncture of objective and subjective factors, and not the 'Blanquism' which seems to be your sole tactical purpose. In the meantime, while we organise for such a day, the big causes, RAR and CND et al, can challenge some of the worst abuses of capitalism and perhaps forestall a plunge into nuclear annihilation or fascism. Reform and revolution are not always opposites. Some times they travel the same road.

Good luck, Yours Fraternally,
Jon.E.Lewis, Cathays, Cardiff.

The Scorcher replies: Thanks, Jon: no award for us, but just as soon as we've found one that sums up socialists for whom socialism = defence of one form of capitalism against another form, you'll get it. To take up a few of your points. The Anti-Nazi League did not defend immigrants: it preferred carnivals to physical defence. It never opposed immigration controls, the specific legal means by which the state harrasses all black Britons. The notion of Britain as a 'liberal democracy' is not one we share - see the articles on Ireland, prison deaths and policing in this issue. The red herrings about right-wing coups and 'Hitler's triumph' (a theme Mrs Thatcher has taken up in a similar way) conceal an approach that says "Things may be bad, but they could be so much worse, so defend what is." Does this constitute a 'struggle against capitalism'? It certainly goes hand-in-hand with your stated lack of confidence in workers. The charge of 'Blanquism' is totally misplaced: even a cursory reading of the Poland article in Issue 2 would have shown that we look entirely to workers to liberate and humanise society. Finally, we don't accept that capitalist reforms travel the same road as working class revolution.

Dear Scorcher,
What a sad, angry spoilt little boy collection of articles on women in the peace movement. What is sad is your total misunderstanding of what it's all about - you are as taken in by the media as the rest of the suckers. What we are discovering (those of us who aren't necessarily separatist, while believing in women organising themselves) is a collectivism (which you're too blinded by resentment to see) in which the individual still has status and meaning (unlike the home life of our own dear soviet) and especially individual women. You talk about working class women being oppressed as part of the class system - what about the fact that they're doubly oppressed by the system and often their husbands as well? What price women's rights in the Soviet Bloc? How many women in positions of influence over there? You're such hypocrites - or perhaps you're not, merely totally unaware that women are offering something different, which should invest socialism with a respect for feeling and the individual - without that it'll be just another form of oppression. Why on earth do you think so many working class

(your phrase) women vote Tory? And plenty of their men as well? Because what you appear to offer is so unpalatable; violent, mouthy, resentful, power-hungry; is that meant to be an improvement because we'll all have jobs on the assembly line again? Don't you ever wonder why all you SWPs WRPs anarchists, etc. have so little support from the people you claim you want to liberate? Or do you think it's because they're stupid? (No that would smack of elitism, so you can't say that.) It's because they know you want to oppress them too, manipulate them, push them around in the name of collectivism. Well, collectivism that turns people into cattle is as bad as capitalism which turns them into slaves. For true liberation you're going to have to talk less and think and feel a little more deeply. To anyone who can call Dec. 12th 'embrace the base' 'feeling up the base' I can only say that if love to you means cheap sexist unpleasantness I am profoundly sorry for you and realise that you won't ever know what's going on because you're emotionally maimed and therefore not fit to think about trying to save the world! Perhaps you'd better try and salvage your personal life

instead. Or is that too difficult? Much easier to go and shout 'Maggie out' or set light to something.

Anne Tunnicliffe.
Oh well, you'll never print it, it's ideologically unsound.

Scorcher replies:
Oh well, We did and it is.
You obviously only got as far as page 2 in the Scorcher, otherwise you would have found out that we are not "pro-Soviet" (Poland article) as you accuse. We are also not SWPers or WRPers. By the way the Scorcher is not an "all male collective."

Dear Scorcher,
Thank you so much for your No.2 issue of Scorcher which I found fascinating. While I could not agree with everything I read, I found your ideas original and thought provoking. Please find enclosed £2 for a further 5 issues which I look forward to receiving.
Yours Anne Burman, Sidcup.
Scorcher says, This is the sort of letter we like.

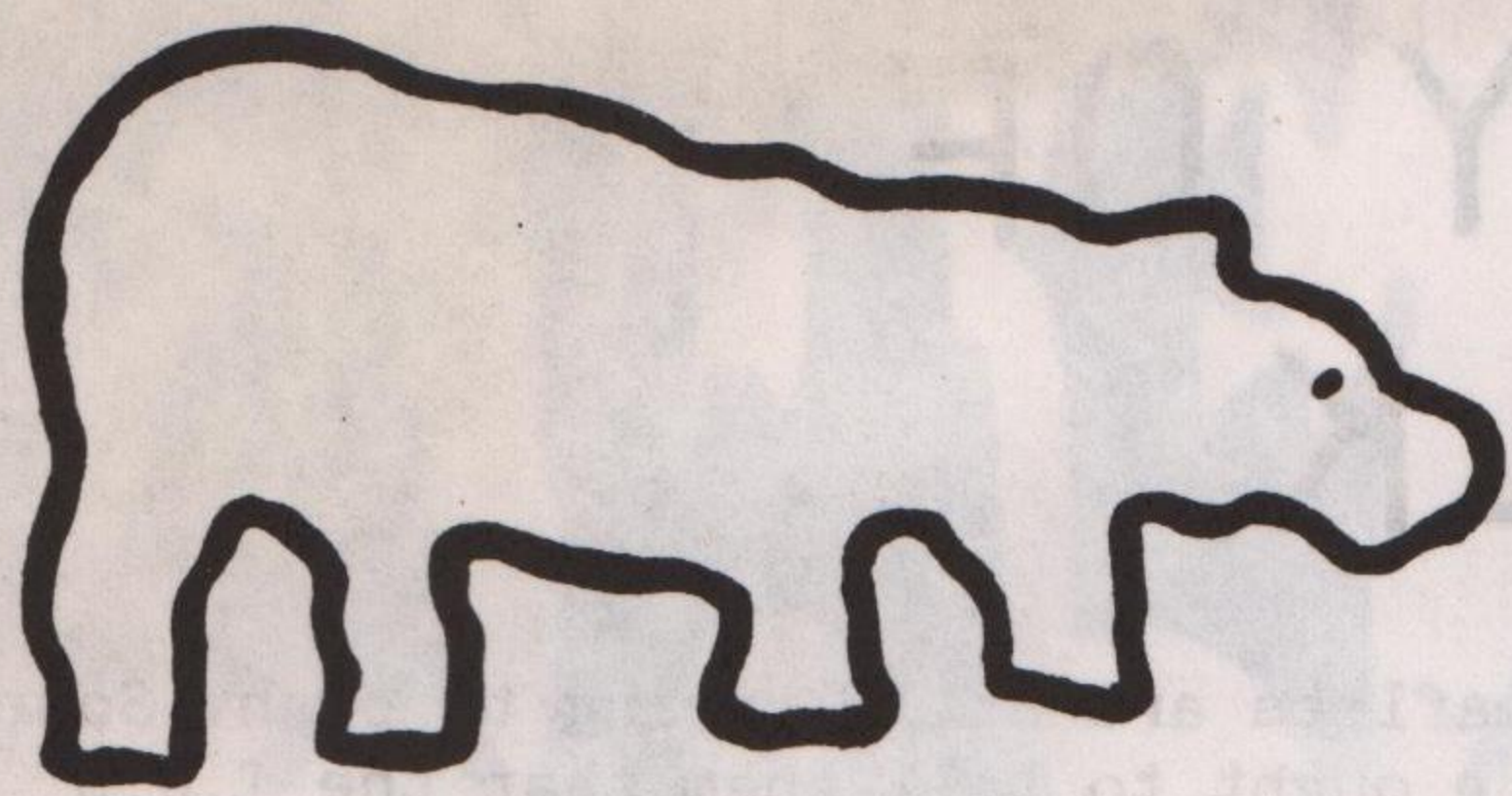
Dear Scorcher,
I am convinced that the Scorcher will be a minor contribution to the confusion of the class struggle as we know it today. As editors we like to show off how anti-sport star we are on the front page by showing the unity of the cops and the soccer stars (issue one) but on the back we try to stroke you (and sometimes each other) into complacent identification with rebellious sports stars by cheering "Yes they also like to riot" That they riot is an attack on their role, a proof that they too can choose to become a little more human, but this choice is despite and against their status within capitalism which can easily sell real anger as the

representation of that which the audience does not live. Here the Scorcher justifies having the 'best' of both worlds by trying to use rebelliousness as a 'credibility' face saver for those who far more often than they choose to riot, have chosen to identify with their lucrative careers within the Theatre of Specialism. It's a bit like using the 1919 police strike or the fact that some cops get caught shoplifting to say that cops aren't all bad. Sure, within cops as within stars - there's a miserable frightened individual you can hook onto to weaken the real stupidity of their concrete choices. But this can't be done by merely encouraging their rebelliousness, but by equally showing

the sick mediocrity of their normal identity and the narrowness of the partisanship it inspires in others. The contradiction between attacking "fake choices" and yet supporting even if ambivalent but critically "partisanship" i.e. the basis of these fake choices is based on the Scorcher's desire to win people over rather than express and attack the contradictions, the authors choose to resign themselves to.

They want their spectacle and critique it!
Nick Brandt, London.

THE SCORCHER HIPPO AWARD



NEGES BOOKSHOP

We should like to extend heartfelt disgust to Neges Bookshop, Swansea for "discontinuing" sale of the Scorcher. As with many socialists they oppose censorship publicly while they practise it privately, in this case with the get-out clause "socially oppressive" - a piece of political gobbledegook if I've ever heard it! When it comes to questioning your causes and yourself the easiest way out of the challenge is to let the lazy cop in your head take control because thinking might undermine your secure self-righteousness. In running a bookshop this would make it more difficult to sell safe alternative politics and literature, the flip side of W H Smiths, to leftists and pacifists who keep the till ringing. If this is all you want to do - get stuffed! If it isn't, then do something about it.

THE RECUPERATORS

11

(continued from back page)

week' Osmond is currently beaver away behind the scenes making a 'Wales this week' Special on the Republican trial for screening after it's over. Anyone deluded enough to co-operate with the creep shouldn't be surprised at the lurid rubbish he'll eventually come up with.

Recuperation is the way that Capitalists turn things which were once a threat to their existence into commodities which they can make money out of. They are quite happy to make a fortune out of films which explicitly attack their own existence or to finance the careers of revolutionary entertainers who overcome their periodic crises of conscience to go on working for the TV companies. Even those who were once jailed soon find they have marketable qualities the TV companies can make use of. Other sometime opponents of the system find it much safer to be radical journalists than radicals. The seduction of the glamour, the money, your own sense of ambition, your illusions of change from within and your rationalisation of your own position prove irresistible to many. TV and film take real people and events and turn them into commodities which no longer have any existence in reality.

Scene: Radical journalist grabs kids who are rioting and asks them to come to the studio for a discussion about it, instead of joining in the riots themselves. They thus not only do not involve themselves but act positively in favour of the ruling class by acting as leeches on the real struggle and by rendering it harmless.

They are as much the valued servants of capitalism as the police - as they turn real anger and action into the passive fake commodities we see on TV. By recuperating every threat they continually strengthen the system and are well rewarded by it.

SUBSCRIBE !

Don't take a chance and miss out on an issue of the Scorcher! Subscribe now, and make sure you get it every six weeks direct to your door. A subscription costs a mere £2 for 5 issues, inc p&p.

BACK ISSUES

If you've missed an issue, don't worry: there's a few precious copies left, price 35p each, inc p&p.

Issue 1: The collapse of the Welsh Republicans, the 1981 riots, Letter from Cardiff Jail, Welsh rock, sport....

Issue 2: Workers against the Workers' States, the criminalisation of everyday life, Feminism, Defence Committees, CND, Scorcher Interview, Letters....

SELL IT !

Help the Scorcher circulate more widely - why not take some copies to sell, or to put in your local newsagent? Write to us if you can help.

Review

ALTERNATIVE WALES

by John and Jane Preston.
ORKID BOOKS, LLANDEILO, £4.

Unfortunately this book is both out of date and overpriced. Many of the addresses given are either wrong or the organisations no longer exist. All the information it contains could have been crammed into about ten duplicated pages and given away free. This is what groups such as the Peace Convoy or organisers of the summer free festivals have been doing for several years. For others to take this information and publish it in a glossy cover at £4 a throw is a needless rip-off.

Leave it out!

Make all cheques/postal orders payable to "The Scorcher", Box 100, 1-0-8 Bookshop, 108, Salisbury Road, Cathays, Cardiff.

ONE LOST CAUSE....

SOCIALIST LEAGUE

The old International Marxist Group is finally disappearing completely into the Labour Party. To go with this total immersion comes a name change: they are now the Socialist League. Sounds much less offensive when you're ingratiating yourself with Labour Party bureaucrats, doesn't it? They can now also pass themselves off as being part of the tradition of 'this great movement of ours': there used to be a Socialist League before the last World War. That group too was on the left of the Labour Party, helping to put a weak socialist gloss over Labour's thoroughly capitalist programme. Where Sir Stafford Cripps once led, today's SL looks to Tony Benn. Indeed, they describe the minor differences between Benn and the Labour right wing as "the deepest political polarisation of the British Labour Movement for fifty years." Having force-fed themselves on this delusion, they then argue that "workers and youth today increasingly look to the Labour Party and its left wing for political solutions to the crisis of British society." The world is stood on its head: the IMG/SL obviously have visions of groups of workers and youth standing around discussing Labour's programme. The increasing rejection

of the Labour Party and its radical left hangers-on is what's really going on. But then all the SL want is.... another Labour Government, and "reform currents within the trade unions": such modest aims for self-styled 'revolutionaries'.

Bombs not Jobs

Naturally, their New Year's resolution was "Tories Out": this year they will build "mass action" with the slogan "Jobs not Bombs", because that's the best way to "kick out the Tories" and get Labour in - it'll also help lead workers into the next slaughter just as the old SL did. There's a myth around that the Left, the Trotskyists, are taking over the Labour Party. Not so! The Labour Party has yet again managed to absorb another generation of radicals: Benn needs them to further his personal ambitions, and Labour needs them to do some foot-slogging and to tart up its tired attempts to keep British capitalism on the road. The SL has nothing to offer workers and youth, so the best place for it is in the Labour Party - they deserve each other!

....AND ANOTHER

S.W.P. BLUES

Meanwhile, the Socialist Workers' Party is depressed. With no real reason for existing - they always tell you to vote Labour, and they backed Tony Benn against Denis Healey - they now blame the working-class for failing to cheer up the SWP. Their analysis is that workers are less confident now than before, and in the recession won't accept 'socialist' ideas: in other words, the same old cry of all fairweather socialists when the going gets rough - 'Now is not the time!' We don't dispute the lack of acceptance of the SWP's ideas, but that is a cause for thanks. But what kind of revolutionaries talk of a "downturn" at a time like this - growing poverty and unemployment, riots in British cities, continuing guerilla war in Ireland? Simply the kind who have no answers. Instead of doing us all a favour and quietly giving up, the SWP is going to spend the next year roaming the streets looking for "defeated strikers", "isolated and demoralised individuals", "disillusioned Labour Party members", and luckiest of all, supporters of CND who will be given "a more serious explanation of the bomb" ('The H-Bomb's very bad, Polish workers bombing the Polish army is ok, Irish workers bombing the British army is outrageous!'). The Social Workers Party, indeed!

THE RECUPERATORS

AN EVERYDAY STORY OF RADICAL TV FOLK

Trade Unionist as TV Star



Ricky Tomlinson and other building workers at the Pontins, Prestatyn site which they occupied during a dispute in 1975. In the 1972 building workers strike Tomlinson had been one of the organisers of the flying pickets which successfully covered sites all over North Wales. So effective were the pickets that after the strike was over the Tory government had 24 North Wales workers arrested on various criminal damage and assault charges. Tomlinson was charged with conspiracy to commit criminal damage and jailed for 18 months at the end of the notorious Shrewsbury building workers pickets trial.

Now Ricky Tomlinson has a leading role as a militant trade unionist in Channel Four's 'sexy' soap opera Brookside. Instead of being one he pretends to be one.

Filmmaker as Fraud



A scene of gripping reality as radical journalists agonise over the latest scoop, from Karl Francis widely acclaimed Giro City. While the hack characterisation, wooden acting, and conventional stereotypes of Welsh people politics and landscapes may have got him the Jury prize at the San Sebastian film festival, anyone else would give the pretentious rubbish the boot - quite properly preferring Wednesday night out with Tom O'Connor or the Benny Hill show. Francis sees the film as about compromise with the system - about the journalists who learn to live with their TV bosses and those who have not - but apparently go on endlessly making films which are never shown because

they can't make the brake with TV, or more accurately the large salaries that go with it. Francis's message is that you can't get anywhere working for TV because "the system" always beats you. He himself has made "the break with TV" after 5 years as a regular producer for ITV. What a surprise it must have been for him therefore to find out that the whole film was commissioned for Channel 4 financed by a TV company, shown on both C4 and S4C How generous of the TV company moguls to finance radical films attacking their own radical pretensions. Francis' next film is about a radical independent film maker who lives in a cave near Brecon and can't get anyone to finance his film. 20th Century Fox and Warner Bros. have already shown an interest.

Radical Comic as Comical Radical



Keith Allen's a Llanelli boy - and just about the best of the radical alternative cabaret comedians there's been. Watching his act is more like undergoing primal therapy than being entertained. When Alexei Sayle was the first of these comic strip boys to make it big on the horrendous O.T.T. the cries of sellout could be heard from Ladbroke Grove to Llwynhendy. Since then Rik Mayall has led the charge to follow in Alexei's footsteps via the Young Ones, Comic Strip presents etc. Those who haven't yet made it on to Channel 4 have only maintained their "credibility" through lack of success - their pilot videos have been turned down - but they're still trying.

Keith became presenter of Channel 4's access programme Whatever You Want. At the end of January he called a press conference to announce his resignation from the show. The reasons were that the producers of the programme and C4, Authorities had made cuts from a programme about unemployment which was strongly critical of TUC leadership. WOW! Who are you trying to kid Keith? The "banned" programme was as much a threat to the establishment as the Val Doonican show. It made a couple of points about the pathetic nature of the unemployment centres the TUC and local Trades Councils are setting up - ping pong, cups of tea, learn a trade, no politics etc. Its line in answer to this was that the T.U.C. should do more for the unemployed, and that the unemployed should join trade unions in order to put pressure on the T.U.C. leadership to do more for them! Ha! Ha! what a laugh. The politics of demands, do something for us and the illusions of T.U.C. as allies that the pre-historic

leaflets are still trying to push. Someone ought to tell them that the T.U.C are the enemy as much as the C.B.I. Far from being afraid of the "radical proposals" there's nothing the Tory and Labour parties would prefer than the kids keep going up these blind alleys. The life long trade unionist Joe Kenyon summed it up at the end when he said "If Thatcher doesn't do something for these kids they'll be ripping up paving stones again". In other words we want the authorities and the T.U.C. to act together to stop the kids from rioting. You Pillock Kenyon - the sooner there's some real anger and paving stones start getting ripped up again the better. Your social work trade unionism will make you one of the targets.

Which brings me back to Keith Allen. His resignation from the show was a well publicised gesture to have the best of both worlds - radical credibility and a famous face - such qualities are too marketable to be left to C4 forever. C4 have already commissioned an hour long show of his Professionals spoof "The Bullshitters" - so Keith's break is not quite the fatal disillusionment we'd thought. A tolerated radical critic rather like a court jester that snaps and bites at the hand that funds it.

TV Wrecker as TV Journalist



Aled Eurig welcomes Hefin Tomos on his release from Swansea prison. Both had been jailed in 1975 for taking part in the Cymdeithas Yr Iaith campaign for a Welsh T.V. channel. Now 7 years later Aled works alongside Rhodri Williams, another one time jailed Cymdeithas militant, for HTV on generous salaries. The campaign involved taking direct action, including criminal damage against both BBC and HTV. The rush of former Cymdeithas militants and Welsh radical Socialists, including Gareth Miles one time chairman for CYIG, now working freelance for S4C, To work for the former enemy has become almost embarrassing. One time proponent of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, Tweli Griffiths, is a regular newsreader. Both Eurig and Williams work with radical chic failed magazine editor, John Osmond on HTV's English language 'Wales this

(continued on page 11 inside)