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# Peoples News Service

25p

No. 175

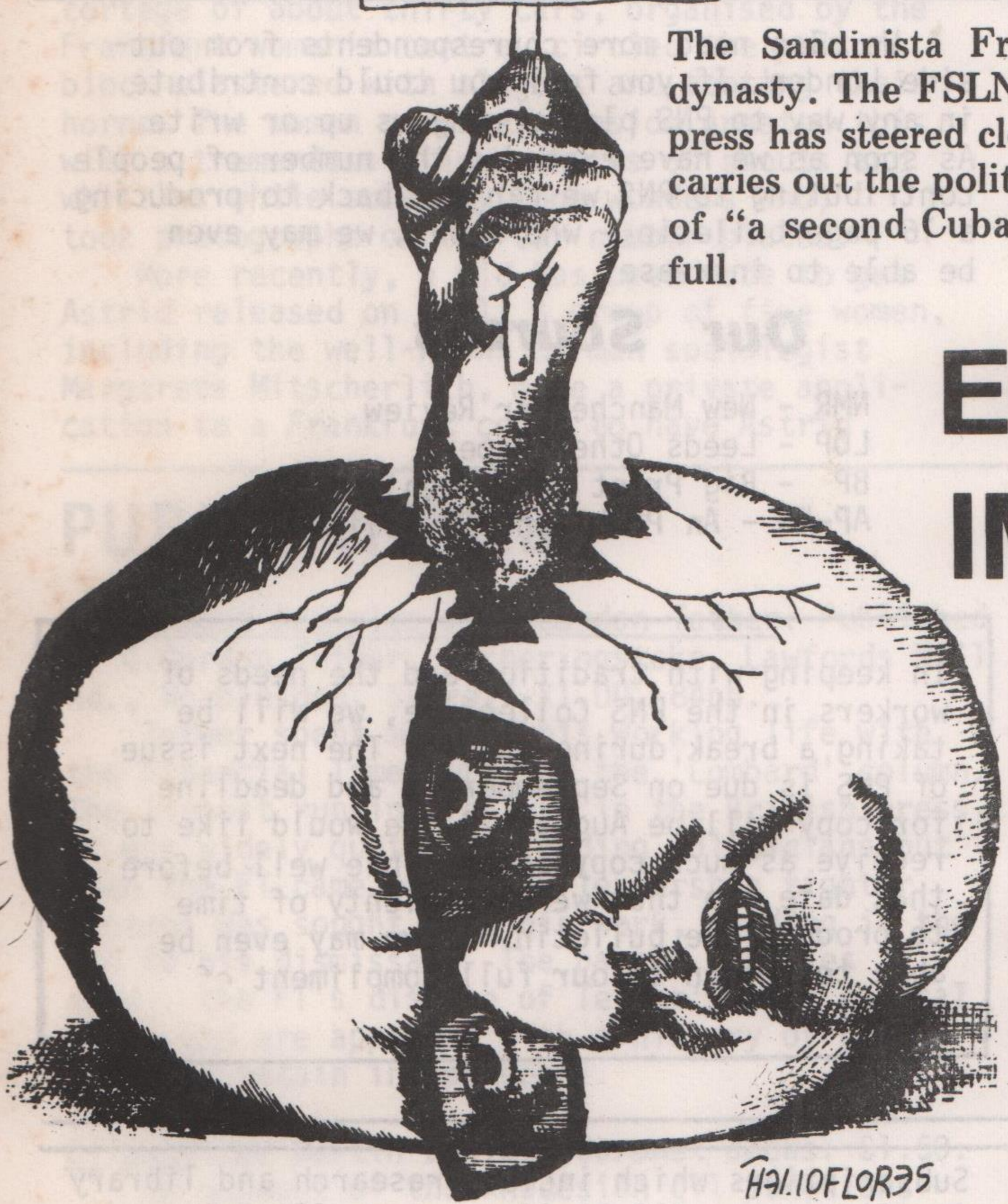
July 24, 1979

OXFORD HOUSE, DERBYSHIRE STREET, LONDON E2. Tel: 01-739 4568.

FRENTE SANDINISTA DE LIBERACION NACIONAL

## THE SANDINISTAS: WHAT THEY STAND FOR

The Sandinista Front for National Liberation has finally smashed the Somoza dynasty. The FSLN has been described as a wide-ranging coalition, but the world's press has steered clear of talking about its politics. If the FSLN sticks to its guns and carries out the political programme it has published, then it looks like the USA's fears of "a second Cuba" may be justified. We print the FSLN's political programme in full. Page 7



## EMPLOYERS MONITOR IMMIGRANTS?

The EEC has sent round a Draft Directive on illegal immigration. It looks like being grist to the Tory mill in its proposals for increased surveillance of immigrants. It could mean greater racial tension in general, and further surveillance of all UK citizens. Page 5

## PRISONERS

Irish republican prisoners claim they are being harassed by having their visits take place in impossible conditions. A smuggled letter details some of the charges. Page 3

## NUKES

The Irish government proposes to waive local authority powers to make sure there are no hiccoughs in its plans for a nuclear Ireland, and toe the EEC line on a radioactive future for Europe. Page 9

## ANTI-NF TRIAL

Thirteen Asian youths are claiming that the charges against them following an anti-NF demo are political and are putting up a joint defence. Appearing with them will be a woman charged, amazingly, with possessing an offensive weapon in the stamping ground of the 'Yorkshire Ripper'. Page 5

## ITALY

Governments come and governments go, but the real focus of attention there is on the latest wage round. Our correspondent in Italy also reports on Antonio Negri and what Roman leftists do when demos remain banned. Page 8

## ALSO:

SHORTS

EVENTS

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ADS.

# What is PNS?

PNS is a left-wing, non-sectarian news service with the aim of providing information that is not readily available in the conventional press. We focus on issues not covered in the national papers, bringing out ignored or distorted details, doing background pieces and researching into national and international stories. We invite other papers to reprint stories from PNS and ask only that they credit us as a source.

Apart from the bulletin, PNS also provides special services for community papers and the alternative press. We index all the community papers that we receive and this index is available on a separate subscription. (An index to PNS itself is also available on request for the cost of postage). We also provide, at a slightly higher subscription rate, special research services; thereby, we hope, encouraging people to investigate stories themselves and helping to find out what they need to know from our contacts in London, our files, libraries, and so on.

PNS is run by a small collective and nobody gets paid for the work they do on the paper. We want to make PNS larger and give our readers more, but this is impossible unless we have more people to write for us and thus ease the production effort.

We particularly need correspondents outside London, but anyone who can help with writing, layout, or distribution is encouraged to contact us at Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London E.2. Tel. (01) 739 4568.

We are holding regular meetings at the Oxford House, which are open to anybody, on every other Thursday at 6.30pm (July 12, July 26 and so on). The deadline for copy for the next issue is Wednesday Aug. 29. All copy for PNS 176 must reach us by then.

Articles bylined with (PNS/ --) mean that the Peoples News Service Collective has edited or rewritten them. Responsibility for what is said in the articles is that of the PNS Collective unless otherwise stated.

## Only 12 pages again

Unfortunately, we have once again to reduce the number of pages in this issue from 16 to twelve. We are in no danger of collapse, but the reasons are as follows. While the bulletin and the other functions of PNS have been expanding and meeting with greater response, the number of people involved has decreased. One has left the country and several members of the collective have taken full-time jobs and have, as a result, less time to devote to PNS.

In order to cope with this situation and to continue producing a fortnightly bulletin, we have decided to restructure PNS so that more people can get involved - perhaps to a lesser extent. Rather than relying on the members of the collective to provide the bulk of the copy, we want to encourage a greater number of people to send in news and stories to PNS. This policy has already been under way but we still need more contributions. We particularly welcome contributions from people involved in such areas as housing, health, social welfare, legal rights etc. who keep up to date on the latest developments. We don't have the time to cover all the issues adequately ourselves.

We also need more correspondents from outside London. If you feel you could contribute in any way to PNS please ring us up or write. As soon as we have expanded the number of people contributing to PNS we can get back to producing a 16 page bulletin - who knows, we may even be able to increase!

## Our Sources

- NMR - New Manchester Review
- LOP - Leeds Other Paper
- BP - Big Print (Aberdeen)
- AP-RN - An Phoblacht/Republican News

In keeping with tradition and the needs of workers in the PNS Collective, we will be taking a break during August. The next issue of PNS is due on September 4, and deadline for copy will be August 29. We would like to receive as much copy as possible well before that date, so that we have plenty of time to produce the bulletin. - we may even be able to return to our full compliment of pages!

# SUBSCRIBE

Subscription rates for left-wing groups and individuals are £2.50 for 10 issues in Britain and Ireland; £3.10 elsewhere.

Subscriptions for 50 issues are £12.00 in Britain and Ireland; £15.00 elsewhere.

Subscriptions which include research and library facilities are £12.50 if you can afford it, or a minimum of £7.50 per year.

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# SMUGGLED LETTER TELLS OF IRISH PRISONER HARASSMENT

London (PNS Correspondent). For a long time Irish Republican prisoners have been protesting at their harassment by the prison authorities and in particular at the conditions imposed during visits to the prisoners. They claim that visitors have been told that the prisoner was not there, when in fact he was, that relatives have travelled very long distances only to find that the prisoner has been transferred without their knowledge, and above all about the humiliating conditions of the visits when they do take place.

Many letters from Irish republican prisoners in jails on mainland Britain have been smuggled out to various organisations and individuals over the past year or so and here we print extracts from one of the latest, sent to Radical Alternatives to Prison. Signed on behalf of the four "Irish Political Prisoners here at Hull", it concentrates on the alleged harassment by prison officers, claiming that "At present Ireland is not only being used as a training ground for the army, they are now using the H-Blocks of Long Kesh for the training of prison personnel in the handling of political prisoners." The author says there are many Scottish and English prison officers in Ireland and that they are being trained to deal with political prisoners in England, Wales and Scotland.

The Irish prisoners in Hull prison see themselves as "guinea pigs". This is how the letter describes visiting conditions. "The visiting room in which the POW is expected to have his visit is approximately 12 feet long and 8 feet in width, two large tables are placed together in the middle of the room, the POW has to sit at one side of these tables while his visitors are expected to sit at the opposite side. No physical contact is permitted. While the visit is in progress two screws (prison officers) are in the room taking notes. It is interesting that, despite the fact of no physical contact being permitted the POW is still subjected to a strip-search before and after the visit, and his visitors are given a body-search with a metal detector. As a result of these conditions republican prisoners are refusing to accept visits."

The letter describes the case on Punter Bennett, who arrived in Hull in March. "It is now ten months since Punter last seen his wife and three children, due to the fact that he was held in Manchester prison and refused to accept the half-hour screened visit which they offered him in solidarity with our comrade Eddie Butler's refusal to accept these visiting conditions. Following his arrival at Hull prison he immediately sent a visiting order to his wife who made arrangements to visit him - note: a POW's visitor has to give five days notice before she or he can visit. The night before the visit a riot occurred on C Wing, the wing where Punter was confined. When Punter's wife arrived the following day for the visit which she had already given five days notice for, she was turned away at the prison gate by a screw with a smiling face who told her that Punter was no longer in the prison, and he didn't know where he was...we have established from Punter... that at the time of his wife and three children being turned away at the prison gate he was in fact still in the prison and was not moved to Manchester prison until later in the day".

In addition to the strictures on prison visits, the Irish republican prisoners, along with all their fellow prisoners, have to endure unhealthy living conditions. Damp and

vermin infestation are the most frequent complaints that come from prisons, the vast majority of which were built in the nineteenth century to house far fewer prisoners than they now have to deal with.

One prisoner complained in a letter written in May that he was woken up by a cockroach running over his face to find the cell floor covered in them. He also said he could not sleep as a result.

Concern about these allegations has found some support from an authoritative body - the Environmental Health Officers Association. In a public statement released during the recent government enquiry into the prison service they urged that EHOs should have right of access to prisons, which now have special immunity from local authority inspections.

Expressing disquiet that many aspects of health and safety, important, especially when the densely populated prisons are in the midst of heavily populated urban areas they said that they should "be able to carry out inspections and to have responsibility for taking reasonable practical public health precautions when required, to protect the inmates and the outside community."

## TWO TIER HOUSING

Manchester (PNS/NMR). Does Manchester City Council operate one set of benign rules for council house tenants who also happen to be senior Labour councillors and a much tougher set for 'ordinary' tenants?

Take rent arrears. There is a view held by many members of the Labour Party that arrears don't really matter because, after all, most of the rent money goes to meet the huge interest payments charged by the financiers who lend money to councils. And many feel that tenants are discriminated against because they do not benefit from mortgage tax allowances.

For some years, if a tenant has fallen more than three weeks in arrears they have become subject to 'intensive' visiting to attempt to wipe the debt out. But not, it appears, if the tenant is Councillor Harold Conway, who represents Gorton South, has been a member of the council since 1965. Until a year ago he was Chairman of the Cultural Committee and he spoke up strongly for the North West Spanner theatre group when they were under attack from the right-wing county council.

He works for the Post Office and suffers loss of income through his membership of many council committees and sub-committees. But he does receive compensatory payments for attendance. Councillor Conway has also suffered from ill-health in recent years but this has not prevented him being regarded as an active member of the council.

For nearly ten years he has lived at 175, Mount Road, Gorton. The rent and rates total a modest £10 per week but at the middle of last month he was £153 in arrears. The fact that



Councillor Conway has been in arrears continually since 1970 has been well-known around the Town Hall for years, as has been the fact that notice to quit orders have been sought half a dozen times.

From time to time he has paid off some of his arrears after timid pressure from the Housing Department but he has also frequently failed to keep promises to make regular excess payments to wipe out the deficit.

But there is considerable feeling around the Town Hall that although Councillor Conway may not have sought to be a special case, the department has operated two standards. It is unlikely that such discrimination has helped the morale of the council officials who have to enforce tight control on 'ordinary' defaulting tenants.

## ADVICE TOO EXPENSIVE

Manchester (PNS/NMR). The Greater Manchester Council's eleven Advice Centres face the axe following the government's decision to withdraw grants from the scheme. Consumer Affairs Minister Sally Oppenheim said she was anxious to encourage the Citizens Advice Bureaux because they were voluntary, effective and 'economic'.

But GMC Labour councillor John Horrocks said; "All voluntary services are well-meaning but they have not got the statutory powers of the consumer advice centres."

## WATER TORTURE

Leeds, Aberdeen (PNS/LOP/BP). Steve Williamson and his neighbours had been complaining for years to Kirklees Council about their condensation. Last summer, the complaints ignored, Steve Williamson took the council to court. The magistrates decided his house was a public health hazard and gave the council three months to rehouse Steve and his family.

The council offered him two unsuitable houses; they finally rehoused him but after the stipulated period. Returning to the magistrates Steve was awarded £100 for the council's breach of contract. But Kirklees council appealed against the fine and on June 25 Judy Pickles of Huddersfield Crown Court, who has obviously never lived in a council house, said "Are you one of those people who think council tenants can decide where they live?", and promptly ordered Steve to pay £250 in costs.

Another case which has gone too far for the council to cry "condensation" is in Aberdeen where the district council are battling with a spate of burst water pipes on their Altens estate.

The houses, which are brand new, have weak stopcocks and when they burst caused hundreds of pounds of damage - all because the stopcocks were in the wrong position. There are plans to move the stopcocks to under the houses so that when they burst again not as much damage will be done.

One tenant phoned the water board only to be told that as it was after hours they should contact the emergency number. The emergency number was manned by an answering machine. Another tenant was told that any claims for damages were automatically rejected on the first attempt and that only perseverance would force the water board to pay up.

Until a new reservoir is built (it would take six months) there will always be the constant fear of flooding, in fact, flooding had occurred even before the houses were occupied. Questions being asked include: why was the reservoir not completed before any tenants were

allowed to move in? And why were tenants told to move in when the plumbing was already known to be too weak for the pressure of the water?

## MOBILITY NOT ALLOWED

Leeds (PNS/LOP). For the last seven months, Mrs Conny James of Farsley, near Leeds, has been waiting for her mobility allowance from the DHSS to arrive. She suffers from agoraphobia, rheumatism and arthritis, and the agoraphobia has kept her away from a 'normal' life for the last twenty four years.

The mobility allowance is given to those with some form of disablement. If the disablement is incurable then the allowance is given for life, otherwise, it is renewed every two years.

Conny's allowance, £5 per week, was not renewed after December 1978 due to the following reason, "The claimant is not suffering from physical disablement such that she is either unable to walk or virtually unable to do so". An appeal was made by Conny against the DHSS decision and after seven months it has still not been heard". (Conny James is a fictitious name as the real person does not want her name to appear in print).



## GAY DISCO VICTORY

Rotherham (PNS/CHE). The Rotherham Campaign for Homosexual Equality has at last won its battle with the local council over the use of the town assembly rooms for a gay disco. The story started four years ago when the groups booking was summarily cancelled by Sid Bennett, Chairperson of the town's catering committee. Terry Sanderson, the group's convenor said "They told us that the staff would be offended. So we hijacked a disco and booked the hall in the name of an individual. 200 gay people turned up and the staff didn't mind at all - they said they'd never been asked about a gay disco."

Faced with the Council's continuing refusal to change its mind, CHE took its case to the ombudsman who ruled the Council were guilty of maladministration and injustice. The initial response was to set up a sub-committee to deal with 'special lettings' - but nothing much happened. Then the group got the support of the local Trades Council and the local Constituency Labour Party condemned the actions of the Labour controlled Council. CHE kept up the pressure and finally won their demand. The first official Gay Disco was subsequently held on July 6.

# EMPLOYERS TO MONITOR IMMIGRANTS?

London (PNS Correspondent). Recent reports about the beginnings of the expected Tory backlash against immigrants, and particularly those who have overstayed their original period of entry, should be seen in the context of recent movements within the EEC on immigration controls.

An EEC Draft Directive on illegal immigrants and their employment is presently being examined by working groups of the Council of Ministers. The main concept behind this Draft Directive is to shift the onus of detection of illegal immigration from the immigration authorities to the employer. Briefly, the proposal is that because the continental countries with their lengthy land frontiers are having difficulties coping with illegal immigration, control at the workplace is proposed as a substitute for frontier control. In the words of the Draft Directive, EEC member states should organise controls "especially of employers and persons and undertakings supplying manpower to third parties".

The Draft Directive has a number of important implications for race relations, civil liberties and the exploitation of migrant work workers. The discriminatory effects of the proposed policy can easily be foreseen. There would be the possibility of spot checks at workplaces. Some employers would no doubt take the opportunity to refuse work to foreigners, on the grounds that they might be an illegal immigrant, thereby obscuring their racial prejudice. Employers will also act in fear of the sanctions that could be taken against them for employing illegal immigrants. At present, most illegal working by immigrants takes place in the hotel and catering trades, which are notorious for their terms and conditions of service. It is probable that some employers would offer conditions even more discriminatory than at present.



"First, take 20 years and learn this intricate tool."

Perhaps the most important implication, however, is that tighter controls at the workplace could probably only be achieved by introducing an identification system covering every worker in the country. Spot checks and other controls could also raise the general

level of racial tension, as well as putting the working population as a whole under wider surveillance.

Recent events in Bradford provide pointers to the kind of situation which could happen if the workplace became the focal point of moves against illegal employment. This week's issue of Leeds Other Paper carries a story of allegations by the Sian Youth Movement of racism on the part of the bus company in Bradford. The company asks prospective employees to provide evidence of date of birth, for the superannuation authorities. However, birth certificates as such are not in general use on the Indian sub-continent. This leaves Asians with the sole option of producing their passports or of paying a solicitor to prepare a sworn affidavit regarding birth date. In practice, Asians who want to be employed by the company produce their passports (which is doubly interesting in the light of the recent Manchester Guardian revelation of the 'secret code-marks' used by immigration officials on certain persons' passports). The Asian Youth Movement has evidence that the procedure for verifying birth date is not always enforced for white workers. The important point about the Bradford situation is that this looks already like evidence of covert checks by an employer on prospective immigrant employees.

It is not a very large step from the kind of discriminatory practice in Bradford to the kind of position which would result if the Draft Directive were implemented.

Up until recently the British government has been the main objector to the Draft Directive, but with the recent Tory election victory and its anti-immigration proposals, continued opposition is no longer certain.

## DEMO CHARGES 'POLITICAL'

Bradford (PNS Correspondent). Following an Anti-National Front demonstration in Bradford on April 30, thirteen people are to appear in court between August 5 and September 17 on various charges; obstruction, threatening behaviour, assault and so on. However, one woman arrested on the demo has now been charged with possession of an offensive weapon, namely an ornamental knife. This replaces the original charge of causing actual bodily harm.

All the defendants have already pleaded not guilty and, despite the fact that their appearances in court have been spread over such a long period, they are presenting the joint defence that the charges are, in fact, political.

The presentation of similar defence for different charges is an interesting move. Demonstrators and their lawyers have often argued that the standard charges brought after demonstrations (obstruction of the public highway, assault, etc.) do not relate to offences committed on the demonstrations. At the demo in Bradford the police waded into the crowd, arresting people in a completely indiscriminate fashion, according to the Asian Youth Movement, which is helping the thirteen in their defence.

Just as serious as the use of criminal charges for political reasons, is the charging of a woman with possession of an offensive weapon in an area where the "Yorkshire Ripper" has already struck and, in his famous taped message, pledged to do so again. In raising the point that "self-defence is no offence", the woman charged and her supporters hope that no precedent will be set which might discourage women from taking adequate precautions to protect themselves from attack.

The Asian Youth Movement is appealing for help and funds for the "Eccleshill 13 Defendants Fund" and donations and messages should be sent to; AYM, 266 Lumb Lane, Bradford.

## COUNCIL PLANS FALL FLAT

Birkenhead (PNS Correspondent). Willborough Council has rejected a proposal that its ratepayers should foot the bill for the demolition of two blocks of flats in Birkenhead's inner city area. Instead the cost of demolition - £150,000 - is to be borne by Willborough Council tenants. The decision raises the question of who pays for a council's mistakes.

The eleven storey blocks, called Oak and Eldon Gardens, are to be blown up on September 30. Local residents are to be evacuated and there are fears that the explosion may cause a nearby railway tunnel to collapse. It will be the first time that blocks of this size have been blown up in this country.

The flats were built in 1957, as part of Birkenhead inner city re-development plans, with money borrowed from the government. Willborough Council are still paying interest charges of £50,000 per annum on that loan. But the flats deteriorated rapidly, and were also badly hit by vandalism. By the early 1970's it became impossible to persuade families to live there, and plans to lease the flats to Liverpool Polytechnic for student accommodation fell through. The damp in the flats now reaches the 9th floor. The Council decided to demolish the two blocks in 1976.

The site is to be sold for private development. The Council maintains that there is enough council housing in Birkenhead inner city area, and say that they want to "ensure there is a good mix of tenants." A local priest comments, "What they seem to be saying is that 'Wedon't want that sort of person around here'".

The Council's policy also raises questions about what will happen to the area adjacent to the flats. A quarter of a mile square of Victorian terraces are being cleared under Compulsory Purchase Orders and demolished. Although the clearance programme is well advanced a council spokesperson says "redevelopment plans have not yet been arrived at."



"Gott in Himmel! If only we'd dropped bulldozers in '42!"

## SNOOPING ON THE SNOOPERS

Bristol (PNS/BV). "That in order to improve the pay bargaining kitty and Post Office cash flow, the Post Office should charge the government a realistic price for the services of the Post Office Investigation Department in opening and copying mail addressed to left wing political parties". That motion was on the agenda of the recent conference of the Civil and Public Servant Association, but on a more serious note, Bristol Voice has been doing some background investigations into this shadowy world, of which many left wingers are aware, but know little.

The Post Office Investigations Department (POID) is an internal police force, but besides dealing with crime inside the Post Office they also collect information for the Police Special Branch on both criminal and political activities. The investigations squad consists of officers seconded from Scotland Yard, former police officers employed as civil servants by the Post Office, and specially vetted GPO technicians. At their headquarters in Euston Tower in Euston Road, London, there are over a hundred officers.

Lists of left-wing political organisations and leaders of campaigns are circulated. Then POID messengers simply grab mail from the sorting office. It can be photocopied (through the envelope), drawn out of the tiny hole at the top of the envelope with a 'spinning needle', or extracted through a cut which is then re-sealed with paper pulp.

POID also taps telephones - conversations can either be tape-recorded at the PO itself, or linked directly to a police listening post. Besides the Watching Galleries in all sorting offices, the POID has special 'normal-looking' BMC vans specially equipped for outside surveillance.

The Birkett Report (on Interception of Communications, 1957) lays down conditions for POID activities, but leaves the widest scope for interpretation. Moreover, it is impossible to take legal proceedings against the PO for interfering with your letters or telephone - Crown Proceedings Act, 1947, gives them complete protection.

Everyone who works in the Post Office knows something of what goes on. The motion on mail-opening was defeated at the CPSA conference after a very brief debate. A few rather frightened people admitted that it happens, most people felt that it shouldn't, but no-one really felt prepared to discuss it. It is hardly surprising. Bristol Voice has been told about POID men pulling workers off their jobs, into a side-room, where they can be interrogated indefinitely, without being told of their rights.

Action against POID snooping is restricted by the Official Secrets Act, by backward laws, and workers' fears. But the Union of Post Office Workers is uncritical of POIS activities.

In late 1978 a Bristol Voice worker described receiving a package which, besides his own mail, contained used Giro's from Windmill Hill Post Office, cashed during the week when the package had been posted. The package had not, apparently, been opened. An inquiry to the Postmaster produced a cheque for 'one pound, but no explanation of how the Giro's got in there!

# THE SANDINISTAS: WHAT THEY STAND FOR

London (PNS Correspondent). The Sandinista Front for National Liberation has finally overthrown the 45-year old dynasty of the Somoza family. Somoza's backers up until the final round of fighting, the US government, had exhausted all diplomatic initiatives to try and prevent "a second Cuba" (as Cyrus Vance put it) and had to rule out direct military intervention. However, in spite of the great fear of the US government of the political implications for Central America as a whole, the press has concentrated almost exclusively on "the tragedy of the fighting" and not given any space to the politics of the FSLN. Below we print the FSLN's 22 point political programme, appearing here, we believe, for the first time in Britain. It gives certain important indications about how the new government proposes to deal with the immense task of reconstruction. (It was translated from the French version in Agence de Presse Liberation - Belgique).

1. Recovery of all the property of Somoza, i.e. expropriation and recuperation of the wealth that belongs to the Nicaraguan people.

2. Creation of a new patriotic army which can defend the interests of the people.

3. Put into effect a genuine agrarian reform.

4. Change the working conditions of the peasants so that they have work twelve months of the year.

5. Change the working conditions in the mines.

6. Change the working conditions in the towns. Teachers and the employees of state enterprises will receive a new salary, an old-age pension, and above all, we will dispense with the compulsory five per cent salary deduction for the Somozist Liberal Party.

7. Freedom to organise trade unions for all workers.

8. Put a brake on the rising cost of living.

9. Increase the efficiency of the transport system and extend it to every part of the country.

10. Create efficient water and electricity supplies for the whole country.

11. Implement a programme to build guaranteed accommodation to meet the needs of workers. Ameliorate the working-class districts by building parks, benches, pavements, homes for abandoned children and the destruction of the shanty-towns.

12. Health and safety are inalienable rights of the people. There will be a campaign to eliminate deposits of stagnant water, open sewers, and the other sources of infection, which lead to social evils like Tuberculosis and infant mortality through dysentery - both are very common in Nicaragua. We will make medical help available to all.

13. We will implement programmes of mass education to get rid of illiteracy which runs at between 70 and 75 per cent of the population.

14. To incorporate into economic and social life the region between the Atlantic coast and the San Juan river. The Sandinist government will extend to that part health, housing, educational services, and create there sources of permanent employment according to the principle resources there, whether they be fishing, timber, mining or agriculture.

15. To defend the natural resources. Nationalisation of the mining and timber industries. Development of an intensive re-forestation programme. Commercial fishing in the sea will be forbidden to foreign companies and this right will be exclusive to Nicaraguans.

16. Nationalisation of the banks.

17. Elimination of organised crime and corruption, including the white slave trade, brothels, gambling and the vile commerce of the Somozist military who live by extortion and intimidation.

18. The Sandinist government will protect civil liberties. All Nicaraguan citizens will be able to express their opinions without fear of persecution. They may all freely engage in trade

unions, co-operatives, and none will be persecuted for their religious beliefs. The FSLN will appeal to these groups to actively involve themselves in the transformation of the nation. It will also appeal to political exiles and emigrants looking



for better living conditions.

19. To put an end to discrimination against women, who will occupy the same place as men in the revolutionary process.

20. We will have free mutual relations with all countries of the world and we will purge all foreign interference in the problems of domestic politics.

21. The Sandinist government will recognise no agreements signed by the Somozists which interfere with the independence, sovereignty and dignity of the Nicaraguan people.

22. The Sandinist government will honour the heroes and martyrs who struggled and struggle now for the liberation of Nicaragua. The people of Nicaragua and future generations will learn their teachings so that their memory will never die. Every project undertaken by the new government will bear their name. And the children of the martyrs will benefit from allowances for their education and housing.

## ITALY: THE LONG HOT SUMMER

PNS has received more news from our correspondent in Italy. As the Communists count the cost of electoral disappointment, and Socialist leader Craxi strenuously tries to form a government, the action has been in the midst of the 'movement' and trade union struggles over their annual contracts. Here we print three stories. The first concerns the engineering workers' fight for a shorter working week and some of the events around their actions. We also have an update on the situation regarding the academics now being set up by the state as the leadership of the Red Brigades and news of how some Roman leftists choose to organise when faced with a total ban on demonstrations.

### Fiat 'Robots' are human

The engineering workers' struggle for a new national contract is still under way. Their demands include a shorter working week, and union powers of access to information on the employers' investment plans. The employers' association is showing no signs of wanting to grant them their demands.

On June 22, 300,000 engineering workers from all over Italy met in Rome for a mass demonstration in support of their struggle for the new contract. The demonstration was organised by the trade unions, and it was marked by incidents involving Workers Autonomy (Autonomia Operaia). AO held a section - about 200 strong - of one of the marches. At a certain point the union stewards took advantage of a widening of the road to 'squeeze out' the AO contingent. About fifty of the latter subsequently ran towards the march from a side-street throwing sticks and bottles and shouting 'fascists! fascists!' They were repelled by stewards wielding crowbars and spanners and one young autonomist had his head smashed and ended in hospital. Members of the MLS (a 'heavy' Marxist-Leninist organisation - see previous reports) were seen to be particularly active in fighting the autonomists. The mass of the workers made no reaction in favour of the autonomists. A contingent from Padua in fact carried a banner that said 'No To Terrorism' which - coming from Padua - was tantamount to saying that Negri and Co. are guilty (Professor Antonio Negri and almost the entire faculty of Political Science of Padua University have been arrested on charges of leading "an association denominated Red Brigades").

The participation of women workers was particularly significant in this demonstration. Many thousands of them marched in a large women-only section of the march, shouting slogans that reflected their interests as women and not only as workers. In contrast to previous occasions, this time the 'feminist workers' heavily outnumbered the 'traditional feminists'. One slogan was "Sexuality has its value; work less to make more love" (in Italian it makes a rhyming couplet) - a slogan which many 'traditional feminists' would not have approved of.

The political awakening of working women - as workers and as women - may well have far-reaching consequences. It should be remembered that the mass movement of 1977 exploded in the 'marginal sections of Italian society (mainly unemployed youth) after feminist contestation had contributed to destroying the hierarchical, male-dominated organisations of the revolutionary 'parties' (in particular Lotta Continua) that covered that area of society, as well as throwing the structure of the couple, and hence young people's emotional lives, into a crisis. This also came on the heels of the electoral disappointment of June 20, 1976. Now the PCI has suffered a heavy electoral setback. The growth of feminism inside the unions and maybe within the Communist Party itself could lead to surprises in the not-so-distant

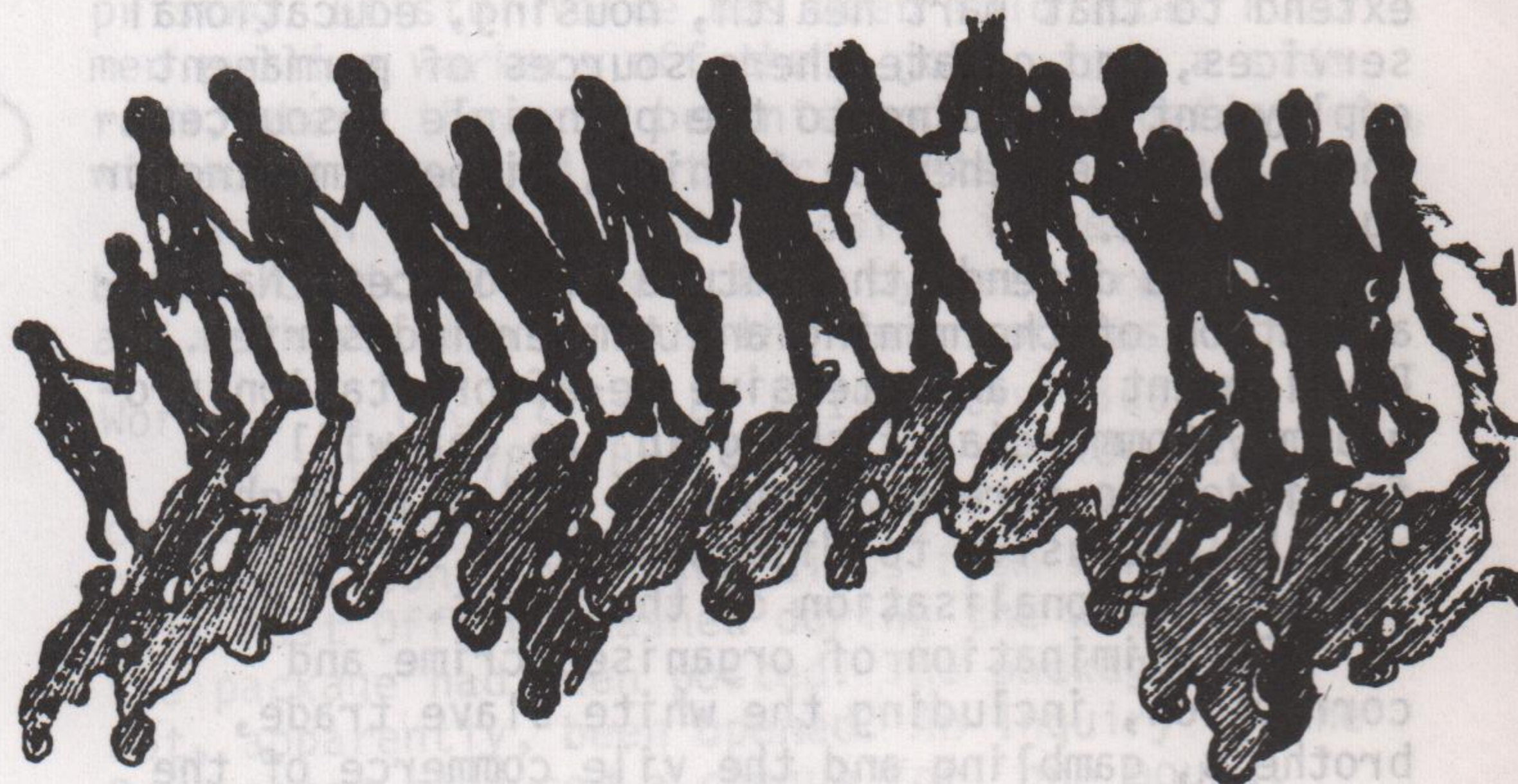
future.

Since June 22 the workers have been hotting up the struggle, also because they want the new contract to be signed before they go on holiday in August (and they want the money to be able to go on holiday). In Turin the Mirafiori plant has been virtually occupied, and the struggle is spilling out into the streets of the city, as the workers set up flying road blocks, drive around the town in commandeered buses bedecked with red flags, and so on. So far, the police has not been called in to stop this, although there have been armed provocations - e.g. three weeks ago a car tried to shoot its way through a workers' road block. The employers' association has said that they do not mind waiting till September to sign the contract.

### Alternative to demos

Political demonstrations by the 'movement' have been forbidden in Rome for over a year now, so that thousands of highly politicised young people are having to seek alternative 'excuses' to get together for mass, collective self-expression.

At the end of June the PCI-run town council sponsored the First International Festival of Poetry, which was held on the beach near the Roman resort of Ostia. Allen Ginsberg, Ferlinghetti, and others of the beat generation came from the USA, Yevtuschenko came from the USSR, and there were poets from France, England, Germany and other countries. Thousands of young people turned up, camped on the beach, smoked grass, bathed in the nude, and on the whole were much more interested in expressing themselves than in listening to the poets recite their verses from the grandstand, which was continually mobbed and risked collapsing more than once. Many of the young people actually wanted to recite their own poems - poetry-writing is very popular amongst young Italians. Only by dint of careful planning and tactics were Ginsberg and his friends able to gain a hearing for their verses on the last day of the festival.



The summer in Rome has been witnessing other outbreaks of popular culture, with music (folk, jazz etc) and dancing in the parks, open-air circuses in the city squares, and



film-shows in places of historic interest like the Castel Sant'Angelo. Most of these initiatives have been promoted by Mr. Nicolini, the long-haired PCI local councillor for culture. It is said that he is not popular with his party colleagues (they consider him frivolous) and that he answers criticisms from political opponents at council meetings in rhyming verse, sometimes taken from Dante.

No hard evidence has yet been produced against Negri and his companions; it now looks very much as if they will spend the summer in jail - their trial is nowhere in sight. On July 7 two other members of the Political Science faculty in Padua university were officially informed that they are being investigated on the charge of 'armed bands'. They are Maria Rosa Dalla Costa, one of Italy's earliest feminists, who is known in the US and the UK for her contributions to the left and feminist debate in particular over the issue of wages for housework, (telegrams of solidarity have already arrived from Kate Millet and other US feminists, and Ferruccio Gambino, also well-known abroad for his studies on the working class, particularly in the car industry. There is now only one lecturer left in the Political Science faculty of Padua who is not in jail or under suspicion, and the students will probably not be able to take their degrees.

## MORE SA DISINVESTMENT

London (PNS Correspondent). The world-wide movement to force companies and governments to sever financial links with South Africa continues. In Canada, the Anti-Apartheid Movement recently won a victory when the board of governors of Dawson College in Montreal voted to divest its \$25m a year account from the Bank of Montreal; which has links with South Africa. This action began with a student petition presented to the governors late last year which demanded that Dawson transfer its account to a bank which was not lending money to South Africa.

One significant aspect of this disinvestment is that Dawson has persuaded the Provincial Bank, to whom it has transferred its account, to agree to inform Dawson prior to making any loans to South Africa. A spokesperson for Dawson is on record as saying that if the bank commences loans to South Africa it will immediately lose the Dawson account.

Meanwhile, back home, the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) voted at its

last council meeting, by 29 votes to 9, not to remove its account from Barclays Bank; one of the biggest in South Africa. The Vice-Chairman, Tony Neale, said "I do not believe that pulling out our account would have the slightest effect on the policy of the bank." Neale believes that the best way to change Barclays' policy is to work from within and, to this end, he attended the bank's AGM earlier this year.

It is ironic, though, that in the same week that the BASW council voted against disinvesting from Barclays', an emergency motion from BASW's International Relations Committee urged all BASW branches to back Amnesty International's campaign to highlight ill-treatment of children in South Africa, in a week of action from September 17-23. Amnesty says that 252 teenagers under 18 were detained under South Africa's Terrorism & Internal Security Act last year.

## MOBUTU TIGHTENS HIS GRIP

Brussels (PNS/Pour). The Belgian government has recently decided to increase its military aid to the Mobutu regime in Zaire. The decision has come at a time when the regime has put on a new face of liberalisation in an effort to solicit continued international support.

Recent reports from Zaire, however, show that in the last two months, the regime has strengthened its repression against all voices of opposition throughout the country.

The Brussels-based Zaire Committee reports that during May public sector workers in main cities went on strike. In one instance the army stormed a hospital under occupation by the employees and are alleged to have removed the incubators from premature babies, thereby killing them.

At the beginning of June the regime carried out a wave of arrests of lawyers. The lawyers had been protesting against the demands of the Chief Prosecutor and State Commissioner for Justice, M. Kenge Wa Dondo, for a national conference of the 'Conseil d'Ordre' (a group of the chief lawyers in the country) in order to force lawyers to work for the State.

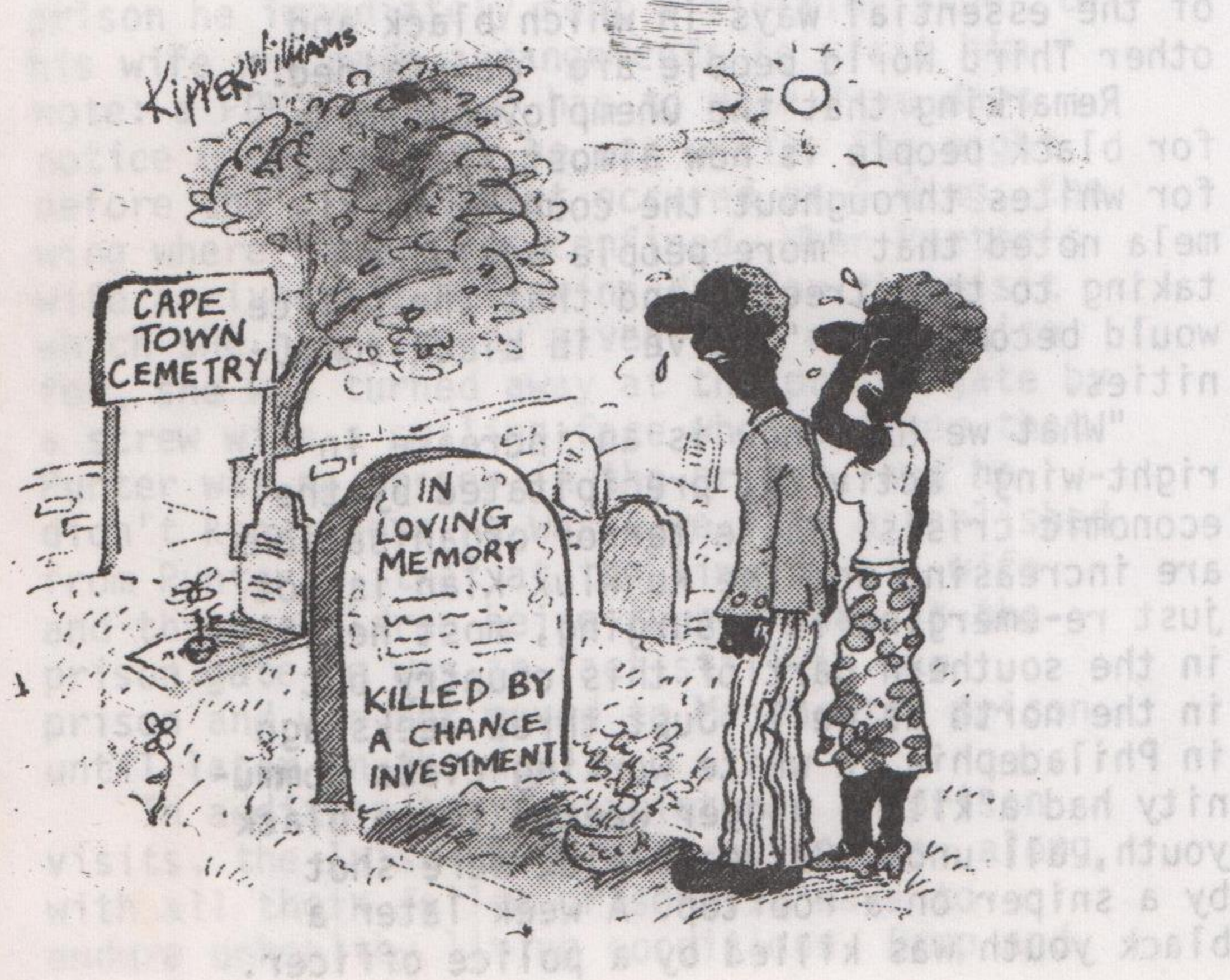
In order to guard their minimal independence under a dictatorial regime, the members of the Conseil refused. The lawyers' spokesperson M. Matanaga, was immediately arrested and put in Makala prison along with other lawyers throughout the country suspected of being hostile to the regime.

Belgian army officers have continued to play a key role in the formation of the Zaire army since the country gained independence. The new military aid has come but a few weeks after the withdrawal of the 2,400 strong Inter-African force from Shaba province and is clearly designed to maintain military power in the area.

## NUCLEAR POWER FOR IRISH

Dublin (PNS/AP-RN). The Irish government plans to go ahead with nuclear power. Opposition to the proposed Carnsore Point station in County Wexford will be ignored, according to the Energy Minister O'Malley, who is heading a tribunal of enquiry into the nuclear power plans. New legislation is expected to be drafted very soon by Fianna Fail (the Irish government) to ensure that the government can always override the objections of local bodies in the 'development' of their areas.

Wexford Country Council, which will have its planning powers removed under the new



legislation, has proposed a motion, put forward by Sinn Fein's Phil Kelly, calling on O'Malley "to abandon plans to build a nuclear power station at Carnsore Point or anywhere else in Ireland, and that finance be provided by Leinster House (the government) to invest in alternative sources of energy".

At the Irish Congress of Trade Unions conference in Bundoran last week it was stressed, that the ICTU should adopt a much more aggressive anti-nuclear stance. But at the moment there is no militant anti-nuclear organisation in the Republic and it is feared that nuclear power will be railroaded through by Fianna Fail with little public debate.

## BRITISH SPIES BLOWN

Belfast (PNS/AP-RN) Two British soldiers were found manning a secret observation post on the roof of the Royal Victoria Hospital on Belfast's Falls Road.

Two hospital security guards discovered the soldiers when they went to check an engine room on the roof of a laboratory used by Queen's University. The soldiers pounced on the guards and after a brief struggle, the guards broke free and contact the Royal Ulster Constabulary, who escorted the soldiers away. The observation post overlooks the Grosvenor and Falls Roads, populous nationalist areas. This is the latest in a series of incidents involving the military and the hospital complex, and has added to calls for the hospital to be de-militarised.

## USA: RACISM FLARES

New York (PNS/LNS). Birmingham, Alabama, the centre of rioting and shootings sparked by racist violence in the 1960s, is once again the focus of black protests against the local police and the Ku Klux Klan. The recent protests in Birmingham were prompted by the June 22 killing of a 20 year old black woman, Bonita Carter, by white police officer George Sands. Carter, who was unarmed, apparently got caught in the middle of what started out as a typical conflict between a white shopkeeper and a black customer.

Carter's killing in the northside black community of Kingston prompted three days of protests by black residents, during which police officers swarmed into the area, firing indiscriminately and shooting out street lights. On July 5, black demonstrators gathered for a peaceful protest at another shop run by the same owner as the one at which Carter was killed. They were attacked by a group of whites, including members of the KKK, who had gathered in the shop's car park, throwing bottles and stones. The police were called in and eleven blacks and one white were arrested.

Apparently, George Sands, the policeman who shot Carter, has a long string of complaints against him, 90 per cent of them from black people, but when community leaders went over the complaints against him they found he had only once been reprimanded. One of the community leaders, Reverend Woods, said, "This isn't the first time that an incident like this has occurred, black people have born the brunt of unprovoked attacks, and been arrested, beaten and killed more by police officers here for years."

According to Woods, black people in Birmingham are beginning to organise themselves around this. Although the city authorities had banned gatherings of more than three persons for 'illegal purposes' - a move aimed at preventing demonstrations - a "broad coalition has been formed."

Birmingham isn't the only city where black people are organising against police brutality. Many protests have been organised in Cincinnati, Ohio, following several years of police violence. Recent incidents which fueled the protests included the shooting of a black man in early May by a white police officer, and a June 6 city council decision stating that police officers should be armed with .357 Magnum revolvers and hollow point bullets (the notorious 'dum-dum' bullets outlawed for use in war by international conventions). A coalition formed by community activists two months ago, the Cincinnati Movement for Human Rights, has already led three marches to the city council, each with as many as 1000 people. In the last year, four police officers have been killed by blacks.

In Los Angeles, local pressure against the police has been mounting since a black woman, Eula Love, was shot to death earlier this year by police officers responding to a complaint against her from an electrical company. Another Los Angeles black resident, 28 year old Steve Conger, was shot and killed by a police officer on June 23 after he came to the aid of his next-door neighbour, 63 year old Jack Goner. Goner had been assaulted and left lying unconscious in his driveway. The sheriff's office called Conger's death 'an accident' and one deputy, Bob Woods, 'explained' that the police officer who shot Conger "just fired instinctively. He didn't know if the guy was a suspect or what."

And in New York city, where the killing of a local community leader sparked the formation of a Black United Front last year, black residents are continuing their campaign against police brutality.

"Police brutality has always existed in the black community," Muntu Matsimela of the National Black Human Rights Coalition in New York city told LNS. Matsimela explained that "police brutality should not be seen as an isolated phenomena." Rather, he emphasised that the police and their brutality should be viewed as one of the essential ways in which black and other Third World people are 'maintained.'

Remarking that the unemployment rate for black people is now almost twice that for whites throughout the country Matsimela noted that "more people would be taking to the streets" and that the police would become more "active" in black communities.

"What we have now is an increase in right-wing activity, precipitated by the economic crisis. White terror organisations are increasing and the Ku Klux Klan is not just re-emerging it's surging, most heavily in the southern part of this country but in the north as well. Just three weeks ago in Philadelphia, a white working class community had a "kill a nigger week." Three black youth, all under 20 years old, were shot by a sniper on a rooftop. A week later a black youth was killed by a police officer.

"The National Black Human Rights Coalition is trying to build a National Black United Front - a protective umbrella to defend black activists who are under attack and to defend our people and speak to the kinds of issues that affect our daily lives and link them up with human rights violations. The US has been the leader in human rights violations and not the leader in eliminating them." The National Black Human Rights Coalition is planning a march on the United Nations on November 5, Black Solidarity Day.

## GREETINGS FOR PROLL

Frankfurt (PNS Correspondent). Since Astrid Proll returned to Germany on June 24, she has been confined in the Frankfurt women's prison at Preungesheim. There are no signs that she might be transferred to the infamous 'tote trakt' (dead unit) cells, whose conditions of sensory deprivation caused her to flee Germany for Britain in the first place.

Back in Frankfurt she has been made welcome by German women doing their best to secure her release and let her know that she has support. The day after her arrival at Preungesheim a cortege of about thirty cars, organised by the Frankfurt women's centre, circled the prison block plastered with slogans and tooting their horns. The women prisoners inside greeted this with a tremendously loud chorus of shouts and whistles while somebody (one wonders who) took photographs of the car number plates.

More recently, a bid has been made to get Astrid released on bail. A group of five women, including the well-known German sociologist Margarete Mitscherlich, made a private application to a Frankfurt court to have Astrid

released into their custody, guaranteeing that she would attend her trial, which is due to begin in the autumn. In a much criticised decision, the judge rejected the application although the women had guaranteed on oath not only Astrid's attendance at the trial, but also a job, a place to live, and financial support.

## Ads

\* The Industrial Common Ownership Movement would like it known that it's Beechwood College is available for hire as a conference and meeting facility. Write to ICOM, 31 Hare St., London S.E.18 or at Beechwood College, Elmete Lane, Roundhay, Leeds LS8 2LQ.

\* Part-time editor wanted for Anti-Apartheid News. Write with details of work experience, AA involvement etc. to Mike Terry, Executive Secretary, Anti-Apartheid Movement, 89, Charlotte Street, London W1P 2DQ.

\* Support Garners Strikers. Since the strike for basic trade union rights was abandoned by the TGWU in May the strikers have been unable to find work and desperately need money. Send donations to Garners Benefit Fund, c/o 14 Ladbroke Terrace, London W.11.

\* This Degrades Women Defence Fund. Two women were fined a total of £120 on July 13 for stickering sexist adverts in Tottenham Hale tube station. A defence fund has been set up to help them: contributions can be sent to c/o 15 Candida Court, Clarence Way, London N.W.1.

## PUBLICATIONS

The Banned Articles of C. Gordon Tether. Published by C. Gordon Tether, Hetheringstoke, Lawfords Mill Rd., Worplesdon, Surrey. £1.00. 84pp.

Tether spent most of his working life with the Financial Times writing the 'Lombard' column. The longest running feature in the British press, it was widely quoted by leading politicians but when the FT came under new leadership tighter control was sought over his work, leading in the end to his dismissal. The banned articles show the FT's dislike of Tether's more radical side, and are appended with a history of his fight to retain independence.

Oilgate, by Martin Bailey. Coronet Books. £1.50.

An account of the Rhodesian oil sanctions busting by BP and Shell. Written in a very readable, almost 'detective' style, the book focuses on the role of the British government, highlighting its political corruption and the hypocrisy of British and United States policy towards Southern Africa - hence the title.

Poverty & Power: The Case for a Political Approach to Development and its Implications for Action in the West, by Rachel Heatley. Published by Returned Volunteer Action. £1.25 (inc. postage).

Questions the effectiveness of conventional approaches to combatting underdevelopment, quoting examples which show the social irresponsibility of economies which produce for profit rather than for people, and examining the human costs and economic obstacles to the

Third World developing along Western lines. Gives a detailed description of a wide range of different activities through which we in the UK can contribute to the world-wide struggle for development.

Region 1 - Supplementary, by Martin Spence. Published by Black Jake Collective. Available from 115 Westgate Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, N.E.7 4AG. 20p. 24pp.

This updates the information given in the original 'Region 1' pamphlet on the state's plans for repression in the North-East. Covers expenditure, planning and personnel involved, confirmed by their own damning evidence as published in council committee reports. It gives the locations of various security installations and details of their probable use, information on Special Police Units, Special Branch manning levels, and Peacetime Emergency plans. 100 per cent information, the supplementary is written in a less fevered style than its predecessor.

## Periodicals

The Abolitionist. A quarterly journal from Radical Alternatives to Prison, Summer 1979. Double issue. 50p. 36pp.

A lengthy magazine which is filled with information on prisons, drugs in prison, black prisoners, mental hospitals, plus reviews of foreign publications concerned with prisons. Gives statistics for the discrepancies in sentencing in different counties in Britain. Also a summary of the Enquiry into the UK Prison Service. Its continued stance is, as the title of the magazine suggests, the abolition of prisons and the provision of workable alternatives.

# EVENTS

## July

- Sat 21 - Sat 28 Brighton. Contemporary arts festival. A mixture of evening events at Brighton Poly, Grand Parade and other sites covering music, theatre, film and video, performance art. Also drama, mime, music workshops, street theatre, and bands. Full programme from: Festival Office, 15b Dorset Gardens, Brighton.
- Wed 25 London. Who Killed Blair Peach? Public meeting. Speakers: Clarence Baker (People Unite/Misty), Prokash Chatterjee (Southall Action Committee), Paul Holborrow (ANL). Plus short film sequence of SPG in action on Grunwicks picket line. 8.00pm. Tavistock Youth Centre, Tavistock Road, London N.W.10.
- Thurs 26 Manchester. The Patriot Game. Much praised documentary film on Northern Ireland 1968 - 1978. Organised by Manchester UTOM. 7.30pm. Carmoor Road (off Hathersage Road) Manchester 13. 60p (40p unwaged).
- Sat 28 London. "Stratford, Camden, Nottingham - Defend Our Union, Defend the Closed Shop". Emergency conference called by Journalists Charter to organise support for Stratford Express, Camden Hournal and Nottingham Evening Post chapels of NUJ. St.Brides Institute, off Fleet Street, E.C.4. 11 am. Open to all NUJ members.
- Sat 28 - Sun 29 Brighton. National Conference on Alternatives to Prison at Sussex University, organised by Newham Alternatives Project and Radical Alternatives to Prison. Contributions from Vivien Stern (NACRO), Martin Wright (Howard League), Geoff Coggan (PROP), Ros Kane (RAP), and Jerry Westall (RAP). Films: Punishment Park, Attica, The Brutalising of Franz Hob, The Glasshouse, and RAP's Open Door programme. Cost £10 if can be afforded. For other arrangements and further details, phone Alan Leader or Chris Bott on 01 555 0289. Correspondence and cheques to National Conference on Alternatives to Prison, 56 Dames Road, London E.7.
- Sat 28 - Aug 4 Leeds. The Socialist Alternative - Big Flame Summer School. Workshops, seminars, films, drama, music. Details: Tel Leeds 620159.
- Mon 30 London. The Patriot Game (see above). At Half Moon, Alie St., E.1.

## August

- Fri 3 - Fri 10 London. "Alternative Production - alternatives to unemployment", Summer School. Details from CAITS, NELP. Longbridge Rd., Dagenham, Essex.
- Sun 5 London. The Patriot Game (see above). At Rio Cinema, Kingsland Road. 3pm. £1.00.
- Thurs 9 London. The Patriot Game (see above). Presented by South London UTOM. At Clapham Library. 7.30pm. 75p (50p unemployed).
- Sun 12 London. Demonstration calling on British government to commit itself to a policy of withdrawal from Northern Ireland. Details from August 12 Demonstration Organising Committee, c/o Young Liberal Office, 1, Whitehall Place, London S.W.1.
- Wed 18 - Tues 24 Laurieston, Kirkcuds. Men's Week. Details from Steve Gould, 18c Crossley St., London N.7. Tel. 01 607 0669.
- Thurs 23 - Fri 24 Milton Keynes. Alternative Technology - Institutional Co-option or Local Control. NATTA Conference. Full board £9.50. Conference only £1.00. Details from Rosemary Rhoades, Redfield, Winslow, Bucks. (Closing date July 31).
- Sat 25 - Mon 27 Milton Keynes. Comtek (Community Technology)'79. Festival; exhibitions, stalls, films, demonstrations, etc. Details from Rosemary Rhoades (address as above).

Printed by Calverts North Star press, 55 Mount Pleasant, London E.C.1.

Front page Typeset by Bread 'n Roses, 30 Camden Road, London N.W.1.

Distributed by Publications Distribution Co-op, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London E.C.1