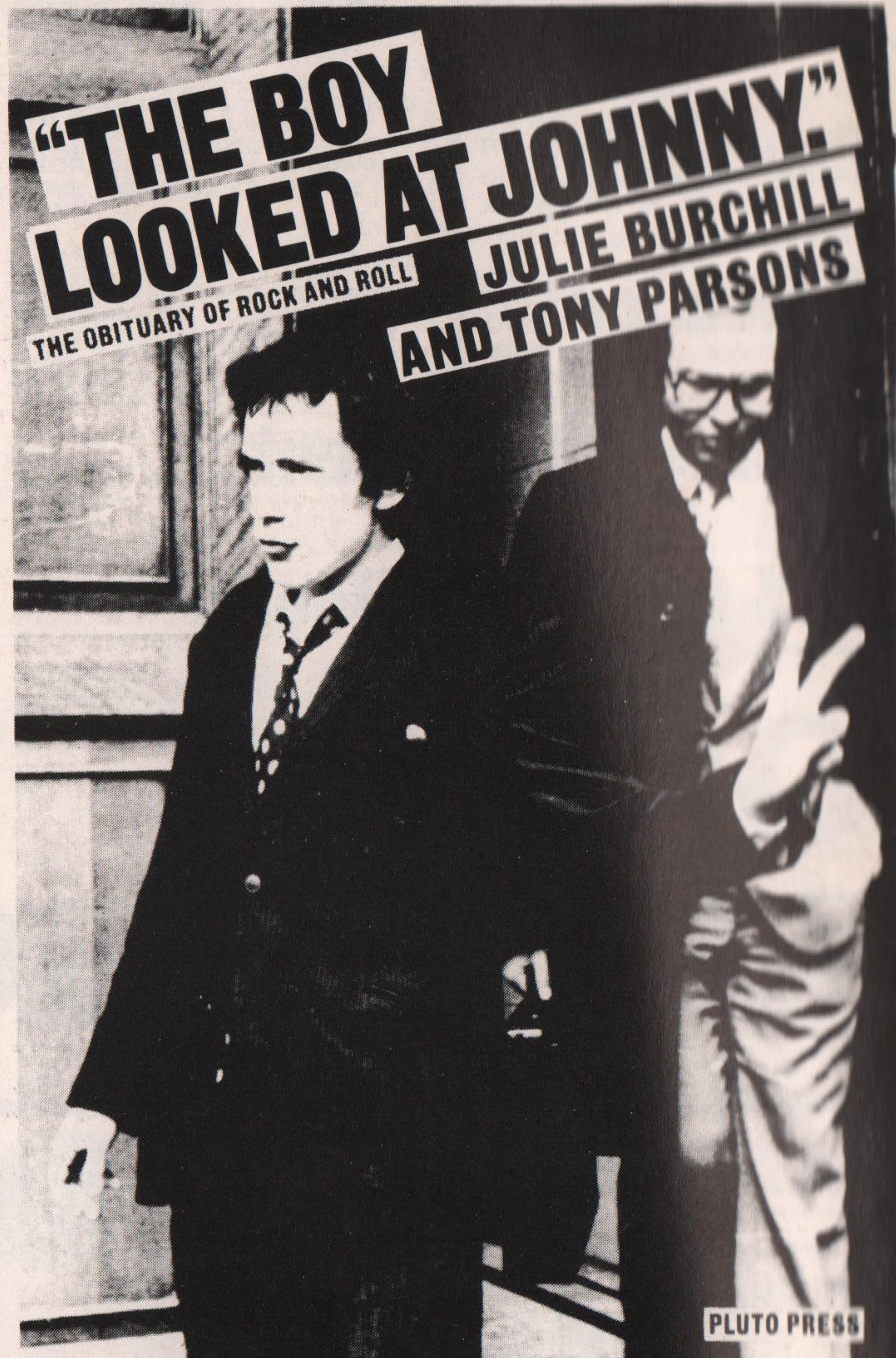
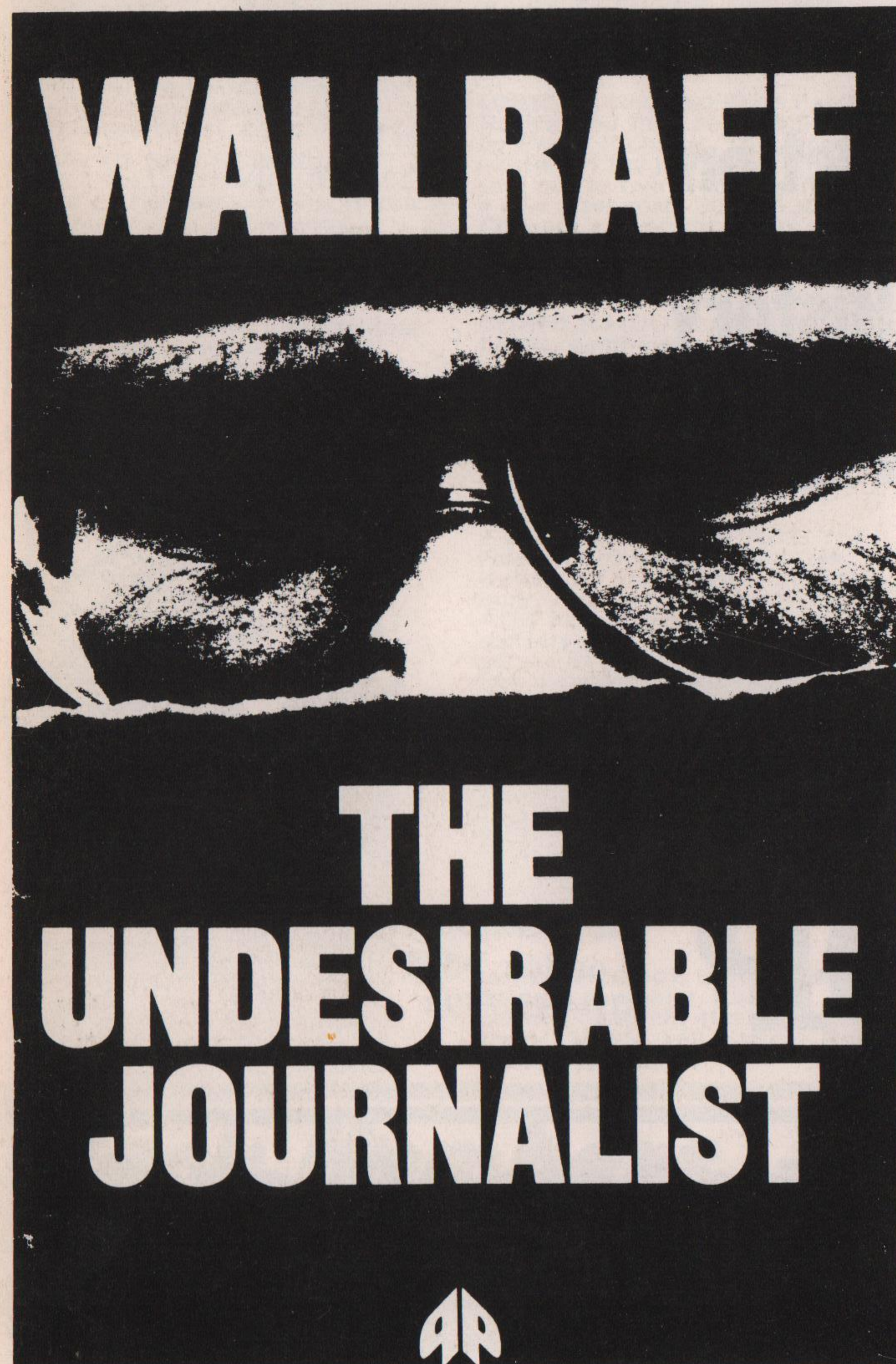


# free book offer



This month's Leveller offer is a choice from forthcoming Pluto Press titles: *The Boy Looked At Johnny* by Julie Burchill and Tony Parsons, and *The Undesirable Journalist* by Gunter Wallraff.

Wallraff reports on life at the bottom of the social pile. He recounts his experience of working anonymously as a messenger, as a labourer, as a journeyman reporter in hilarious, anarchic detail. In this selection from his vast output he becomes secretary of a phantom fascist group and gets the police to describe to him the conditions of employment as a political spy.

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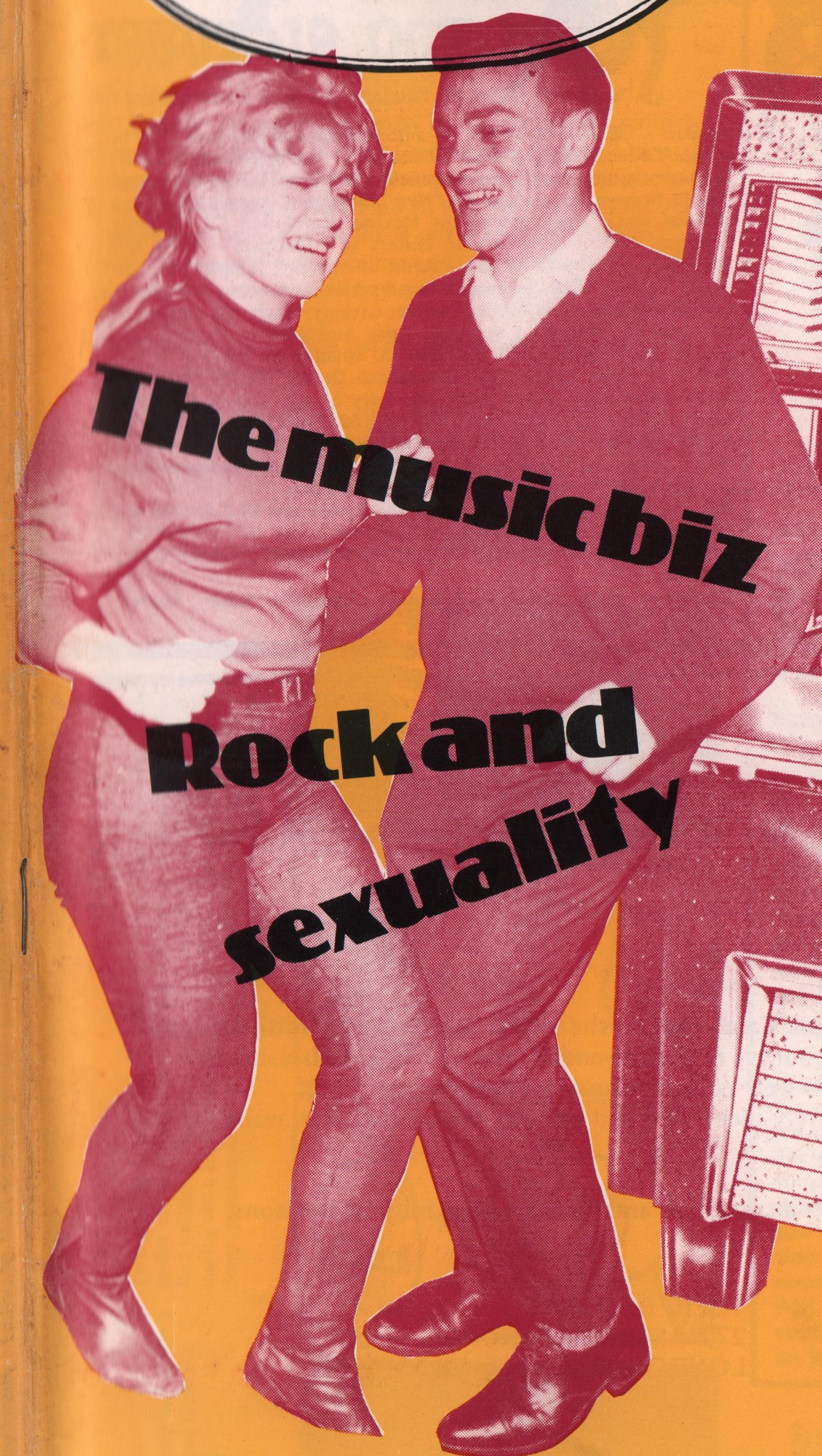
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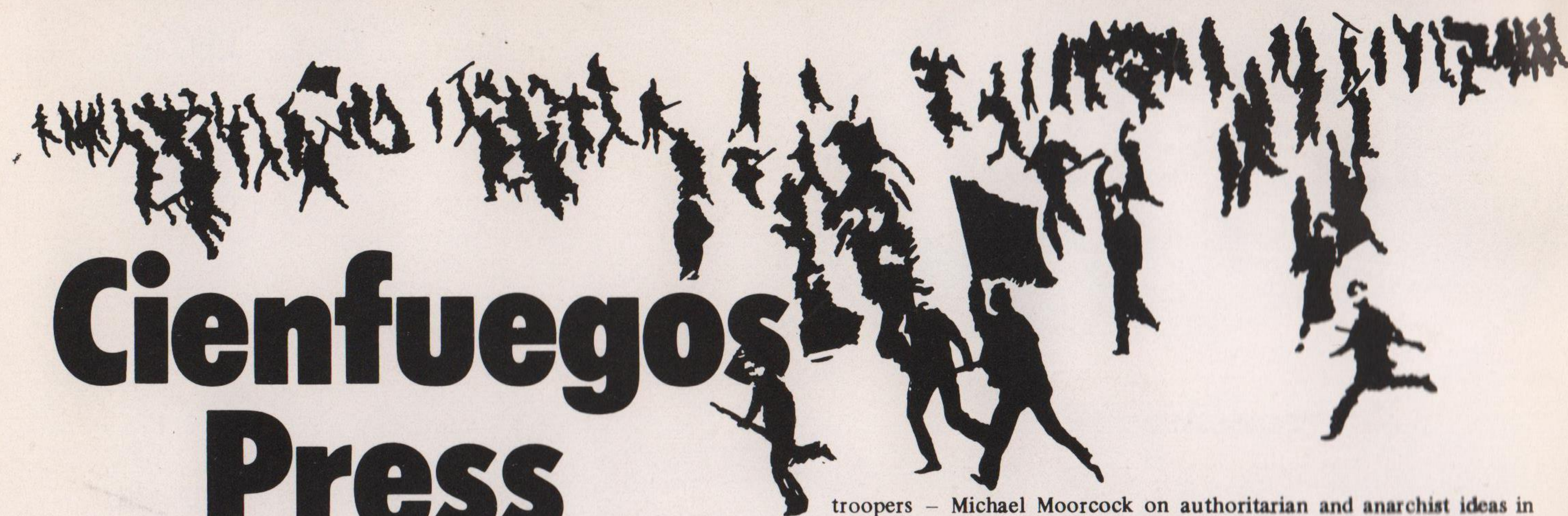
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Plus

# Abortion + The Election





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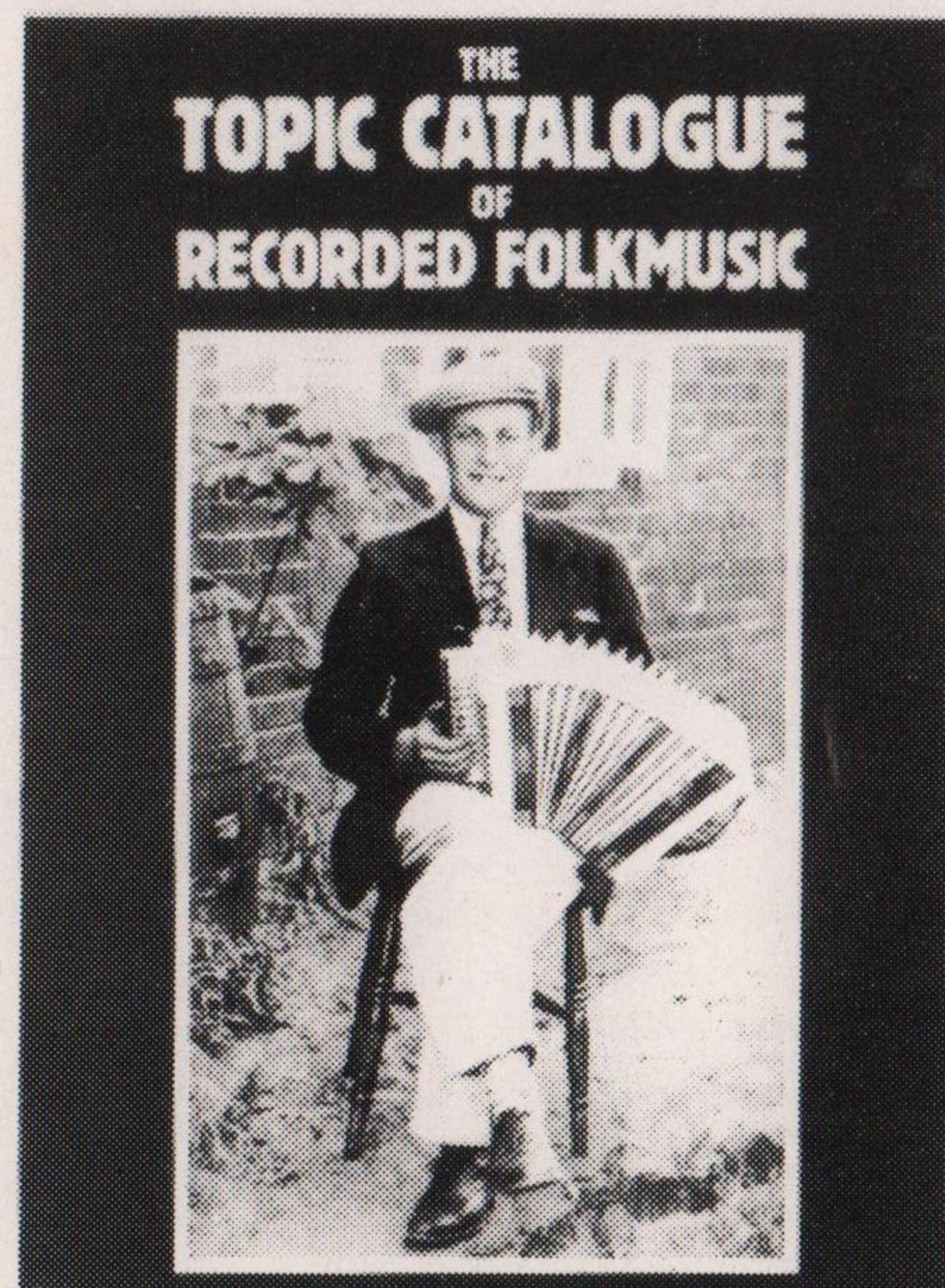
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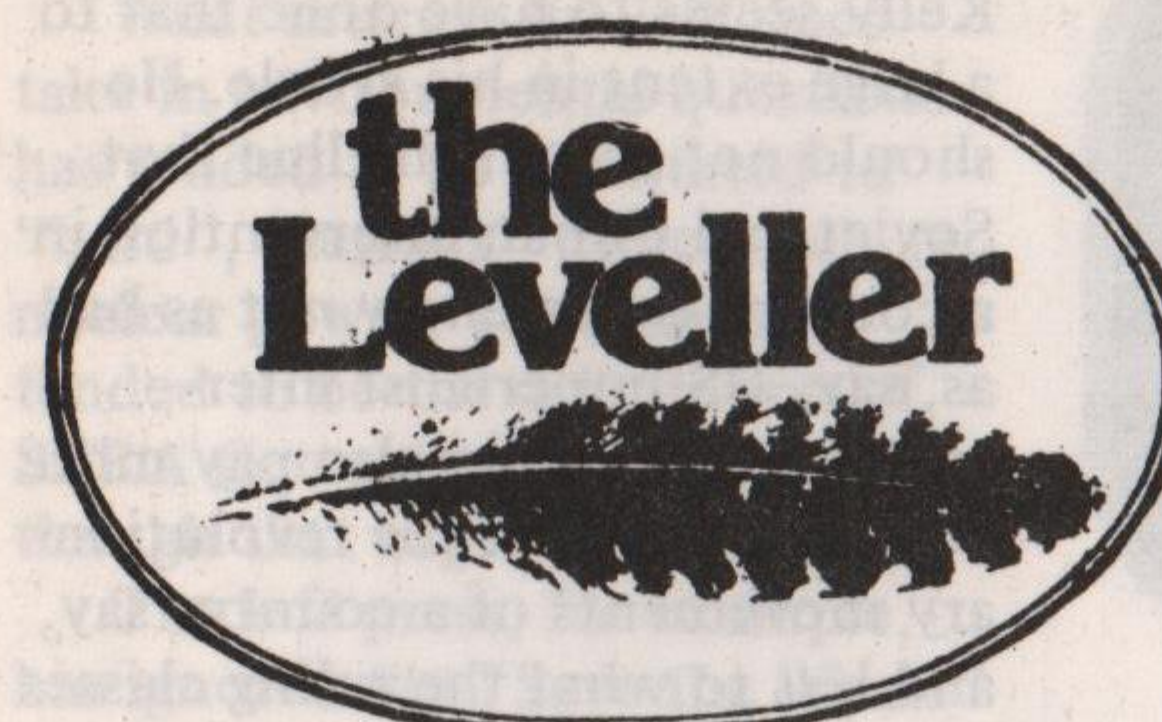


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### ISSUE 19 OCT 1978

An independent monthly socialist magazine produced by the *Leveller* Collective. Owned by its Supporting Subscribers through the Leveller Friendly Co-operative Society Ltd, a society whose AGM controls the magazine. Articles, photographs, cartoons and letters are all very welcome. Collective meetings are open and we invite our readers' interest and participation in the development of the magazine. The next introductory meeting will be held at our office at 7.30pm on Tuesday October 10.

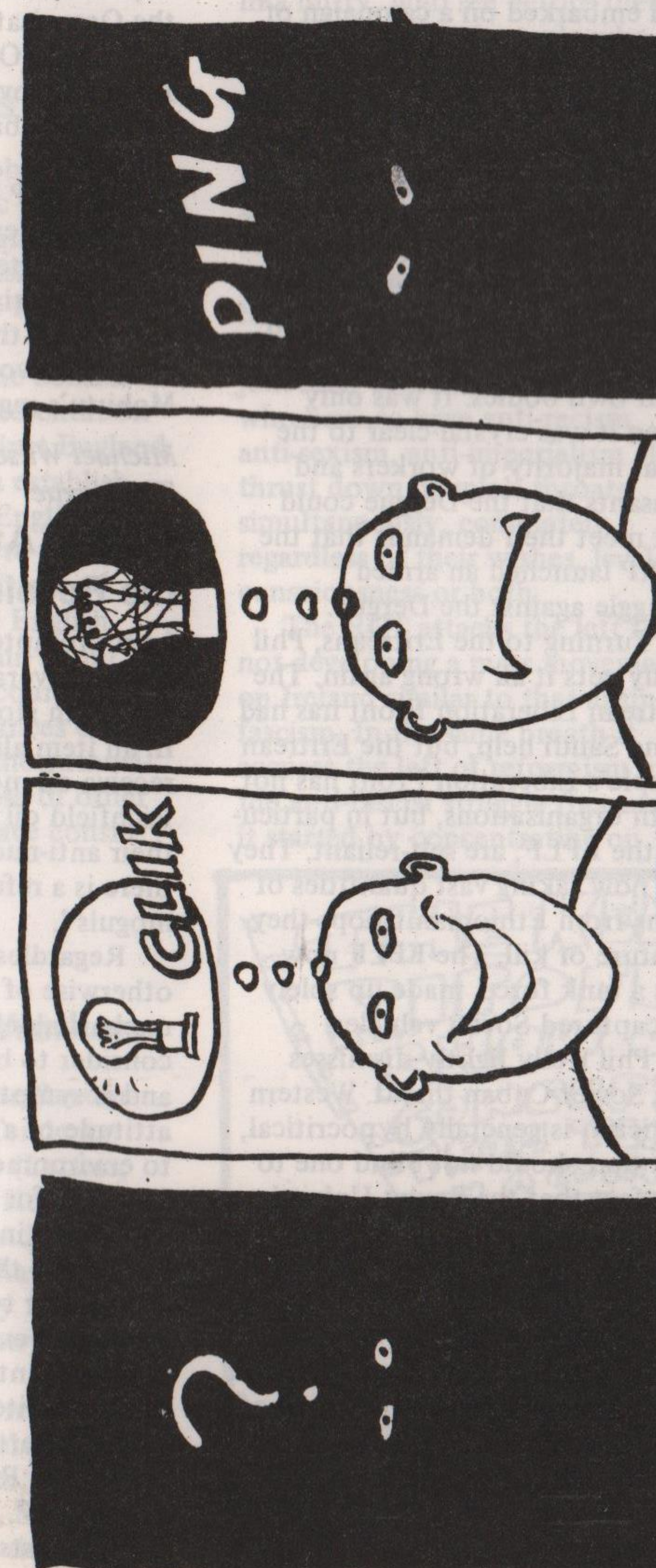
Collective member Tessa has just had a baby boy - an eight pounder called Leon.

Become a *Leveller* agent; 10p commission per copy sold. Call and collect from the office. Cash in advance, but money refunded on unsold copies.

See "The Liberation of the Indians in Kollasuyu (Bolivia)" MINK 'A, 1975; Full list IWGIA, Frederiksholms Kanal 4A DK 1220 Copenhagen K, Denmark as part of Document no. 27

To Roger Moody for leaving his byline off the Bolivia article - The Red Indians of Bolivia - and leaving out a list of literature. Sorry, pressure of space.

APOLOGIES  
To Pete Clark who did last month's cover. Thank you and sorry we left your name out.



Courtesy International Times

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Pages 8-12 The Rock Industry. The international record business is controlled by five multinational companies, three of them American, two European. Small independent labels may have the talent, but the 'majors' still market the product. *Phil Hardy* and *Dave Laing* examine the economics of the rock industry.



Pages 24-26 The Iron Fist. Six anarchists rot in Brixton jail while a worried Anti Terrorist Squad grubs around for enough evidence to bring them to trial. Lord Shackleton whitewashes the Prevention of Terrorism Act and nobody notices. And the ABC trial gets off on an appropriate foot with a check on the 'loyalty' of the jury.

Pages 20-23 The Election Cometh. The Prime Minister's announcement shocked a waiting nation but not *The Leveller's* team of hacks. *Ian Walker* takes his usual measured appraisal of the pros and cons of elections, and *Brian Deer* watches the left gearing up for the great day.

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## Christiania Critic

Your article in 'Leveller 17' on Christiania was okay—as far as it went—but what was it really meant to do?

If it was a news item it contained very little that was new, and if it was intended to be a report on the freetown then surely you could have spared a little more space. As it was—under the fatuous heading "All the dope on Christiania"—the article seemed to have omitted most of the detail which would have given the facts you did print some of the life and excitement of Christiania itself.

We aren't asking for a 10,000 word thesis, just a little less superficial treatment of the place. (And the mention of our pamphlet—Freetown Christiania, 50p inc. postage from the Resource Library—could have been put in with the article itself.)

Sorry to grouse—we do like the magazine.

Steve Platt,  
for Support Christiania/England  
Ladbroke House, Highbury Grove,  
London N5 2AD.

## Dergue Debunked .....

Ethiopia is an attractive topic for instant punditry by journalists of the trendy left, particularly if they don't know what they're talking about—as Phil Kelly (July) clearly does not.

His article displays an unwarranted tolerance to a regime which progressive Ethiopian forces have long since dismissed and resisted as a fascist tyranny controlled by Soviet social-imperialism. He also attributes rather too much political nous to Mengistu Haile-Mariam, who is basically an ignorant (though not unintelligent) soldier manipulated by those around him (whom, as Kelly points out, he distrusts) and capable of retaining power only through the use of terror.

We should be alarmed by Soviet moves in the Third World not so much as a strategic threat but as a very real subversion and manipulation of the sovereignty of weak (and often, as in the case of Ethiopia, desperate) states with inherently unstable regimes. That instability is, of course, cynically encouraged by the Russians.

The famine continues on an even greater scale than in 1973-74, not just in Wollo (a region, formerly a province, and not a city), but in Eritrea, Hararghe, Gondar, Tigrai, Sidamo, Bale and Arssi—two-thirds of the country. To say that "the Dergue's response has been to step up its aid" is to ignore the fact that the regime is at once incapable and unwilling to rush aid to guerrilla-controlled areas of Eritrea and Hararghe and, because of the economic and infrastructural breakdowns it has fostered throughout the country, cannot deliver a fraction of the relief aid

# letters

that would otherwise be pouring in.

The assertion that fewer have died even under the Dergue's "red terror" than under Haile Selassie's neglect is unfounded. Apart from the slaughter (particularly of young children) under "red terror", thousands have died in internecine strife sparked off by the Dergue's misrule, thousands more conscripted peasants have been killed in the Ogaden and Eritrea and hundreds have faced the Dergue's firing squads since long before the "red terror" began.

These are in addition to the hundreds of thousands of refugees from the various war zones—150,000 northerners living in appalling conditions in the Sudan alone. At the moment, Eritrea's civil war is creating mass suffering on the scale of Biafra. Unable to overwhelm the rebels by force, the Dergue is quite happy to allow the Eritreans to starve to death.

Bill Lee  
(co-author, *Conflict in the Horn of Africa*)  
London SW1.

## ..... and in Disgrace

I have often thought of writing into *The Leveller*—the magazine has a lot of good features and some bad ones too. What finally prompted me to write was the article on Ethiopia by Phil Kelly in the July issue. It whitewashed the Dergue and its supporters and ran down the revolutionary forces in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Its "facts" were all wrong.

The Dergue was said to appeal to the peasants because of its land reform programme. In fact like most of the Dergue's "progressive" policies, this has been a paper reform. Land has been redistributed to landless peasants in many areas, but by the peasants themselves. While the central government was still weak immediately after the overthrow of Haile Selassie, they seized many estates and large farms, driving out or killing the landlords.

The Dergue simply recognised a fait accompli—it didn't have much choice—but this did not inspire any support from the peasants. The so-called "peasant militias" were forcibly recruited. Their lack of enthusiasm for the leaders who led them (from a very safe distance) was shown by the way they fell to pieces as soon as they were set against the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary

Army (the army led by the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party).

Phil Kelly refers to the political groups in Ethiopia which support the Dergue. Most of these were made up of handfuls of intellectuals and were set up by the Dergue, sometimes by different factions. They proclaimed themselves "Marxist-Leninist" or "socialist" and gave the Dergue their support. It was good for the "revolutionary" image of the Dergue abroad, but not much use internally.

However the regime's socialist demagoguery has helped the Soviet Union and Cuba justify their aid to what is certainly a fascist regime.

The EPRP was founded in 1972, not 1974. When the trade unions launched the first general strike in Ethiopian history in March, 1974, they were led by EPRP members and supporters. The Dergue quickly recognised the threat the Marxist-Leninists of the EPRP presented to them, and embarked on a campaign of violence against them. It was the Dergue, not as Phil Kelly said, the EPRP, which started the campaign of violence.

It assassinated leaders of mass organisations and held new elections, in which the masses again voted for the EPRP. Eventually the Dergue dissolved the mass organisations and set up their own bodies. It was only when it was crystal-clear to the great majority of workers and peasants that the Dergue could not meet their demands that the EPRP launched an armed struggle against the Dergue.

Turning to the Eritreans, Phil Kelly gets it all wrong again. The Eritrean Liberation Front has had some Saudi help, but the Eritrean People's Liberation Front has not. Both organisations, but in particular the EPLF, are self-reliant. They are now taking vast quantities of arms from Ethiopian troops they capture or kill. The EPLF now has a tank force, made up solely of captured Soviet vehicles.

Phil Kelly lightly dismisses the Soviet-Cuban threat. Western criticism is generally hypocritical, but that should not blind one to the fact that the Soviet Union is attempting to expand in Africa, and that the Cubans are the agents of its expansion. The latter are up to their ears in debt to the Soviet Union, and to treat them as some sort of idealist crusaders acting of their own free will is just ridiculous.

It is very easy for progressive westerners to fall in with the Soviet view of the world, and Phil

Kelly seems to have done that to a large extent in his article. He should not accept the line that Soviet and Cuban intervention in a country is somehow not as bad as, say, US imperialist intervention. He should also pay more attention to what the revolutionary movements of a country say, and less to what the ruling classes and their backers say.

J.G.  
Communist Workers Movement  
member.

## Zaire Debate

A brief comment on the "Zaire" article in *The Leveller* 17. Russell Southwood suggests that the FNLC and the PRP are allied. Yet the PRP's official publications have denied such an alliance, and are strongly critical of the FNLC.

Mbumba's past political record certainly does not qualify as "revolutionary", and the FNLC is linked directly with the "Katangese" mercenaries who fought the Portuguese colonialists.

The PRP of Laurent Kabila can be contacted in Belgium via:  
Documents du M.R.C.  
B.P.55A  
1348 Louvain-La-Neuve  
Belgium.

The "Comite-Zaire" in Antwerpen may—charitably—be described as uncritically pro-Russian/Cuban. The PRP have expressed their solidarity with the Organisation of Communists of Angola (O.C.A.), a Marxist-Leninist movement against the Russian/Cuban occupation of Angola.

The PRP have issued statements condemning the Shaba events as interference by Russian social-imperialism, and calling instead for the intensification of people's revolutionary war against Mobutu's regime.

Michael Wilson,  
*The Hague.*

## Whales After the Revolution

I am prompted to write by your bitchy coverage of the Friends of the Earth story in the last issue. In an item alleging that FOE receive oil money from Atlantic Richfield oil company to pursue their anti-nuclear campaign, there is a reference to "FOE moguls".

Regardless of the truth or otherwise of the story, this is uncharitable to a group which I consider to be on the "right side", and is symptomatic of the attitude of a section of the left to environmental issues. The Leveller, for example, has succeeded in running piss taking articles on the Mind and Body festival for two years running, while its positive coverage of environmental issues has been limited to items on nuclear power (very important of course) and one other, Recycling Marxism, in *Leveller* 17, pointing out the need for socialists to take more interest in environmental issues.

What interest the left does take in environmental questions has tended to be orientated to "hard", "serious" topics such as nuclear power. That has also tended to be the orientation of SERA (letter last issue), excellent though that organisation is.

The left press, for example, has ignored the "Save the Whale" campaign. The attitude seems to be that this is a cissy thing to be concerned with. What a wasted opportunity to convince people of the stupidities of the present system! Besides, I for one would like there to be some whales still around "after the revolution".

I know it's a question of priorities, but for it to have been given no coverage at all has relegated it to a non-issue as far as the left is concerned.

There almost seems to be a kind of cultivated philistinism on the left as far as the environment is concerned. One idiot, writing in *Socialist Challenge*, sneered at environmentalists for preferring the smell of horse shit to exhaust fumes. Give me horse shit anytime! Exhaust fumes contain carbon monoxide (1% concentration is fatal within half an hour), lead (nerve poison) and benzpyrene (carcinogenic) among other things, not to mention asbestos particles from the brake linings.

Selwyn Jones  
Moseley, B'ham.

## England Expects .....

Padraig O Conchuir objects to any but Irish Catholic Nationalism in Ireland. Does he equally object to anything but English Nationalism in England where he is a settler?

Certainly when one considers how Westminster representation is gerrymandered against England and the refusal of the establishment to consider an English assembly, equivalent to the Scots and Welsh ones, as a focus of national identity, the English have much to complain about.

If the left in this country took up the national grievances of the English people with the enthusiasm they take up those of other nations they might have considerably more impact.

Tom Tyler  
London SE26.

## Relating to the Workers

The Irish caucus of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency writes very fine prose (Letters, *The Leveller* No 17). However, what their language and the ideas expressed through it have to do with the revolutionary tasks before us in this country defeats me.

For the RCT, to "relate to the working class" is to relate to reformism and, in turn, to be reformist. As a result, the only answer, —to judge by the RCT's language and politics—is decidedly

# letters

not to "relate to the working class".

Fine. One writes in a language that all those millions with a good enough education—preferably a degree with a good dollop of Marxism on top—can understand. One uses words that come direct from Capital or Two Tasks of Social Democracy or the Revolution Betrayed and are consequently *scientific*. And one is appropriately ignored.

But what does it mean "to relate to the working class"? Apart from anything else, it is a bad use of language, conceptually inadequate. A *class* can't be related to.

But the content of the phrase, the politics behind it, are important. What it is about is certainly *not* rejecting scientific conceptions of the state, capital, class, etc, nor rejecting the importance of the anti-imperialist struggle, the unity of the British and Irish working class.

At the same time, it is about rejecting revolutionaries who are in a hurry, who see before them a mass of oppressed people who only need to hear the word (capital, class, state) to join the revolutionary party and struggle for revolution; about rejecting those who refuse to communicate to people in a language that doesn't go above their heads; who have no conception of strategy, of flexibility, of the present conjuncture, of where people are at; who have to have anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-imperialism all thrust down people's throats simultaneously, completely regardless of their wishes, level of consciousness or both.

The RCT attacks the left for not developing a mass movement on Ireland similar to that against fascism. In the same breath it accuses the left of reformism in the anti-fascist struggle (because it started by concentrating on

the more liberal issues). With its mixture of malice and envy no doubt it will split again soon over whether or not to enter the struggle. The Revolutionary Amoebic Tendency strikes again.

Ireland and fascism are related. The links are racism and imperialism. As the recent Anti-Nazi League Conference showed, the anti-fascist movement is not stagnant, not stuck in a rut of anti-British chauvinism. Far from it, it is developing upon its great successes and moving beyond fascism and into such areas as racism and Ireland. And having started with a liberal anti-Nazi position it can politicise far more people over racism and Ireland than it could have otherwise. Likewise the struggle over Ireland, starting with H-Block, Troops Out, torture.

Thus to "relate to" people is not to stagnate with them but to interact with them and move forward. Opposing and 'relating to' reformist politics are not, as the RCT suggest, two ends of a pole, but perfectly compatible. It is, in fact, only when you *fail* to relate to reformist politics that you fail to effectively oppose them—'cos you bugger up the dialectic, don't you ...

Ben Johnson  
S.London Big Flame

## Complicating Factors

Your article "Saturday Night Heaven" importantly raise the questions around the use that socialists can and do make of film, the relevance to the audience, the size of audience etc.

However in considering bourgeois narrative film it must be remembered that whatever the content, the prevailing (oppressive) culture is inevitably transmitted and reinforced. This in itself is mostly more powerful

than any content and the fact that the culture can so readily contain a revolutionary story effectively neuters the impact of the message whatever the immediate emotional effect.

Further, important aspects of our cultural oppression (say attitudes towards women) are often legitimated by faithful and uncritical representation in the setting of a "revolutionary" story.

There is a lot more to the destruction of film form than Kevin McDonnell appears to consider although his informed article could be a useful starting point for further consideration of this.

Tom Wilson,  
Nottingham.

## Getting to Know You

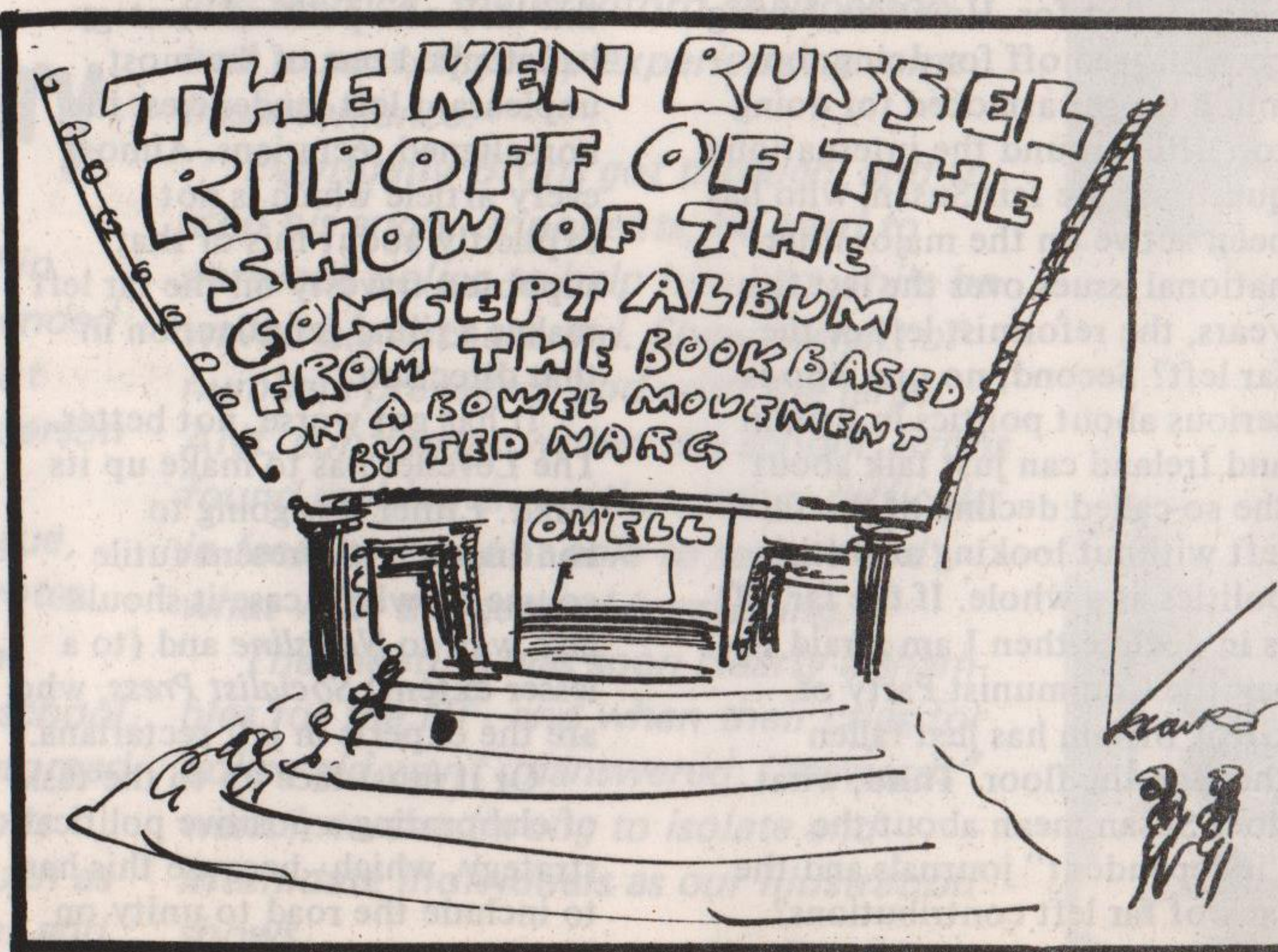
Thanks very much for sending me so regularly all the information about the collective, as well as the excellent magazine. I've just read Phil Cohen's report on the Leveller conference, and thought you might be interested to hear what a couple of your readers in Swansea are like.

My husband and me can't really get to your meetings, as we have no transport and aren't that well off for travelling up to London very often; this doesn't help you to make the set-up less London based, I know, so I thought I'd establish a sort of primitive contact by letter, if you've got the time to skip through it.

I'm not what you'd call an active political worker, although I'm getting more that way recently. Three and a half years ago I started a co-operative community theatre company with three other people, called Open Cast Theatre. It still works in West Glamorgan, in small halls etc., doing a variety of shows, always with the aim of doing what ordinary people want and keeping both ears wide open to find out what that is. It isn't a left-wing company as such, because the trouble is that if you want people to find out what they want, they've got to make mistakes too. This means that we did 'Private Lives' last year—but it didn't matter because our public, even those who suggested it, remarked that there were now other things they enjoy us doing more—the company is now exploring more original and specifically regional theatre now (stuff on local government and second homes).

But I've left now, and I'll explain why. I do care about socialism and justice, but I think that in a society like ours, where we aren't educated to take part in a democracy at all, the first thing we must do is give people the chance to exercise their democratic muscles. So while I don't do a lot in politics, I do want to get some useful theatre

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continued

work going in Wales. I've lived here since 1969, and during that time I've come to realise slowly how deep the ruling class's brainwash techniques have gone with the Welsh working and middle classes.

It's gone so deep that you can hardly say that Wales even has its own middle class; as in any colony, all the values adopted are those of the ruling country. So I've decided that there is a lot inherent in Welsh life that ought to be treated as if it's valuable, if the Welsh people are to preserve enough self-respect to keep them healthy. The language, for instance, which I'm learning, and some of their own pacifist democratic traditions, which I think the Labour Party has shamefully abused here.

The only party that in Swansea represents any real opposition to corrupt government and prestige spending is Plaid Cymru, so at present I'm working with them to try to shift the power balance in local government away from the disastrous Labour and Ratepayer power groups. West Glamorgan County Council is going to build a County Hall in Swansea, conservatively estimated to cost 11 million quid, but more probably above the £20 million mark. Some people think it's not needed at all, but anyway there are perfectly good Victorian buildings going to rack and ruin in the county that could be used. No single party is opposing this project, except the left-wing of Plaid Cymru.

I'd just ask *The Leveller* people to remember that there are left-wingers in the most surprising places, working quietly inside structures which seem hopelessly corrupt. So I agree with the bits about keeping

against left groups. A friend of mind got so depressed reading one of your issues he won't look again; I like your articles which show where people are winning battles, especially where there is still goodwill left at the end. We don't all want to end up sour and embittered or we'll use power badly if we ever get it. I know it seems unsophisticated these days to be nice and chummy, instead of cool and critical, but I think it's important sometimes.

Eirwen Gardiner  
Abertawe.

### A Plea for the Party Spirit

No serious revolutionary organisation should object to positive criticism of their theory or practice. Unfortunately, it would appear that over the past few months *The Leveller* has adopted what I would call an elitist and negative approach to the far left.

I have for a number of years now been active in this circle of people, both as a group member and as an individual involved in

# letters

campaigns, union work, etc. We are not very large it is true and, I believe I am correct in saying, with hindsight we have made a number of mistakes. Nevertheless, over the last few years the far left has begun to become aware of whole new areas of class struggle and the important lessons to be learnt from the women's and gays' movements. This awareness has also led to a better understanding of those people who, for whatever reason, cannot join the existing groups. I seriously believe that only a hack sectarian could swim around looking for examples of the far left dismissing the actions of individual activists.

Sadly, the creeping elitism and negative attitude adopted by certain forces around *The Leveller* does more harm to the isolated comrades working in the UOM or NAC than to those in IMG or SWP. *The Leveller* could influence the comrades of these groups by having a positive and non-sectarian approach. Exposure politics while being important does not open up the left to real debate or real joint activity.

Negative criticism and distortions remind me of current debates around the oppression of people through roles, eg teacher/student, parent/kid, man/woman etc. It is true that many left groups—not just the far left—suffer from this power-relationship, but anti-Party people are far from innocent too you know.

Finally, what sparked off this letter was Susan Gargen's "The Rise and Fall of the Far Left". While not wishing to make Susan the centre of my attack, I found what she wrote unbelievable in places. First, it is true that we can jump from one campaign to another—this is not always through choice but because of limited personpower and urgent action being called for. However, having been slagged off for doing too much we get attacked for doing too little around the international questions. Be fair Susan, who has been active on the major international issues over the last five years, the reformist left or the far left? Second, no one who is serious about politics in Britain and Ireland can just talk about the so-called decline of the far left without looking at British politics as a whole. If the far left is in decline then I am afraid to say the Communist Party of Great Britain has just fallen through the floor. Third, what does Susan mean about the "independent" journals and the lack of far left contributions?

Just one example, *Wedge* was started by members of the far left!

Please, comrades, don't turn the magazine into a "Hack-Bag".

Bob Findlay,  
Birmingham.

### Sectariana Rules?

Dave Bradney's polemic against the Leveller's professional journalists (Aug/Sep) hits the wrong target. There are two aspects to professionalism in journalism. One is the skills of the trade—how to interview, write simply, obtain facts quickly, sub-edit, design etc. These need to be employed on behalf of the left, and used to assist those who do not have access to the mass media to communicate their views, concerns and interests.

If, as Bradney claims, the central concern of the Leveller's professionals is exposé-type journalism, then this is not a bad thing. Lenin, who had the merit of leading a successful revolution, argued that it was important to expose and denounce the vile workings of the capitalist system.

But exposé journalism can only be an adjunct to politics, and not a substitute for it. It aids in defining the enemy and winning supporters to our side, but provides no strategy for countering the system. It is here that the major weakness of *The Leveller* lies.

Any Leveller reader who asks "What do I do?" is left without a clue. What does *The Leveller* have to say about confronting the Labour Government, the union bureaucracies, Phase four, the cuts, racism, Euro-communism, uniting the far left—next to nothing.

Into the vacuum created by this lack of a political strategy has stepped one of the most unpleasant left tendencies, the non-aligned sectarians. Almost every article which is not explicitly about this or that supposed travesty on the far left makes a ritual genuflection in that direction.

It has got worse, not better. The Leveller has to make up its mind. Either it is going to continue on its present futile course, in which case it should give way to *Newsline* and (to a lesser extent) *Socialist Press*, who are the experts in left sectariana.

Or it must face up to the task of elaborating a positive political strategy, which—because this has to include the road to unity on

the far left—will involve placing the magazine in relation to the projects of *Socialist Worker* and in particular *Socialist Challenge*.

The only visible middle road is to leave alone the strategy, quit the sectarianism, and concentrate on social and cultural issues.

Boris Tardov  
London NW10

### Just Say the Word ....

In connection with your articles on surveillance (*Leveller* 15), you may be interested in a recent piece of research which shows how quickly political technology changes.

Dorothy Jones stated that surveillance was expensive and time and man-power consuming: "Listening to one person's phone conversation 24 hours a day takes 4 to 6 staff. Like any capitalist the state is going to be wary of such an outlay if there is little likelihood of returns".

However, the authors of "Technology of Political Control" (1977) found "research and development teams are working on ways of making surveillance less labour intensive. There have been reports of devices under development to monitor large numbers of telephone lines simultaneously and automatically . . . one is the development of a programme for detecting 'key words', e.g. demonstration, strike, and names of political organisations. Only conversations involving 'critical people' or using 'key words' would then be recorded . . . 'Key word' detection is still a remote prospect. The era of mass practicable surveillance is still many years off".

Unfortunately, what the authors saw as science fiction is now very close to coming to fruition. The National Physical Laboratory have been able to teach a micro-computer to learn to react to up to 50 words of the English Language.

"The researchers have solved the problems of transmitting the voice commands over a telephone line and of making the computer recognition system sensitive to commands in a noisy background . . . Also the commands can be picked up even if the key words are in the middle of the sentence. The low cost of such a voice interaction system would cost only in the region of £2,000" (New Scientist, 3rd August '78).

With the application of micro-processors and bubble memories, due to be available in the next few years, there is a frightening potential for mass telephone surveillance. Capital cost and the number of operatives needed to monitor the equipment will be low.

All in time for 1984.

S.V Brooks and S.L.Dorrell  
Huddersfield.

## SHORTS

### No stopping Philip Agee

Philip Agee now faces the danger of espionage charges being brought against him by the US Justice Department over his eagerly-awaited new book which should come out this month.

The Justice Department is also considering taking civil action against Lyle Stuart Inc., the American publishers, to stop them bringing out "Dirty Work: the CIA in Western Europe", in which Agee and several other authors detail more CIA names and deeds, particularly in Portugal, Greece and Britain.

The US government may however be banjaxed by the simple fact that Agee is not resident in the USA and that his publishers have not signed any secrecy agreement to protect CIA material. The US would also like somehow to stop the newsletter Agee and others have launched—the first issue named the CIA station chief in Jamaica. This newsletter is called "Covert Action Information Bulletin", it costs \$16 a year but a free sub will arrive if you send \$24.95 for the "Dirty Work" book to PO Box 50272, F Street Station, Washington DC, 20004, USA.

### Who bombed Brum? - cont.

An attempt to sabotage the bid by six Northern Irishmen to assert their innocence of Britain's biggest-ever mass murder of the 22 people killed in November 1974 when two bombs blasted two Birmingham city centre pubs—is being made by the West Midlands police.

The background to this case was set out in *The Leveller* (issue 1); since then the six men have had leave to appeal

### More NF thuggery

An August bye-election was called in Hebden Bridge near Leeds, which ended with a defeat for the National Front candidate Barry Wadsworth, chairperson of the Halifax NF who, constantly harried by the local Anti-Nazi League, came bottom of the poll with 83 votes.

When the NF called an election meeting on the 16th at a primary school, the ANL was ready and with widespread support placed pickets at the various entrances, through which NFers such as Andrew Brons, Yorkshire organiser and

turned down, but they have succeeded in getting legal aid for a unique case alleging assault by West Midlands police in Birmingham, Lancashire police in Morecambe, and by the Home Office in that they were responsible for the beatings. The men undoubtedly received their first day on remand at Winson Green prison, even though fourteen prison officers accused of these beatings were acquitted in Birmingham two years ago.

The men are saying they were beaten, threatened and intimidated into signing false confessions, which formed the bulk of the prosecution case that ended with them each receiving multiple life sentences at Lancaster Crown Court in 1975.

Preparations for the assault case had been developing in an encouraging manner, with much new evidence, and the men's families optimistic as ever, were anticipating a hopeful case sometime late in 1979.

Now however, the West Midlands police are attempting to intercept this with a legal manoeuvre using an obscure procedural device to assert the claims have "no reasonable basis", are "vexacious" and should be struck out.

The police action comes up at the London High Courts on 13 November this year, and will be heard for five days by a judge without a jury; the public will not be admitted, and the men will be forced to reveal new evidence they wanted under wraps for their own case.

If the police succeed in sabotaging the Irishmen's cases then they are left no legal recourse in Britain, and will have only the long-drawn out Strasbourg procedures to keep any hope alive.

### Irish rogues daub big Ben

"Under bare Ben Bulben's head In Drumcliff churchyard Yeats is laid." Not only the superb Irish poet is under Ben Bulben's head, but the unmissable message "Brits Out." Earlier this year some dastardly Republicans chose that splendid mount in Co. Sligo, so beloved of Yeats, to spell out the slogan with large white painted rocks.

Jim Merrick, the Bradford chairperson, had to pass, thereby experiencing some inconvenience.

Eventually Brons got through, and to stop his angry opponents, he tried to persuade police to help him out while he waved his fists around. Sheer weight of numbers prevailed, and with the large ANL contingent within the school, Brons found making an oration rather difficult; in fact, he was not able to say a word what with the general barracking.

The meeting was soon clearly a sham-bles for the NF, and when their cries for police aid went unanswered, "stewards" went into the throng to isolate and intimidate individuals as our illustration shows.

Fred Foot

The County Council, disturbed at delicate tourist sensibilities being upset by the message on the foothills far below Bulben's summit, acted quickly to eradicate it. Undeterred, the slogan appeared within the week half way up the mount, and again diligent workmen clambered up the slope to dismantle the "Brits Out" once more.

Recently however, knaves with the deftness of mountain goats have managed to place the slogan on the highest, steepest part of the mountain where it commanded a still more impressive position. This time round, council workmen are refusing to risk the climb, fearful of their lives, and visitors to Yeats' graveyard are obliged to view the message as they gaze with awe at Ben Bulben.

### Mau-Mau in Brighton

At times people can make an impact on the mass media. On August 12 the Brighton Anti-Racist Committee marched on the office of the town's ineffably boring daily paper, the *Evening Argus*, to protest against the space awarded freely to letter-writers from the National Front but denied to anti-racists.

A deputation got in to mau-mau editor Victor Gorrings, and he agreed to run a protest letter. He also ran a leading article on the Anti-Nazi League, pointing out that despite its SWP connections, it was still (his argument) a cause that should be supported.

For his pains "The Clockwork" Gorrings got slammed in the next issue of the Front magazine *Spearhead*. The *Argus* is owned by the evil Westminster Press chain, a subsidiary of the S Pearson empire, which is into oil, banking, ceramics and books (Penguin) as well as papers. Nasty monopolists, to be sure; but especially for the Front. Their banking subsidiary is Lazards, part of the great international Zionist conspiracy. And because there are directorial connections with Rowntrees, and the Joseph Rowntree Social Service Trust funds a few token lefty groups, part of the Marxist conspiracy too. Always nice to see the right at each others' throats.



Pic: Niel





IT'S NOT only rock 'n roll. However much you like it, it's big, big business. Who owns what in the record industry? Who are the Big 5? What's the relation between the record industry and the radio stations? And who controls public taste? Phil Hardy and Dave Laing, presently writing a book together on the record industry, have some of the answers.

# Product Of Our Time

**F**irst, some figures. In 1976, world sales of records totalled 3500 million dollars. Of this about three-quarters was in the United States and less than a tenth in Britain. In America, sales of discs brought in about seven times as much as sales of paperback books.

Some idea of the expansion of the industry during the years since rock 'n roll can be got from the figures for the production of records in Britain. In 1955, 9 million albums were manufactured. By 1965 this had jumped under the impetus of The Beatles by over 200% to 31 million. And in 1975, the figure was 102 million, another increase of well over 200%. The amount of cash paid out for the albums and singles (75 million manufactured) in that year was £140,973,000. To this you must add the gate money for live concerts, the sales of the

music press (around 750,000 weekly), and the turnover of the musical instrument and hi-fi industries, all of whom are now virtually satellites of the record business.

But who controls the record industry? At first sight it appears to fit into the pattern of "monopoly capitalism" and domination by the multi-nationals beloved of most marxist economists. A glance at the industry on a worldwide basis shows five massive corporations far ahead of anyone else in the field. Three are American, two European. The United States has WEA (Warner Bros, Elektra, Atlantic, part of Warner Communications which is part of the Kinney Corporation, originally a chain of car parks and funeral parlours); RCA, member of a radio and electronics complex; and Columbia (CBS), whose interests cover all the media.

Polygram comprises the Dutch Phonogram company (owned by Phillips Electrical) and the German Polydor label, a subsidiary of Siemens. And finally there is the British company EMI, which has 33 branches overseas, mostly set up in Europe and Asia in the heyday of Empire — they still have 98% of the Indian record market. But EMI also own the ABC cinema chain, most of Thames TV, Capitol Records USA, record shops, ticket agents, music publishers, night clubs, musical instrument distributors and (in America) recording equipment manufacturers.

These Big 5 companies are referred to as the majors in the jargon of the record business. The definition of a major, however, is not based simply on size and breadth of its involvement in leisure and electronics. A major is a

company which controls two of the three segments of the record industry process: manufacture and distribution. As a general rule, every other record company (an "independent") has to have its releases pressed and sent round to the shops by one of the majors. This means that the big companies get a cut from every record sold; regardless of whether it's one of their labels. This cut can be up to 20% of the retail price.

It is increasingly difficult for smaller companies to make the leap into the ranks of the majors. Vast sums would be needed for pressing plant and for ensuring supplies of raw materials. The vinyl out of which records are made is a by-product of oil and following the world oil crisis of five years ago, the British majors signed long term contracts with the oil companies: EMI and RCA

with ICI, Decca (a major in the British market) with BP.

The other potential problem for majors is the continuous utilisation of their manufacturing capacity. Recently, RCA had only one single and no albums in the Top 60 (the single was by Elvis!). But this almost certainly didn't mean that everyone at the RCA factory in Washington New Town had the day off. Christmas is the peak period for record sales and the companies have to start pressing the copies of "Elvis Meets Santa Beyond The Stars" or whatever during the summer. And in addition, there is a sort of "gentlemen's agreement" between the majors that when someone has such big hits on their hands that their own presses can't cope, they'll use a rival's spare capacity, at a price. In the words of EMI's Leslie Hill,

"the cycle of success visits each of us in turn".

In manufacturing and distribution, then, the record industry is a classic case of monopoly, with pseudo-competition between giant conglomerates. But it would be wrong to conclude from this that the music itself is in the stranglehold of the monopolies. Because in the third area of the record business, the "origination" of the recordings, the picture is rather different. Although the Top 60 singles are all made and distributed by Britain's seven national majors (the Big 5 plus Pye and Selecta which is owned by Decca), only about half of the records were originated by those firms. The rest are on labels owned by "independents" varying in size from Tamla-Motown to Manchester's Rabid Records, a child of punk run by a few shrewd ex-hippies.

This is not to say, however, that these "independents", and the existence of this enclave of a modified version of competitive capitalism within the general monopoly situation, necessarily represents some progressive aspect of the record industry. It is true that in the history of rock some small labels have nourished innovation (from Sun to Stiff), but so have the majors (CBS signed Dylan, The Beatles were on EMI). In fact, because they don't have the dependable income from pressing discs to fall back on, the independents are often total slaves to the charts and the drive to get hits, usually by exploiting a formula ad nauseam.

The lack of control by the majors of the origination of recordings is, in fact, a sign of their *lack of control of the market*. They are unable, in a definitive way, to determine which records we, the consumers, will buy in large numbers. Put another way, they cannot control or predict to any reliable extent the precise pieces of music which will appeal to us, delight us or obsess us.

Of course, the control is there to some degree. But so widespread is the belief on the left that it is the record

companies who "create" the stars (implying that we are manipulated in the process), that this unpredictability needs to be stressed. What the companies in fact do, is to create the conditions for stardom, to the extent that is extremely difficult for any genuinely popular artist to avoid taking up that role.

Comparisons with the fashion business where control is virtually total make this limit to market control clearer.

In the fashion business it is achieved in two ways: the identity of outlook and interest between manufacturers and the media people who comment on fashion (journalists and photographers); and the existence of "laboratories" where new lines can be test marketed. The latter are the fashion shows (notably in Paris) where designers present their new lines. Attending the shows are the buyers from chain stores and mass clothing manufacturers, as well as the press. Haute Couture is the testing-ground for mass-market fashions, and the (relatively small) number of designs chosen by chain-store buyers effectively determine next year's "look". This is reinforced by the fashion writers, who of all commentators on cultural commodities are (with motoring correspondents) the most dedicated to the direct encouragement of consumption.

In short, the fashion world presents a united front to its market: originators, manufacturers, retailers and interpreters speak with one

voice. In the music business there is no such united front, there are no "laboratories" for test-marketing and the scale of operations is very different: to tool up for a new fashion garment is far more expensive than to etch a master disc from which to press copies of a new recording.

The absence of a united front in the record business stems from the simple fact that the companies and their main intermediaries with the audience — the radio stations — have divergent interests. While the record industry wants to sell records, primarily to the young, still the section of the market that buys records most often, the radio station has to attract the audience its advertisers want to reach. In this context the young are less significant than the householders, female and male, who in general are less regular record buyers. Thus even when punk was at its height, most radio stations programmed very little of it; in crude terms, not many punk fans are in the market for washing machines.

There are a number of ways in which the record industry tries to get radio to do its bidding. The easiest used to be "pay-for-play" or payola. Both Radio Luxembourg and the pirate stations devoted a large proportion of their time to records which the companies had paid to have broadcast.

Nowadays, they have turned their attention to the charts, which influence the policy of radio stations to a high degree. This is particularly true of the BBC, which is more interested in its total listening figures than in getting particular segments of the audience. The arguments about the charts would take up too much space here, but the essential point is that rankings depend on numbers of records sold in a particular timespan in a supposedly representative sample of shops (about 300). To ensure a disc gets into the chart, a company needs to know which the chart return shops are and to find a way of getting its disc bought there in maximum numbers as early as possible.

Etching the master disc.



Pic: Sue Gibson

Pic: Sue Gibson



continued

In the last year they've come up with a masterstroke: the 12" single in a limited edition, available only in some shops, nearly all of which happen to be chart return retailers. The 12" single, usually of disco music, is proving to be very popular as a collector's item among kids and because of its limited availability everyone rushes to get it as soon as it's released. The result is a chart placing right away, which guarantees wide exposure on radio and in the discos.

If the 12" single is an example of the industry achieving some short-term measure of control over the market, punk, for a while was just the opposite. Over the Sex Pistols, EMI was faced with a conflict between its duty to its profit margins and its duty to the system which ensures its right to those profits. Such was the pressure that (unusually) the latter won. It was no doubt as a result of that debacle that the company rushed to sign Tom Robinson as a replacement.

Punk rock was also a sign that rock music, despite the ever-present pressure from within the industry to keep it "only entertainment", is not immune to social and economic changes. So, in a very different way, is the rise and rise of Robert Stigwood, producer of "Saturday Night Fever", "Grease" and the "Sgt Pepper" movie and manager of the Bee Gees and Eric Clapton. If Tom Robinson is the Woody Guthrie of the new Depression, Stigwood is its Busby Berkeley. Like that Hollywood choreographer of the 1930s, he is in the escapism market. But since this is after the sixties, the escapism has a tinge of "realism" about it. *Newsweek* aptly described his movies as a "Dionysian celebration of middle-class values". In business terms, though, Stigwood has expanded the horizons of the industry. There have always been soundtrack albums of film music (most notably "The Sound of Music") but his movies have been spinoffs from the music. Although it



broke box-office records, "Saturday Night Fever" was primarily a trailer for the album, sales of which have reached over 8 million. By spearheading this new alliance of rock and the Hollywood mainstream, Stigwood has grafted onto rock the marketing strategies of the movie business: if you spend a million on marketing, you'll make a million.

That the graft will be permanent seems unlikely. The innate contradictions that go with turning music into a commodity should ensure in the long term that the market remains unpredictable for the record industry. But if Stigwood's blockbuster approach (and various "artist development" schemes) catches on, there's going to be a lot more money spent on fewer artists by the companies, narrowing even further the range of music they record and distribute.

\* *Statistics from the recently published "Sociology of Rock" by Simon Frith (Constable).*

# Rock Around The Cock

LINDSAY COOPER, ex *Henry Cow*, now in the *Feminist Improvisation Group*, looks at rock and sexuality.

**The Sex Pistols didn't like Glen Matlock, their first bass player, because he put minor chords in his songs. Minor chords are pouffy they said.**

It's a crude way of putting it but then rock has never been subtle in its presentation of masculine and feminine, homosexual and heterosexual. But no-one ever asked why the subtle, melodic changes of the minor chords should be reserved for gay men and, by implication, women.

Rock has always been

about sex. Jazz and blues were both originally various forms of sexual slangs. It wasn't till the sexually explicit words and beat of the blues got mixed up with puritanical country music that white music fans discovered there was more than just kissing and cuddling. It was rock 'n' roll.

Elvis's thrusting pelvis left little doubt about what he was expressing. This new explicitness brought with it a music of genuine teenage rebellion with a threat of



sexual liberation which proved as potent and threatening as communism to 'straight' America. It shook up traditional sexual values, even if it didn't change them much.

The sexuality of the music was very much part of the dancing that went with it.

Later, this cathartic and liberating element in dance would be lost, as sixties rock culture focused more on the superstar performer. Music and dance changed from being a substitute for sex; hip easy listening—like the Eagles and Jackson Browne—became a background accompaniment to sex.

But this concern with sexuality is not about sexual liberation. Rock remains a machismo cult, a rebellion of young men against old. Its sexual content reproduces and caricatures existing values.

Lyrics of every kind of rock music, from cock rock to teenybop, insult women and glorify dominant male sexuality:-

**Under my thumb, the girl who once had me down  
Under my thumb, the girl who once pushed me around  
It's down to me, the difference in the clothes she wears  
It's down to me, the change has come, she's under my thumb  
Ain't it the truth babe (Rolling Stones)**

The notorious, male sexual posturing of cock rock with its pumping beat and arrogant style underpin an aggressive sexuality which often spills over into violence at concerts. You can't wipe out the memory of the brutal killing at Altamont or the uncheckable violence of Sham '69 fans

I'm not saying that women don't enjoy this type of music. For the screaming girl fans, the Rolling Stones were a lot more exciting than their fumbling boyfriends. Also the 'romance' of the hit singles may well have seemed more real than their own.

**You don't have to say you love me Just be close at hand  
You don't have to stay forever I will understand (Dusty Springfield)**

It's no answer to say 'there have always been women performers'. For rock culture has always turned them into sexual objects (like Debbie Harry) or makes them into Armatrading-type cults.

What they can do is limited. They can be singers but rarely instrumentalists; they're so good at conveying emotion but are limited musically. Their voices are invariably controlled by production techniques, geared to a market that is used to a manufactured femininity.

**On a recent TV show Helen Reddy was told that she would have to have elastoplast over her nipples and shave her armpits. She refused. Panic ensued. The situation was saved by a compromise. She would wear elastoplast over her nipples but not shave her armpits.**

Women performers like Dory Previn can sing about how they're pissed about by men, but never about understanding this oppression or changing it.

As elsewhere, rock shows women as idealised, unreal male-fantasy people: the all-understanding women, the dependable women, the women who won't come up with the sexual goods and so on. The range of images for women performers, accepted by the public and the music biz, is very small.

Men are allowed to be sexually ambiguous like Bowie and Jagger or downright unmasculine like Tom Robinson and Elvis Costello. But female sexual ambiguity is short on popular appeal. Only Patti Smith (and she's a poet) can get away with it. An image which challenges female stereotypes is even harder to pull off. Would we have had Poly

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Styrene and Siouxsie (of the Banshees) without the general challenge of punk?

But you can't just talk about rock's sexism in performances and record lyrics. It comes from a profit-making industry "selling people what they want", which is not in business to challenge its own existence.

It can be forced to make concessions like Tom Robinson's *Glad To Be Gay* and *Right On Sister* but this is a drop in the ocean alongside the unending volumes of heterosexist records streaming off the presses.

Chris Brazier of the *Melody Maker* can criticise the Stranglers for their sexist attitudes but he fights hopelessly against the endless 'tit 'n' bum' ads for records and sexist articles by other writers.

So if rock is virtually about male sexuality how can it be changed? No real breakdown of rock machismo is going to happen until more women are playing music and women who work in rock aren't automatically slotted into being just 'sexy chicks'.

One optimistic sign is that over the last two years music has started to have a far greater political impact and context than it's ever had. Although experience has taught women that a rise in leftist consciousness can still exclude any awareness of sexism.

**At a Rock Against Racism gig, the Fabulous Poodles started to play a song about schoolgirls.**

Several women objected. The band became abusive. An exchange of sharp letters ensued in *RAR's* mag, *Temporary Hoarding*. The women accusing *RAR* of not taking sexism as seriously as racism, when in effect there was no difference between the two. The organisers replied that the band would never have learnt how women felt if they hadn't mounted the gig and how difficult it was to ensure politically 'sound' bands.

In Europe the reaction against anglo-american cultural imperialism has produced a lot of political rock music, most of it being made independently of the music industry. The number of women musicians involved can be counted on the strings of one guitar, and the audiences are predominantly male, but the collective, unmacho approach of most of the European political groups is making more than

and where the left-wing parties are actively involved in putting on rock concerts, the whole context of rock performance is obviously very different. The Stormy Six, probably the most interesting of the Italian political/independent groups do at least sing about sexual politics: "This is not a political song" they say with endearing irony, "because it's about sexual politics" and launch into a bitter rock

*Things*) and authoritarian stage presence. Their influence is waning, but can still be felt in the Belgian Univers Zero, who see being an all-male group as a problem, but whose stern, tormented-male image is unlikely to attract many women musicians.

**You'd better watch out baby  
Here comes your master  
(Jimi Hendrix)**



But it is in women's bands that the problem of sexism and constructions of sexuality in performance are being specifically tackled. For women musicians, the choice to work in all female bands comes as much from the positive effect of working with other women as from the problems of working in mixed bands, either inside or outside of commercial music (even if you can get work you're likely to be just a token woman/sex object or—only marginally better—token feminist).

**Every woman should be  
What her man wants her to be  
(Marvin Gaye)**



Women's bands are not negatively separatist (that's much truer of men's bands) or a refuge for the incompetent (women's music is developing fast considering that most of the performers have for obvious reasons had relatively little experience), but a way of getting away from performance being equated with sexual performance as defined by men, and of exploring different relationships between performers and audience.

The importance of a women's musical culture developing independently from the music business, however, shouldn't undermine what women are doing in commercial music and in mixed political/independent groups—the main thing is that we are now actively redefining sexuality in rock instead of hoping that the few enlightened stars would do it for us.



cosmetic changes in the music and its performance.

In Sweden there is a well established political music movement which is utterly male dominated, but also an autonomous women's culture including several rock bands.

**What is it, I'll rape it  
(the Who)**



In Italy, where mass political consciousness is high

parody using preposterous macho gestures and lyrics about monogamous romantic love.

In France the growth of an indigenous rock culture has been less consciously political and Magma, the group who virtually singlehandedly started it, presented a quasi-mystical concept of masculinity with their superman philosophy (more serious by far than the Bowie of *Oh You Pretty*

# Havana good time

**This summer's international youth festival in Cuba came in for some predictable criticism in Britain.**

**Mike Phillips went along to see for himself .....**

ARRIVING AT JOSE MARTI had a quality of heart-stopping recognition. This was the Caribbean all right. It was two in the morning, but two in the morning in the tropics is nothing like two in the morning in England. The dark had that velvet feeling you only get in a tropic night. But it wasn't black: the light shining through the trees and reflected back from the bushes made it a green night. In front of the small airport lounge, about the scale of Stanstead, the airport workers were standing around moving their hips to the sound of an almighty sound system blasting out rhythm. Across the front of the building, banners shouted "Bienvenidos". In that moment it was easy to feel I had come back home, even though it was miles away from my own country.

I suppose that's probably the overwhelming impression I took away from Cuba. In spite of all the talk of Soviet influence, missiles, foreign bases, military adventures, the new man, Cuba was, for me, in the end, and speaking as a Caribbean, essentially another Caribbean island. Rather more interesting and enjoyable than most, and without the depressing elements I encountered in, for instance, Jamaica.

What mattered to me at the time was not the politics of the festival - which seemed to me, at least from within the bowels of the British delegation, appallingly insular and narrow. It was odds-on that nobody cared a great deal about what was said or not said about the "human rights" issue except for the boring British and their boring Russian mates. And the heat of their debates about various rights - minority rights, women's rights and the whole litany of political fashion in London - totally missed the point that they themselves were part of the imperialist monster.

In that context, anti-imperialist solidarity would have meant a serious attempt to understand third world concerns, moods and attitudes rather than importing their own arguments and trying to bring them to the centre of a stage where they were mostly irrelevant. Cultural imperialism rules OK. For anybody who takes the trouble to look around them, Cuba is a country of fascinating contrasts. In most of the rest of the Caribbean you'd notice the contrast between rich and poor, and between native and expatriate styles of life. In Cuba the contrasts are subtler and no less instructive. For instance, at the seaside in Cojimar there is a huge bust of Ernest Hemingway, that unreconstructed individualist, brooding over a military fort which stands just opposite. And there are, at least two bars dedicated to the memory of the American writer in the old part of Havana. On the wall of one of them hangs a handwritten note from Salvador Allende, and below Allende's name is pinned a photograph of a Canadian pop group.

Facts of this kind serve as a continual reminder that the island has a tradition of habits and structures which are not very different from those of any other Caribbean island. Traditionally, Cuba saw itself as Latin American - a definition which took in some of the worst elements of the continent's cultural arrangements. On the other hand, OAS participation in the blockade forced the Cubans to reconsider the relationship. In addition there was the necessity to restructure the entire network of social arrangements. On top of that, a layer of Cuban society literally disappeared appeared in a fairly short time. This meant that the attempt to redefine a Caribbean personality, which is an important part of the region's present social dynamic, was intensified in Cuba. The correspondence, for instance, with Jamaican nationalism, can be seen in the Cuban's response to the Jamaican National

Dance Company or to the reggae groups on tour with it. The JNDC puts on stage a style which precisely reflects the physical movements and attitudes of its audiences all over the Caribbean - and Cuba is no exception. It's a movement that emerges in the matter of lifestyles. A consequence of the Cuban attempt to rid its country of the brothel flavour of pre-revolutionary days was that it was dubbed "puritan". But it's hard to imagine European-style anti-sexuality flourishing in the Caribbean. The state-run 'posadas' are hotels where courting couples can book in for an hour or a night and do their business. Looking at the queue of couples outside the posadas on Saturday night it would be difficult to detect any puritanism in the atmosphere. It's a far cry from the pinched drabness of Sofia or even Warsaw. And it's hard to resist the conclusion that socialism in Cuba will have to wear a different face from anything we've seen so far. That's an impression that's heightened by seeing the Soviets moving through the city. They look like, well, Europeans. Not cool. And curiously the American visitors seem more relaxed and at home. The expatriate style of life, moving around in private buses, and living behind the walls of compounds - a habit I remember from when the British used to be doing it - certainly doesn't help anyone warm to the Soviets on a personal basis. In the end the impression that I came away with is that what's important about Cuba is that it's a Caribbean island with many of the same features to its day-to-day existence as other Caribbean islands, like Jamaica or Trinidad. All of the students and visitors from other parts of the Caribbean felt much the same. It's difficult to say just what effect another twenty years of communism will have in that country. But at the moment, for most people in the region, socialism in Cuba wears a Caribbean face.

Mike Phillips





Debate

# Welsh socialism?

Welsh nationalism is commonly treated as a diversion by more or less the whole of the British left. Robert Griffiths, Research Officer of Plaid Cymru, writing here in a personal capacity, argues that there is a substantial Welsh dimension to politics which is largely unknown to the anglocentric Left in England; that the Labour Party in Wales is no automatic haven for socialists, or, indeed, for any Welsh people unashamed of their nationality; and that Plaid Cymru might not be the vipers' nest of introspective preachers and teachers portrayed to the outside world by its domestic opponents.

Crossing the Severn Bridge westwards, any South Wales MP flattered by the Westminster lobby and several socialist papers as a left-wing, internationalist rebel encounters the scorn of a growing number of socialists who regard him as a centralist, British Nationalist place-seeker. The cap fits at least half-a-dozen valleys' MPs. Far from being the "mass party of the working class", to plunder *Militant's* copyright, Labour has degenerated in most areas of Wales into a creaking machine cranked by petty careerists - usually lecturers or barristers - lazy or corrupt councillors, arrogant English settlers and aboriginal Uncle Toms whose lickspitting hostility for the Welsh language, the National Eisteddfod and devolution make Step'n Fetchit look like Paul Robeson. But Plaid Cymru's pedigree does not easily commend itself to the homeless socialist. For 40 years it remained a party dominated by an anti-British section of the Welsh intelligentsia, mostly Nonconformists, who preferred an almost feudal, romantic and theological nationalism to class politics. Since the

early 1960s, Plaid has evolved into an open-minded social-democratic party far from antagonistic to the socialism of its growing marxist wing; a social democracy as yet untainted by betrayal and uncorrupted by its small taste of power. Above all, it is a social democracy determined to find its expression in a sovereign Welsh state. It is this objective which, along with the perpetuation of a culture constructed and sustained by the common people of Wales rather than by a State or a ruling class, attracts so many socialists in Wales today. As a debate around devolution and self-government develops, so the fundamental issues of social and economic power will climb once again to the top of the agenda - something neither stale slogans, stagnant parties nor discredited "demands" can accomplish.

"All very Utopian", "a diversion from the real struggle" and even "petit-bourgeois nationalist deviationism" (honest!) are some of the stock responses to Welsh nationalism from outside and (decreasingly) inside Wales. Such critics would prefer the Welsh to play silent witness to the demise of an ancient language and culture, of their own nationality in fact. National-democratic aspirations are brushed aside by these self-proclaimed Leninists of the SWP, WSL and company. Their reconstruction should commence with the reading (or re-reading) of "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination" - especially the Second Thesis. Of course support for national movements is obligatory away from home - say in Corsica or the Basque country - and then usually in direct proportion to the

violence involved. Back here in Britain, the only real struggles of consequence, the Greater English Chauvinists loftily inform us, are those for wages, housing, jobs (and gay rights).

As if anybody in Wales could be oblivious to these troughs of desperation! How could we be when the ordinary inhabitant of Wales is more likely to be on the dole, to emigrate, to die sooner, to earn less, to live in substandard housing than someone in almost any region in England? As an additional affront, the self-respecting Welsh patriot can watch the Welsh language and national identity run their daily gauntlet of neglect, humiliation or patronising exploitation at the hands of officialdom, industry and the mass media.

It is in the righting of these wrongs that the socialist potential in a growing Welsh consciousness can be released. The drive to create a national state, to re-orientate a colonial economy, to restore a language, will challenge the design of capitalism and its British state for Wales. Unless, that is, one believes that a country with an organised working class, virtually no bourgeoisie, and a national mission, will skirt around the status quo: three quarters of private industry in Wales, and the whole of the public sector, owned and controlled from outside Wales; one fifth of Welsh land either a military playground or under water and under lease to English conurbations; cultural hegemony imposed by an English (and largely anti-Welsh) press and by the British Nationalist broadcasting machine; a governmental and educational system which is overwhelmingly English in language and entirely British in sentiment. No sincere

## SATURDAY JUNE 10

5,000 copies of Plaid Cymru's newspaper *Welsh Miner* were distributed at the South Wales Miners' Gala. Another 20,000 were subsequently given out at collieries throughout the coalfield.

## FRIDAY JUNE 23

A meeting of Mid Glamorgan County Council expired to the sound of stamping feet and cries of "Labour traitors" from Anti-Apartheid pickets in the public gallery. The ruling Labour Group had just voted not to discuss a Plaid councillor's motion calling for disinvestment of council employees' pension funds from companies with South African connections. The chairman had hidden behind his chief clerk's erroneous advice that the motion was "unlawful"!

## WEDNESDAY JULY 5

Gwynedd County Council endorsed the findings of an enquiry into allegations made under Parliamentary Privilege by Bedwellty Labour MP Neil Kinnock that Welsh-speaking teachers had terrorised English-speaking children in a campaign of "linguistic racialism". The report shows how Kinnock acted as the mouth-piece of a Tory-riddled, anti-Welsh language minority in Gwynedd, slandering teachers and parroting old wives' tales barely worthy of Enoch Powell.

## MONDAY JULY 10

The trial began in Camarthen of two Welsh Language Society leaders for conspiracy to commit criminal damage. Of the entire Welsh Left outside Plaid Cymru, only Wrexham Labour MP Tom Ellis and Clwyd building worker Des Warren spoke up for the defendants and condemned the use of conspiracy charges. Two other Welsh Labour MPs issued a statement during the trial, in breach of sub judice, deploring the defendants' disrespect for "Laura Norder". The jury divided evenly: a re-trial is scheduled for November.

Welsh socialist bent on his or her nation's emancipation will shy away from these provocative obstacles.

What socialists in Plaid Cymru seek to do is to ensure that the proper questions are asked, and the correct, most progressive answers are given; to point out to the Welsh people how the British state, the servant of domestic and international capitalism, stands between them and the realisation of their socialist and national aspirations; that anglophobia is futile and dangerous; and that Wales' extrication from the Wall Street and City of London web is near-impossible in isolation.

Hence our resolve to expand Plaid Cymru's links with socially-progressive national and regional movements on the European continent. To distill our ideas, organise our forces and argue our policies, Plaid socialists produce an internal bulletin, a quarterly magazine (*Y Saeth*) and are launching a popular newspaper (*Y Faner Goch - The Red Flag*) in November. We are working towards the goal of a Welsh Socialist Republic: devolution and constitutional self-government will help immensely in our preparation for that endeavour as well as expressing and consolidating the desire of the Welsh people to recover their future from the ravages of the past. We also recognise that the overthrow of the existing order in England, Germany, the USA and elsewhere is essential not only for the full liberation of Wales but also for the survival of the world. So we want the closest working class unity on British, European and international levels - but one founded on mutual support, respect and equality. Should this article (perhaps an introduction for many readers to the separatist socialism now nascent in Wales) foster a better understanding amongst our English comrades, then that future is brought a little nearer.

Pic: Tony Nicholls





# ROLL-CALL ON RACE

APRIL 5, 1981, is Census Night. Everybody in the country alive on that day will be counted and identified by age, sex, where they live, where they are on that night if they are not at home, where they work, whether they are married. And for the first time they are going to be asked whether they are black or white. It is illegal to refuse to answer.

The office of Population Censuses and Surveys is already at work: but the tricky problem is going to be the race question: Question 15.

The White Paper presented in July says: "Question 15 Race or ethnic origin. The form of question will be decided after further consideration."

The need for census statistics is obvious. It is necessary to know how many people there are in the country, what age they are, whether they live in town, flat or country cottage. Whether they go to work by car or train or bike. But why does the government and "other census users" (usually local authorities, social scientists and market researchers) want to know whether people are black or white?

The White Paper says: "In order to help in carrying out their responsibilities under the Race Relations Act, and in developing effective social policies, the Government and local authorities need to know how

the family structure, housing, education, employment and unemployment of the ethnic minorities compare with the conditions in the population as a whole".

The Commission for Racial Equality accepts this "direction of resources" argument, and supports Question 15 in principle, but it's not a very strong reason for equipping the government, and all future governments, with the name and address of every non-white in the country. It would be interesting to know exactly how many blacks are unemployed compared with whites — interesting but not vital. Yet the thought that locked away somewhere is what amounts to a complete list of blacks in the country should chill anyone's spine.

I guess that a stronger argument in the minds of the CRE and other liberal supporters of Question 15 is that when there is a definitive figure on the colour balance in Britain it will put paid to apocalyptic talk by the National Front and Margaret Thatcher about Britain being "swamped" or "overrun", which depends on the absence of accurate figures for its credibility.

The government assures us that no census-derived information about a specific individual has ever been used. When the figures are processed, the name and address is not fed into the computer, the forms themselves remain confidential for 100 years unless they "have to be

produced as evidence in court in connection with a prosecution under the Census Act 1920". Yet my unease remains.

The OPCS is aware that other people are uneasy too. They are still experimenting with the exact form of the question and they found "an apparent reluctance of some West Indian parents to record their UK born children as West Indian. It was often difficult to determine whether this resulted from misunderstanding the question or from a real objection to describing their children in this way."

The form of the question, although not yet finally decided, is almost certain to include white as a category. Experiments showed that if the category was European, of White (European descent), some people born in Europe, but not qualifying on skin colour, were classifying themselves White.

On top of that, certain peoples, like the Cypriot community, Greeks and Turks were not sure, although eager to please, whether the authorities considered them to be whites or not.

The problems for the statisticians are complex. Many people from the Indian sub-continent found the divisions Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, quite meaningless when divorced from religion. Yet when religious categories were introduced, some Turks upset the system by ticking themselves as Muslims.

The OPCS did consider European

sub-divisions, but the system falls apart when it encounters this flaw; the give-away which undermines all the justifications for the test. What they are really trying to find out is colour — Black, Brown, Yellow, etc. But, quite rightly embarrassed about asking directly, they are confusing national categories with ethnic ones. White is an alternative to West Indian. Have you any doubt which category a white, third generation plantation owner's son from Jamaica would tick?

They have managed to come up with a form of question which doesn't mention the word white. It works like this: Does the person belong to, or is he or she descended or partially descended from any of the following ethnic groups?

African, Arab, Italian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Polish, Chinese, Turkish/Turkish Cypriot, Greek Greek Cypriot, West Indian Indian YES NO  
If YES please tick the appropriate box . . . . .

If of mixed descent tick Mixed descent box and box for appropriate groups. Clever isn't it. No mention of whites there, only the unfortunate Poles and Italians seem to have got lumped in with all the coloured peoples. Whether this is tokenism, or someone has got something against them, I don't know.

There is another form of the question which only mentions these groups: West Indian, African Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi. The interesting omission here is Chinese. Surely one would want to know about them in the spirit of

disinterested enquiry? Unless one is just trying to identify those particular minorities Margaret Thatcher thinks are swamping the nation.

Censuses have been held every ten years since 1801 (except 1941) and only twice have racial questions (as opposed to nationality and country-of-birth questions which identify immigrants and aliens) been asked.

In 1921 the question was aimed at the Jews, who were feared at the time to be swamping Britain — and no doubt stinking the streets out with their cooking as well.

In 1971 a question was included which asked about parents' country of birth. This is to be dropped in '81. It was an admitted attempt to find out just how many blacks there were in the country, but it isn't satisfactory because so many British blacks have parents also born in Britain. The new question comes much closer to asking directly about colour.

The Government declares that the Census should be conducted on four broad principles. These are:  
1. It should be confined to obtaining information for which there is a real need, and which will be put to good use.

Question 15 has not been shown to fulfil this criterion at all.

2. It should be acceptable to the public by respecting their privacy and limiting its demands.

Question 15 goes further than that. 3. It should safeguard the confidentiality of the information the public provides.

We only have this on trust. The present government and bureaucracy may be well-intentioned — simple victims of the bureaucratic desire to have as much as

possible about every citizen on file somewhere. But there is no safeguard for the future.

4. The census should meet the essential needs of census users as rapidly and flexibly as possible.

This is simple a statistical and financial problem. The '81 census will cost about £45 million and take several years to process the results.

The OPCS point out that many countries ask questions about race. America, Canada, Australia, Commonwealth Caribbean. No doubt the Russians do as well. The United Nations say that "national and/or ethnic groups" are among "other useful topics" a census could investigate. Again it is hardly a justification.

George Paine, the Registrar General, has said: "There has always been a supposition that there would be a resistance to such a question, but we have made an investigation and found much less resistance than we had formerly supposed." There is still time to change that.

The Census form has to be approved by Parliament. Political opposition could kill Question 15 there. If that fails then direct action is left. The real question is: why do they want to know? If you can't think of a good reason, or you can think of a bad one, don't answer. A relatively small proportion of invalid responses destroys the whole sample.

Of course, it may be that one of the categories in Question 15 will be Mixed Descent. We could all, white and black, put our hands on our hearts and answer YES to that with a clear conscience.

Nigel Thomas



## EQUITY Backstage

Equity — the actors union, has a membership of around 25,000, and runs a virtual closed shop. Aspiring actors and variety artistes might spend months as stage managers to get a ticket, and once they are in, they face one of the most archaic power structures in the union movement. Controlled by the General Council and Area Committees, Equity has only

one forum for debate open to individual members: The Annual General Meeting. Proposals for a branch and delegate structure were defeated at Special General Meetings this summer, and the Equity General Council is firmly in the hands of the right wing. Susan Glanville unravels what's going on behind this 'struggle of the stars'.

"I'd like to put you up against a wall and shoot you, you little Trot!" shouted an

Equity Council member — this unmitigated unpleasantness was brought about not by threats of a far left takeover, but by a request for creche facilities. And when Marius

Goring, fearless champion of reaction, threatened to throw Corin Redgrave out the window, it wasn't over a massive wage demand or wild-cat strike, but because the Council had refused to stick to standing orders and give the AGM an extension so that some of the guillotined motions could be debated.

It is the ferocity, especially of the right wing, and the issues that arouse it, that are particularly interesting in

Equity. The components are common enough to white collar unions: moderate means extreme right wing, politics is a dirty word, and individual freedom is equated with postal ballots and referenda. Red-baiting is used to discredit any demand, although the Workers Revolutionary Party, by pursuing their alienated politics with robot-like insensitivity, do much to assist the process. But this apparent polarisation is something of a smokescreen — the fight in Equity really centres on whether we're a trade union or a gents professional association, and whether actors should see themselves as workers or as privileged artistes.

It all assumes extraordinary proportions, considering that capitalism is unlikely to be brought to its knees if we all

went on strike. We have little industrial significance, but our internal right wing can and does have many powerful allies. Marius's fellow member of the Garrick Club, Bernard Levin, acts as a journalistic Big Bertha for the right in Equity — one article in *The Times* telling our members how to vote, and they obey. And when Marius took out a High Court Action on the Union, he must have been greatly relieved to see that the judge was also a Garrick Club buddy — of course Marius won. With friends like this, one wonders why he's so upset by his enemies — and if funds get tight he can always rely on the National Association For Freedom, who already find Equity a perfect natural habitat.

Can it be that they all realise, in spite of themselves, that in the future we might make some attempt to control the propaganda machine we service? Levin can't really believe the rubbish he puts out about the proposed Branch and Delegate structure being a terrorist plot by Vanessa

Redgrave, but he helped manage to stop the reform of our antiquated and undemocratic pyramid structure.

Even the centre left, trade unionist broad front (called the Campaign for Restructuring and Progress for Equity) which championed the Branch and Delegate structure, landed up doing a dialectical flip to its opposite, turning into a campaign for postal ballots and referenda. It had succumbed to its reactionary elements, and therefore wrecked the rest of its support, assisting Levin, Goring, and the rest of 'Act for Equity' to defeat the attempt to re-structure.

It seems that the last thing the right will do is let us develop a sense of trade union solidarity, where we might talk to each other, or let us create a situation in which we might begin to see through the blackmail. 80% of us are unemployed at any one time, but we are teased by the faint possibility of a job, and the even fainter chance of becoming a 'star'.

Drama students are still

taught that by a supreme effort of talent they could 'make it', and we all learn to compete viciously with each other in humiliating auditions to perform racist, sexist, anti-trade union, and anti-working class propaganda. If we all realised that the statistics are weighted so heavily against any individual success, we might just start questioning what we perform, and then how would control be kept of your minds?

But members are still getting together in unofficial branches to pool casting information, and the growth of the fringe companies means that the grovelling attitudes to pay, conditions, and content of material have been ousted by a significant degree of workers control. All in opposition to the individualistic and slavish indoctrination still perpetrated in Equity, where the presence of managers, directors and prestigious actors remains an inherent contradiction and a deeply inhibiting factor.

And now non-aligned socialists and socialist feminists

are meeting to talk about the situation. The IMG and Rank and File (not, as far as I know, the WRP) are re-examining their tactics and organising with the non-aligned left and with each other. We're all trying to tackle the problem of communicating with our scattered and shell-shocked, if not totally apathetic membership, who have so far been untouched by boring leaflet campaigns, ill-attended meetings, and revolutionary sounding rhetoric. We are keen to hear from people in other cultural service unions like the NUJ and NUT, who also face the contradiction wherein the slightest militancy or progressive behaviour meets with the anti-trade unionism of their own members.

Not that the current stirrings mean that actors en masse are about to refuse to put our reactionary material, or even that Equity is about to become a militant union. But I can't help feeling that Levin and his ilk can see some writing on the wall of capitalism's cultural superstructure.

Susan Glanville



# ABORTION: NO UPPER LIMIT?

Women block Fleet Street in support of Joan Paton, whose husband tried (and failed) to get a court judgement stopping her from having an abortion.

Many groups see the National Abortion Campaign's controversial stand as the height of political insanity, likely to alienate and undermine the support they have already won. Some organisations are desperately worried that they will be automatically associated with NAC's position, and even some NAC supporters are concerned that "by insisting on everything we may end up with nothing at all".

The debate in NAC was largely precipitated by a model Abortion Bill presented by the Abortion Law Reform Association (ALRA, the organisation that was the moving force behind the 1967 Abortion Act), who needed the support of a nationally active campaign like NAC if the Bill was going to have any success. Their Bill gives women the right to choose, but sets a time limit of 28 weeks of pregnancy, the point at which they recognise that a foetus could survive outside the woman's body. ALRA oppose abortion

up to term on both ethical and pragmatic grounds. As Sharon Spiers, member of the ALRA Executive, and Chairman (sic) of Tories for Free Choice sees it: "Most people would find it abhorrent, except where there is risk to the life of the mother, or foetal damage. Those who would agree with it know that we would lose support if we take up this policy".

NAC's discussion of the Bill concentrated on two main questions: first, would a Bill campaigned for now be doomed to failure, and therefore demoralise and defuse the campaign, and second, should there be any limit on a woman's right to choose? They committed themselves to critical support of any advance on the present law, but on principle rejected ALRA's time limit.

A shocked silence greeted NAC's announcement of its 'no time limit' decision at a meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee in Defence of the 1967 Abortion Act (CO-ORD), whose members represent virtually every 'pro-choice' group in the country—from the National Secular Society, through the charitable abortion agencies, to the National Council of Civil Liberties.

CO-ORD fights restrictions to the present law, but has no policy on what it would like instead, and doesn't see that as its role. However, some influential members of CO-ORD have said they

will leave CO-ORD if NAC remains. A letter has been sent to NAC from the Birth Control Campaign putting their position right on the line: "Your resolution has done a great deal of harm and no good at all. Privately you have made it clear that you believe it unlikely that women will request abortions after 28 weeks, and certainly no respectable doctor would perform the operation, so there seems no point in publicly pressing for this... I would like you to reconsider, bearing the harmful effect that it can have on us and the campaign generally... We are worried that you will be labelled as the lunatic extremists of the movement, and therefore the good work you are doing will be ruined."

If the NAC decision were ever a practical reality, it would be doctors who would be expected to carry out a woman's request for a late termination, and the response in that quarter has not been much more positive. Doctors for a Woman's Choice, one of the more radical groupings, say that because of recent technological advances, a viable foetus has more chance of surviving than it did in the past: "Once that foetus is capable of independent life, it has at least some rights as a human being. Once it is viable there is a third party involved, and the doctor must feel some responsibility to it, and so must society—as it does at the moment." It looks very much as if this group will press ALRA to lower their limit to 24 weeks.

One doctor who does support NAC's policy feels they have evaded crucial questions: "NAC have been irresponsible in the lack of attention they have given to the foetus. It is too simple and unrealistic to say it has no rights, and then dispose of it mentally, as if this will somehow cope with the disposal of it physically."

**PERCENTAGE OF ABORTIONS IN EACH STAGE OF PREGNANCY**  
Figures most recently available are 1974's, but there's no sign they have changed.

under 12 weeks	80%
13-19 weeks	16%
20-23 weeks	0.7%
24+ weeks	0.1%
not stated	3.2%

Figures for terminations over 28 weeks are not clear, but they do occur when doctors decide the mother's life is at risk, or there is major foetal damage.

So NAC seems to have got itself into deeper technological waters than it bargained for.

NAC has always seen the support of the labour movement as hugely important if the campaign is to succeed. The Communist Party, who are showing an unprecedented involvement in the forthcoming NAC Trade Union Conference, have come to no decision, but CP women are privately worried that NAC's policy will sabotage the work already done to get the CP behind the campaign. At the last Communist Party Congress the question of support for NAC was remitted to the CP Executive, and discussions are to be held in branches during the autumn. Nothing has been heard on the issue from either the Labour Party or Trade Unions.

The anti-abortion organisation LIFE lost no time putting out a press release, which was precisely the kind of publicity that CO-ORD fears, and that is bound to be discussed at the next CO-ORD meeting (in September). Linking NAC with the Birth Control Campaign, the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, and ALRA, they implied that all the groups wanted day care (out patient) abortions up to term.

The only newspaper to take this up in any big way was the *Bournemouth Echo*, most others realising the idea was ludicrous. Three other local papers have published letters from LIFE making the same allegations, and the organisations linked with NAC have written immediately to disassociate themselves. But for the time being anti-abortion activity on the issue has died down, with no-one but the abortion movement itself taking much interest in NAC's position.

Not surprisingly, it is ALRA which has reacted more strongly than anyone else, with what appears to be an unwritten policy of no public identification with NAC. The first concrete expression of this was their refusal to support the NAC trade union Conference, even though positive legislation and viability are not on the agenda. Some ALRA women say they won't share a platform with a NAC member, although Sharon Spiers has emphasised that they will discuss

The National Abortion Campaign has sparked off a major row in the abortion movement with its decision to support "a woman's right to choose throughout the nine months of pregnancy". Rose Shapiro looks at the arguments that have followed this controversial move, made at the recent NAC conference. It was a majority decision, and although only 100 people attended, reflected the mood of discussions held over the preceding year.

participation in NAC events as they come up. In the past, the two bodies have worked together against reactionary moves in Parliament, and in practice they have similar aims — safe, easily available abortions before 12 weeks. Both groups agree that NAC's decision relates to only a tiny percentage of terminations, but ALRA's mind is made up; "We feel that NAC will automatically lose support, and it will be a rope round everyone's neck. We hope that people will realise that we don't support this, and if it's going to be divisive — we can't help it."

Since NAC has made it clear from the beginning that it's not something around which they will campaign, why was the decision taken in the first place? "We were pushed into it, because ALRA was so determined to get a response" NAC claims, "If we had just produced a paper on the tactical reasons for not supporting their Bill, it would have been avoiding the question". NAC's argument centres mainly on the principle of women's control over their health and fertility, which at the moment rests in the hands of the medical profession and the state.

NAC wants to know how ALRA's time limit would be enforced. If it were broken, would the doctor performing the operation, or the woman herself be prosecuted?

For NAC the policy is little more than a clarification of the statement 'no medical or legal restrictions' which they have campaigned around since their first conference in '75. They are not prepared to allow doctors or government to intervene in a decision which they believe no woman is likely to make unless her life is at risk, or there is severe foetal damage — the criteria that some doctors already apply.

But did they expect the kind of response they've got from the rest of the movement, particularly that of ALRA? Gill Butler of NAC: "I was surprised at the lengths to which they've carried it. Whatever decision we took would have alienated some section — if we'd supported the Bill we would have alienated much of the woman's movement. We are a feminist campaign, and we're not willing to sacrifice our principles for the sake of popularity."

NAC does not accept that any of their activities will lead to a rise in the number of late terminations. Rose Knight, one of the more vocal campaigners, says: "The true effect of what we are doing at the moment (the day care campaign) means that an increasing number of abortions will take place early. When that happens,

the question of an upper time limit will become totally abstract. It will come up only in extreme circumstances, and there will be humane doctors who won't just see it as their responsibility for killing something, but put the needs of a fully developed person first."

But some women in NAC think that the policy is open to so much misrepresentation that it should never have been adopted, and certainly not by a supposedly broad front campaign. One woman who attended the conference believes that the decision was largely the result of the work done by the International Marxist Group, who have a number of active women in NAC, and that they would have been better advised to push principled demands inside their own organisation rather than to apply them to a mass campaign.

One IMG woman I spoke to saw it very differently: "If we look at any progressive movement on behalf of human beings, the principles put forward initially are trodden on. But you don't start off making compromises before you begin. That's why I despise ALRA in some ways, because they are quite prepared to sacrifice women's rights at the start, and to give in to pressures from the medical and legal professions. We stand by the principle — we probably won't get what we want in this historical context, but we'll push as hard as we can to get as much as we can." And she dismissed the idea of IMG manipulation saying that only a few IMG members attended the NAC conference.

In some ways NAC is guilty of trying to please all of the people all of the time — they make a sensational stand and then promise they won't campaign on it; they reject a positive Bill but assure the rest of the movement they would support it if it was put before Parliament; they pass a resolution saying that no NAC member should feel bound by the decision if she disagrees with it — and so on. "Political purity at any cost" was how one woman in NAC (who is against the policy) described it.

All the NAC members I spoke to accepted the possibility that the decision may be modified, or even overturned, at the next conference. Certainly many of them see ALRA's 'no public association' position as petty and unnecessary, and that the response of other groups is what makes the campaign split or not. But "if no-one picks up on this, and NAC gets completely isolated, then we'll have to rethink".

In the next Parliamentary session ALRA will be putting down an Early Day motion to have their Bill debated, without the support of NAC. The prospect of a Tory government means that anti-abortion legislation will be given even greater attention. The campaign will have to find a way to unite so it can once again mobilise thousands of people. Whether the campaign is as divided as some people would have us believe, remains to be seen.





Grasping desperately for power more than principle, the practice by which he has determined his political life, James Callaghan has opted for the most extraordinarily foolish option of them all. Now we are faced with a winter of sordid political alliances, a resurgence of pragmatism unseen even in the headiest days of the Wilson era. For the next six months, socialism isn't even on the Parliamentary agenda, let alone at the centre of the debate.

In the first of our own build up to the Spring, *Leveller* writers examine the electoral programmes of some of the socialist left and ask whether elections are anything more than a spectacle anyway.



Steve Bell

## ...votecatchinplotthatchin meterswinginmudslingin voxpoppinmindstoppin...

SO CHEEKY JIMMY put one over on all those nose-pickers who read between lines, perceive messages in eyebrow movements, possess brain-tuners that can pick up whispers and who were all going for 5 October. But whenever it is finally released, this X-rated action-packed spectacular will be the ideological event of 1979. IAN WALKER has been along to a sneak preview.

BERNARD SHAW, being a clever kind of bloke, once said something about parliament being like a hot-air balloon. Most of the time it just floats through the sky, but once every four years or so it comes to earth. All the passengers pile out briefly, before clambering back on with just a few new faces on board, a handful of ex-fellow-travellers permanently grounded. The balloon then disappears for a few more years. And even through the balloon is full of pricks it somehow doesn't burst. Not up to now, anyway.

An even cleverer bloke, Karl Marx, said: "The modern state is but a committee for managing the affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." And the modern election is but a vast PR job for the whole of bourgeois society. Irrespective of the Great Issues of the particular time, the policies of the contenders, the general election — considered as a whole — is a time-honoured ritual, the main effect of which is to re-establish the faith of the people in the parliamentary system itself.

Once extracted from Healey's mouth-foaming denunciation of brothers Saatchi, the analogy between parliamentary politics and detergent becomes quite apposite. Leaving aside debates about the relative whitewashing properties of the two commodities, the election ritual (manifestoes, speeches, TV

confrontations, party political broadcasts, hoardings, hustings and whistle-stop tours, followed by the late-late TV show which builds to the grand finale) is one long ad for parliamentary democracy.

Which all goes to show that it works better/cleans faster/gives better value for money/sends you to work with a bigger smile on your face than any other brand (X or otherwise) of political system which exists in the world or the imagination of men and women.

Power, like the hot-air balloon usually out of the reach of the people, is suddenly in the grasp of anyone old enough to walk into a polling station and pick up a pencil. The idea being that you walk out of the station warmed by that democratic glow which comes with the knowledge that you have earned a niche, however microscopic, in history. You have determined the fate of the nation. You have power.

But before that pencil forms the cross, the brain which guides the hand must be informed of the Issues Of this Election. So like the rain in April, (incorrect) ideas suddenly fall from the sky: the Need to think this way/that way about the economy immigration, the unions, foreign policy, defence, education etc.

And just as suddenly the Great Media-Consuming British public — fed on a diet of showbiz, sport, sex and soap operas — is supposed to start weighing up the pros and cons of monetarism while it is filling in the pools/watching Crossroads/on the bus to work/at home doing the washing up.

No one seems to mind that much. After all, the general election has so much more life, colour, theatrics than the usual field of activity deemed politics by the media — the findings of this White/Green Paper,

something weird happening to the gold reserves, the latest balance-of-payments graphic, "bombshells" delivered by this or that Minister, exploding with all the force of a tropical snowstorm on everyone's consciousness. Sure, the election makes a change. And it makes great TV. Hands up who hasn't stayed up all night, araldited to the single-episode 12 hour epic?

Prof McKenzie is looning around on the swingometer, David Butler's rabbiting on about the swing in Bradford East in '32. Will Billericay be the first with the result and will Robin Day ever stop coughing? And as the results start flashing up on the electronic scoreboard, the predictions about the full-time score.

Indeed the only thing in doubt (sometimes) is the result. Everything else is so immediately recognisable and British, cosy. The TV cast, the victory speeches thanking the Mayor Uncle Tom Cobbley'n all, the losers shaking hands — public school-style — saying what a sporting contest, clean fight, etc, it's been.

The sporting metaphors are not merely linguistic convenience. When the "commentators" and "experts" babble breathlessly about two-horse races, three-cornered fights, no-holds-barred campaigns, Labour winning the first round (before the second round of redneck Tory constituencies), they are indeed speaking about an event where the rules of the game, the history of the game, the fans of the game, are all more important than the outcome of the game.

And when the game is over, the teams walked off the pitch, the champagne popped and the sorrows drowned (and always assuming old Queenie OKs the result) then life, rather miraculously, goes on much as before. Those who possessed power in that magical moment when they pencilled in the cross become once more the dispossessed.

Meantime the new (or old) rulers are getting on with what we are told is "the business of government" — a serious, undramatic and largely bureaucratic activity too mundane and/or complicated for us to understand/be interested in.



# The Bolshie Ballot

WHATEVER DEALS the government may make in the House of Commons, a general election can't be far away. Whoever wins that election, some things we can count on. Unemployment will go up, wages will go down, the rich will get richer and so on. For despite their differences, on basic economic strategy the Labour government and the Tory Party are of one mind.

So does it matter who wins? And what should the independent Left do? BRIAN DEER talked to Tariq Ali, Bert Ramelson and Stuart Holland and asked them what they will be doing when the election comes.

## Tariq Ali

AS THE official British section of Trotsky's Fourth International, you wouldn't expect the International Marxist Group to have much truck with elections. But the small IMG will be working flat out in support of parliamentary candidates when a general election is called.

Tariq Ali, a member of the IMG's political committee, says he has no illusions about parliament. Despite its apparent powers, many of the key decisions are only rubber stamped by the House of Commons. Real control lies with big business and its agencies like the International Monetary Fund.

"We do not believe that socialism will be achieved by a majority in the House of Commons" he says. "But on the other hand, it would be very useful if revolutionaries had Members of Parliament." These revolutionary MPs wouldn't carry on like all the rest but would use their positions to appeal to a "much broader layer of people" than the far left can get at now.

"If we were ever elected to parliament in this country, our central aim would be to use our parliamentary position to develop extra-parliamentary struggles against the system." Part of this struggle will be to rid the masses of their illusions about bourgeois institutions. "They have known nothing better", he says.

The IMG is planning three "interventions" in the next election. Top priority is to help its dozen or so Socialist Unity candidates, mostly running in traditional Labour "safe" seats. Ali himself will be opposing Labour's Syd Bidwell in Southall. They will also be working for candidates of the Socialist Workers' Party.

The second prong in the IMG attack is to help a small number of Labour MPs who have "very sharp" criticisms of the government. This work will be done alongside IMG members and other Trotskyists in the Labour Party under a "Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory" umbrella.

And in other parts of the country where IMG comrades find themselves at a loose end, they will be giving support to the leafletting campaign of the Anti-Nazi League. The ANL are hoping to make a big impact in cutting the National Front vote.

Socialist Unity is not expecting any of its candidates to actually win, but offering even a small number of people the opportunity to vote for a revolutionary is seen as a

useful exercise. Ali's explanation is that while voting doesn't solve anything, "it involves people in politics, even though at a very elementary level."

On an overall scale, the IMG is emphatic in saying we should vote Labour. Not because we have any great expectations of the Labour Party, but as "a reflex with the bulk of the working class against the Tories—openly the party of the ruling class."

Whether Labour wins or loses, in the coming year there are going to be big problems for the Left. But the IMG is hopeful that after that election Callaghan will stay on at Number 10. With Labour in power they think it is much easier to expose social democracy than it is under the Tories.

For Tariq Ali the choice in a general election is simple: vote Labour unless you have a candidate who offers a real socialist alternative. To do anything else is to "totally cut yourself off from the overwhelming majority of working class people."

## Bert Ramelson

AS THE Tory Party's Campaign Guide Supplement wisely observes, Britain's Communists now offer a strategy which differs only in detail from that of the Labour Left. And, despite the hostility still expressed by many Labour Party members, the Communist Party hopes the next election will give an opportunity for more cooperation at local level.

Bert Ramelson, a member of the Communist Party's political committee and for many years its industrial organiser, says there are three key elements in their campaign preparations.

Working to get the biggest possible vote for the Communist Party's own candidates will be the first priority. More than 40 have been picked to fight in constituencies where no real threat is posed to Labour's chances of winning. According to Ramelson, these candidates will try "to expose the danger" of the government's policies.

Second on his list is campaigning with the *Morning Star*. Although obviously supporting the Party's own candidates, the *Star* will call on readers to vote Labour in most constituencies. And during the election period a big push will be made to sell more copies of the paper.

Thirdly, where Ramelson says a lack of resources "unfortunately" makes it impossible to run a Communist, his party will in many areas be actively supporting the Labour candidate. "We want to work within the Labour Party machine, but will not make any deal to support government policies", he says.

The Communist Party's support for Labour is due, not to the government's policies, but to an analysis of the Labour Party's position in society. "The Labour Party is deeply rooted in the working class and can be made accountable to the wider movement", Ramelson argues.

If the government is not accountable now, it is because there is a lack of pressure from within the movement. When this pressure is on, a Labour government will act, he says, citing the example of the Wilson government's withdrawal of *In Place of Strife*.

We need conscious, organised struggle. To opt out because up to now there have been no changes leaves the field open for the perpetuation of capitalism.

Despite the importance of parliament in the Party's programme *The British Road to Socialism*, Ramelson says it's wrong to think Communists advocate a parliamentary road. His scenario includes a mixture of parliamentary and extra-parliamentary action. It will be the struggles outside the House of Commons which will result in a socialist majority of MPs.

Even once that majority has been won, the extra-parliamentary campaigns would continue. "It's not just a matter of getting people elected because, however well-meaning they may be, some will slip back." There are no blueprints for the kind of organisations to do this, but they will emerge with a growing "socialist consciousness" in the working class.

The dominant Labour Right accepts the framework of capitalism, but, even so, the Communist Party believes the Labour Party can be changed and can play a big part in the

struggle for socialism. "We will argue and we will fight in the next election for the return of a Labour government with all its deficiencies", says Bert Ramelson.



## Stuart Holland

WHEN Labour's Programme 1973 was adopted by the Labour Party, then in opposition, it seemed like a great victory for the Left. The Programme demanded that a future Labour government would take big sections of the economy into public ownership and carry out a wide range of socialist policies.

But the Right's domination of the Parliamentary Labour Party meant there was no way that such policies would get implemented. The deal with the Liberal Party killed off even the remaining policies which most Labour MPs supported. And the swing to the Right in the engineer's union looks set to clobber the Left at the Party's conference during October.

One of the people behind the drafting of Labour's Programme was Stuart Holland, a Left economist and at that time advisor to Judith Hart. The success of his influential book *The Socialist Challenge* (after which even a newspaper was named) set Holland looking for a seat in parliament. And now, as Labour's candidate for the South London Vauxhall constituency, he will become an MP at the next election.

Even though he will shortly join their ranks, Holland does not believe individual MPs have any great influence. "We are supposed to have parliamentary sovereignty", he says. "But in fact government dominates parliament and beyond that capital rules."

For Holland this means any serious strategy for socialism must establish control over the government by parliament and also provide a basis to undermine the power of capital. This strategy has both parliamentary and mass movement aspects and demands a complete change in the democratic structures of the Labour Party.

For this, his top priority is establishing the right of constituency organisations to change their parliamentary candidate for each election if they want. He is a sponsor of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy and argues that only when this demand is won will it be possible to get a majority of MPs who support the policies in Labour's Programme.

But even with a fully democratic Labour Party with a Left majority there will be massive problems in tackling the dominance of big business, and particularly the multinational corporations. Holland believes this will need a major extension of parliamentary power through nationalisation of big companies and compulsory planning agreements.

There are some on the Left, he says, who undervalue the importance of parliament in the transition to socialism. But, while struggles outside the House of Commons—especially for workers' control in industry—will be crucial, to ignore parliament is to "undermine feasible change in the power structures of society".

If Labour loses the next election, Holland says it will be for one reason: because the Callaghan government has been "classically social-democratic in vainly trying to manage capitalism in a period of fundamental crisis."

When the election comes, Stuart Holland will be out like many thousands of Labour Party members, knocking on doors and putting leaflets through letter-boxes. But in Vauxhall, he won't be on the doorstep apologising for the government, but he'll be arguing the case for voting Labour on the basis of his party's policy.



Stephen Clancy 78



# THE IRON FIST :1

## Persons Unknown

### Month 4 in jail

Four months ago two anarchists, Ronan Bennett and Iris Mills, were arrested in a London flat and charged with "conspiracy to cause explosions". Since then, in what has become known as the "Persons Unknown" case, a further four anarchists have been arrested and charged with conspiracy; some while later the police added a variety of firearms and armed robbery charges.

Dafydd Ladd's fingerprints were found in Iris and Ronan's flat, he was arrested and then there were three. Later, Stewart Carr was arrested in Gillingham, Vince Stevenson on his way to a support group meeting, and when Trevor Dawton's home was raided a suitcase was allegedly found containing guns and ammunition, and he too was arrested. The six have still not been committed for trial.

Detective Chief Superintendent Peter Bradbury, Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) Number Three, says there is a conspiracy. He told one of the remand hearings that he objected to bail for Dafydd Ladd because

he was "one of a group of idealistic persons who believe that they should take positive steps to overthrow society".

So far nobody knows what exactly the evidence is. There haven't been any explosions. There were weedkiller and wiring found in Ronan and Iris' flat, and, allegedly, the arms and ammo in Dawton's, and that's all police have mentioned, so far.

The prisoners are brought in to Lambeth Magistrates court in a high-security van complete with armed escort. Until recent and viciously-stifled dock protests, they've been brought in wearing handcuffs. Police have on occasion beaten them in the dock, in full view of the court. Security conditions continue to get tighter for the public — armed police on the rooftops and in nearby buildings as well as inside the court and surrounding the public gallery.

And by tying the remands in with those of the various Arabs accused of terrorist offences in London, the police can present the oppressive security as being in the public interest. People going into the public gallery are photographed and searched and often refused entry.

Members of Persons Unknown, the support group, have been harassed and arrested outside the court, two people were arrested and threatened with being held under the PTA as "security risks" for what turned out to be a small unpaid fine.

For three months now Iris has been held in virtual solitary confinement, the only woman (until recently) in Brixton Prison. Solitary confinement has been refined as a technique for use against political dissidents. It is medically proven to make someone incapable of clear, logical thought.

She is stripsearched before and after visits, and has only been allowed one 15 minute period a week with Ronan after a long struggle with the prison governor. On the day she sees Ronan she is not allowed a visit, nor on the

## letter from prison...

"From what I hear there have been several raids by the Anti Terrorist Squad in London seeking, doubtless, to find the 'British connection' to the much-vaunted international terrorist conspiracy beloved of some politicians, police and military.

"Obviously the idea is to prove that we are the British equivalent of a budding RAF seeking to provoke a revolution. But as an anarchist who believes firmly in the spontaneity of revolution, I can say that it is my opinion that such groups achieve little. I can understand it as a reaction to a particular form of oppression, but I think any reading of history shows that the people revolt when they decide to.

"Small groups of agitators or conspiratorial sects may influence to a degree but generally they are just as surprised by the outbreak of rebellion or revolution as the rulers themselves. Examples of this are the Bolsheviks in February 1917 (when Lenin himself had given up all hope) and the IRA in 1968-69. Though always claiming to be one step ahead of the people, they generally have to scramble to keep up with events!

"I think too that events in West Germany have borne out this theory. In an attempt to turn the people away from the government by forcing the government to become more repressive and totalitarian (which I've always considered spurious reasoning) the RAF have succeeded in turning the working class against the left and actually strengthening the repressive forces of the state. There are counter claims to be made against my reasoning here, I don't deny it. But this is basically my own point of view.

"While saying the above, I don't mean that we should all sit back. There's plenty to be said, plenty to be done, examples to be set, exposes to be made, issues to be clarified. But the appeal of an urban guerilla group in this country, in this political climate, would be easy for me to resist.

"Meanwhile, of course, Special Branch is having a field day — something for them to do at last. Incidentally the pilot issue of the Leveller was seized in our flat. They totally freaked out when they saw the cover!"

Ronan Bennett B19617  
Brixton Prison, London SW2

day they appear in court.

She has to exercise alone guarded by 3 women screws and watched by cameras. She has to clean the wing herself, as the convicted prisoners who would normally do the work are not allowed in; for this she gets paid 97p a week.

Since all efforts to gain association for her with the other defendants have failed, and in spite of the solidarity shown to her by the other men in Brixton, she now wants to be moved to Holloway.

The ATS is now planning identity parades, which they want to hold on their home

ground, Paddington Green, where there are distinct advantages for the police over the usual location at the remand prison or "the nearest convenient police station" (Home Office Circular). Each prisoner will have to appear on up to 30 parades, so there is a fair chance of each of them being picked out at least once.

Meanwhile, the public is being told, by police, through the media, of a massive revolutionary conspiracy. The word hasn't had to be used, but everyone knows it: "Terrorists".

Support should go to  
Persons Unknown at Box 123,  
182 Upper St, London N1,  
and direct to the six prisoners;  
these are their numbers in  
Brixton Prison, London SW2:

Iris Mills D01993, Ronan  
Bennett B19617, Dafydd  
Ladd B19792, Stewart Carr  
B21185, Vincent Stevenson  
B20621, Trevor Dawton  
B20620



Cop in flak jacket searches people entering Lambeth Magistrates Court.

## THE IRON FIST :2

### Over 3000 held without warrant

It was clever of the government to let the Shackleton Report slip out almost unnoticed at the end of August. Released late in the week prior to the bank holiday it virtually escaped any comment or public debate on the workings of the Prevention of Terrorism Act: the (Temporary Provisions) concession to liberal opinion remains in the title of the Act but the gist of Shackleton's argument is that it's going to be with us a long time yet.

Great skill was employed by

Lord Shackleton in defending the indefensible. He made several plaintive cries about the damage to human rights and even suggested a few minor changes to improve "civil liberties".

But he said he thought the Act — rushed in overnight in the wake of the Birmingham pub bombings — should stay, warning as he did so that he hoped "the temporary concept of this legislation will not diminish". Yet the Act looks well on the way to becoming

law permanently — much like those other hurried pieces of legislation, the 1936 Incitement to Disaffection Act and the Official Secrets Act.

Shackleton justified the damning evidence of the statistics by arguing that the Act is to prevent terrorism. Thus, it's possible to justify detaining 3,259 people and only charge 105 of them, by saying that these little unpleasant incidents are necessary to keep terrorism down. While he ingeniously warns against "crude inferences" from the statistics, he ignores the undeniable fact that the Act has been used to smash any form of legitimate radical Irish political organisation in the UK.

"Great skill was employed by Lord Shackleton in defending the indefensible..."

Shackleton professes the liberal dislike for exclusion orders, recommending that the review system be re-examined. The orders, which allow the police to get rid of anyone they don't like but against whom they can prove nothing, have already done their work in ensuring the deportation not just of a few suspected terrorists but also of most of the political leadership of Sinn Féin, civil right activists and trades unionists.

That there has been no Irish-related terrorism in the UK since January 1976 (a series of bombs in Liverpool) hardly enters the report. Nor does the fact that no IRA activist has been caught as a result of the Act dealt with by explaining that "other powers are used to arrest and charge where possible". No hint of course that the real reason the bombings have stopped on the mainland is agreements thrashed out with the Provisionals in Belfast.

"... allowed the police to get rid of anyone they don't like..."

Shackleton concludes his report by arguing that a basic civil liberty is the right "to stay alive and go about one's business without fear". To maintain that right, he argues that we "must be prepared to forgo some of our civil liberties for a time". And he argues with a most dangerous politician's loop-hole that "while the threat from terrorism continues, the powers in this Act cannot be

dispensed with. A carte blanche for indefinite retention.

An argument used frequently to little avail by Irish activists about the PTA is that in time as its temporary nature wanes, it can and will be used against blacks, trade unionists, pacifists indeed any group of people deemed "internal enemies" by the State.

Ken Lynam experienced this last autumn when on his way via Fishguard to attend Ireland's first ever anti-nuclear demonstration — the festival at Carnsore Co. Wicklow in protest at the Irish Electricity Board's intention to go nuclear.

Lynam with three friends, one an Italian, were detained under the PTA, and in wanting to publicise his experience, he wrote it was to "knock any ideas people may have that the PTA is aimed only at Irish people — sure enough it's primarily Irish people who get picked up and detained under it, but it was very definitely used in our case like a piece from Kitson's "Low intensity Operations": getting fairly innocuous information which allows the State to keep tabs on, in our case, what we do and the area of London we cover/work in, the people we know etc.

"... it can and will be used against blacks, trade unionists, pacifists..."

"It is important for people to realise that the powers which the Act give the Police — to detain us on the basis we had material that is completely legal but about which they weren't happy, to hold us for seven days without informing us of our rights and without access to a solicitor, so that you're inclined to be very co-operative just to get out — those powers which were originally brought in to combat IRA "terrorism" are being used against anyone they are not "happy about".

Lynam was lucky: after some hours in Haverfordwest police station, during which time he was strip-searched, fingerprinted, photographed, and asked many questions which had little to do with Ireland, including what state his London flat was in, he was released without any explanation or indeed thanks!

The Shackleton Report served its masters well, but Lynam's experiences and the hundreds of others, some now before the European Court of Human Rights, show what gobbledegook Shackleton's near-whitewash is.





# THE IRON FIST: 3

## Waiting for Mr C

"The return of Colonel B" is the slogan in the ABC Defence Committee's propaganda around the long-awaited Official Secrets trial which opened on September 5. And among other problems, the crown has found itself in a pickle over the question: what to call him, when it does.

After all the state's been through to protect his identity, it would be swallowing too much to call him Hugh Johnstone — and ridiculous to persist in the "B" pretence. So the solution is not to call him anything.

His tedious deposition to the committal proceedings will be presented to the court, because it has to be, but he will not be questioned by crown counsel John Leonard QC. He will, however, be tendered as a witness for the defence to cross-examine, again because he has to. And it appears he will then give his real name, when asked.

Just what effect this would have on the *Levellor/Peace News/NUJ* House of Lords appeal, which comes up on November 27, depends on how much notice their Lordships take of the real world.

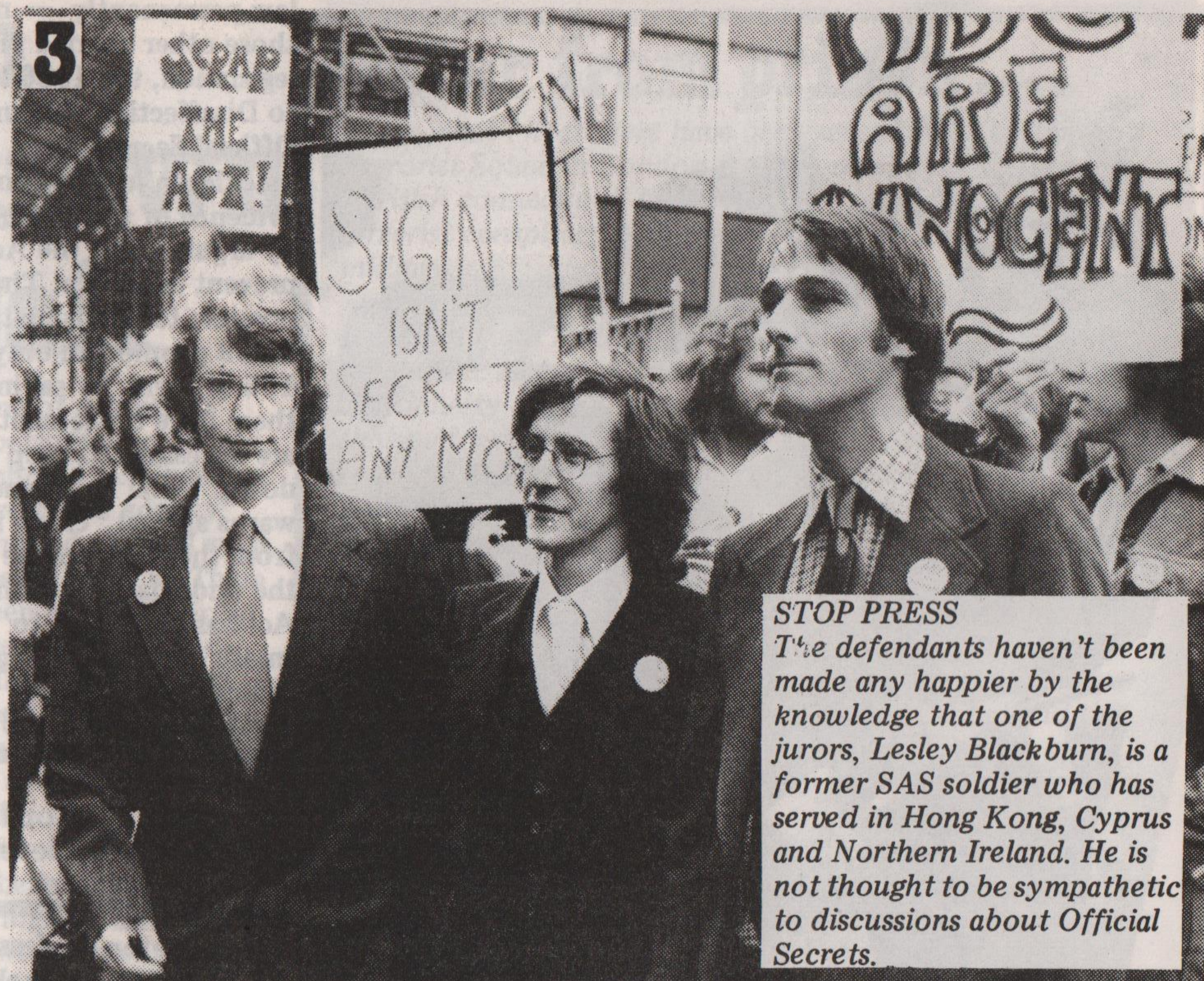
It is possible that *The Leveller* itself will not be involved in the appeal. After the general meeting decided only to proceed if it wouldn't cost us anything, one of the five individual defendants applied for legal aid. So did the PN people — but were refused. The area committee, against whose decision there is no appeal, wrote that "it would be unreasonable that legal aid should be granted when the court had imposed no penalty" (the individuals having not been fined, while the two companies, which are ineligible for legal aid, were fined £500 each).

In a naked exposition of class law, the letter went on: "The committee took the view that an ordinary fee-paying client of moderate or adequate means would not be advised to prosecute the appeal".

To do Johnstone's job this time, to recite the state's case that the information offered by John Berry, and that collected by Duncan Campbell, is such a threat to the state, the prosecution is calling another super secret person, Mr. C.

Mr. C is not a soldier, but a senior civil servant, an under-secretary at the Foreign Office, which runs the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), which incorporates Signals Intelligence (SIGINT), in which Johnstone was commanding officer and John Berry a corporal.

One of the main lines of defence will be that everything Aubrey, Berry and Campbell know about intelligence communications, and a wee bit more, is well known to the KGB and all other intelligence operations. Proof of this lies



**STOP PRESS**  
The defendants haven't been made any happier by the knowledge that one of the jurors, Lesley Blackburn, is a former SAS soldier who has served in Hong Kong, Cyprus and Northern Ireland. He is not thought to be sympathetic to discussions about Official Secrets.

in the now-forgotten defection to East Germany in 1965 of Corporal Patchett, then serving with 13 Signals Regiment at RAF Gatow, West Berlin.

Patchett was COMINT indoctrinated to Category 3. He had the highest security clearance, and had within his knowledge a large amount of information about the British COMINT organisation (GCHQ), the role of Army SIGINT and the other collaborating agencies i.e. the National Security Agency (Fort Mead, Maryland), CBNRC (Ottawa), and DSD (Melbourne).

It is a matter of some certitude that the information in his possession was duly related to his new friends. The identities and locations of the major units and their establishments remain substantially the same to this day.

Early reports of this defection made front page news, but subsequent coverage was thought to have been limited in detail by a "D" notice. What really disturbs the authorities about the ABC case is the possibility that it should become general public knowledge that HMG is conducting illegal operations (Geneva Telecommunications treaty-1965) against allied states (e.g. Greece and Turkey), and against other sovereign states which present no threat to the security of the United Kingdom (e.g. Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Syria and Japan etc.).

Disclosure of this kind of activity to two radical journalists is more likely to cause embarrassment and discomfiture to the government than imperil the security of the state.

Leonard QC tried to pre-empt this defence in his opening address, with repeated assertions that it wasn't just a matter of stopping the Ruskies finding out new things about us; but stopping them getting corroboration for what they knew already, which, he said, was of vital importance in all intelligence work: the jury looked

confused, as they have throughout the case.

But because of the increasingly obvious absurdity of trying to make AB and C look like spies (an absurdity that does not, it seems, extend to prevent them being prosecuted as such), the whole case has been surprisingly low-key. No great threats to civilisation have been invoked. To get his conviction, Leonard has been relying on building up a mass of tiny detail, to set the impression of the effort that is said to have gone into lifting secrecy, rather than the result.

So the journalistic angle has come to the fore: that Aubrey and Campbell were virtually inciting Berry to commit a breach of the law that, having signed repeated OSA declarations, he should have known better not to do.

The weakness of the Section 1 (spying) charges also became public with the revelation just before the trial that Campbell and Berry had been offered a plea bargain: plead guilty to Section 2 (which carries 2 years) and we'll drop Section 1 (fourteen years) — The prosecution were told to stuff the bargain up their legal rectums, but the cat was out of the bag. They can't have been very happy about Section 1 — hence now the softly softly approach.

The judge is called Willis, a former (wartime) officer in the Royal Signals, which looks bad, but he's still not as bad as the reputation enjoyed by Judge Gerald Thesiger, aged 76, who was to have heard the case until a surprise switch a few days before it began. Thesiger by repute is a hanger and flogger, and presumably the authorities were worried he'd go over the top and blow the whole thing on appeal.

One new aspect of the security work came up at the start of the trial. The panel of 82 jurors set down for the case had, on Leonard's admission, been vetted for their "loyalty". Though challenged by Campbell's mouthpiece Lord Hutchinson, he declined to define this "loyalty" further. He also failed to explain why 11 of the 82 weren't at the Old Bailey.

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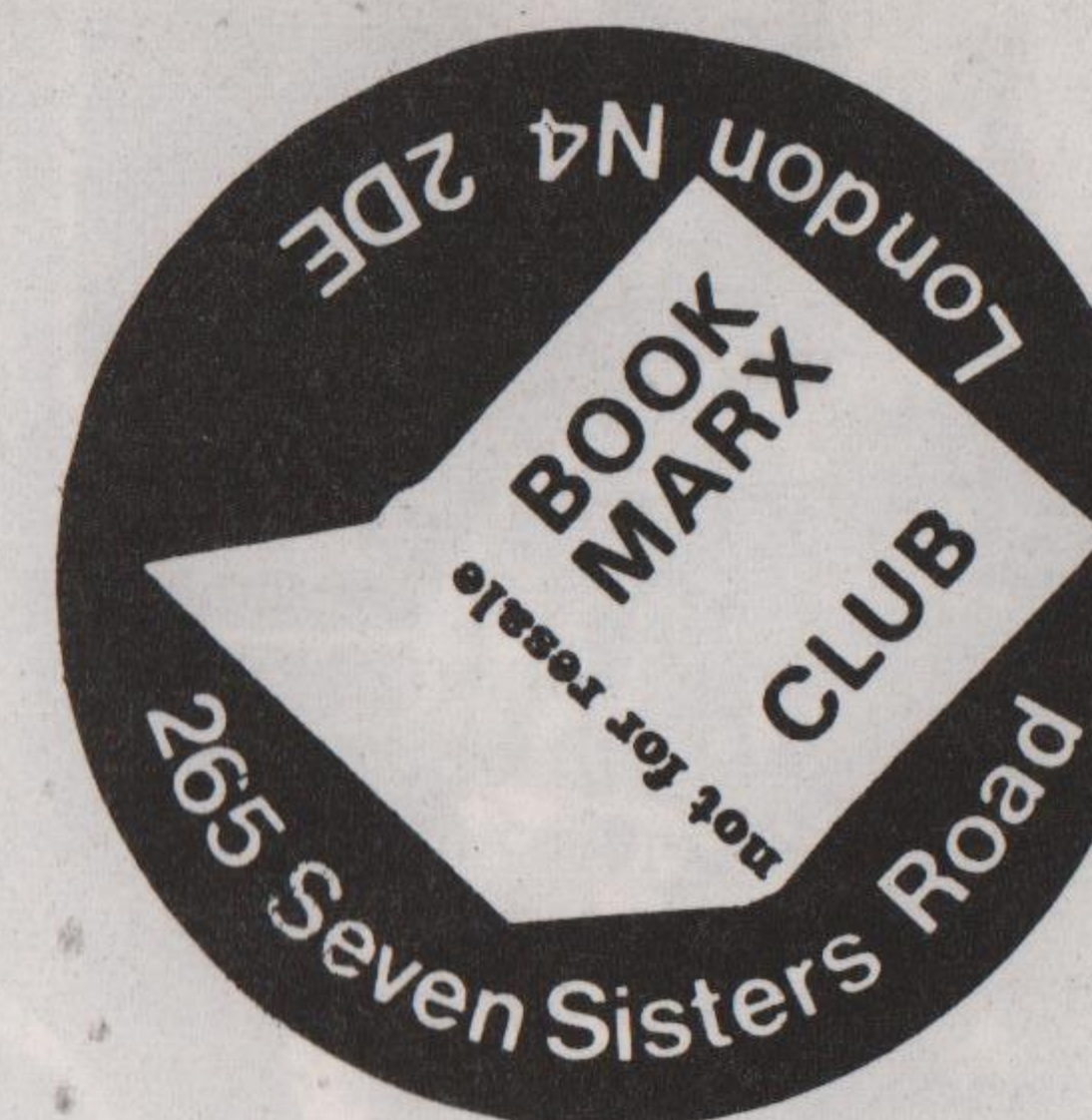
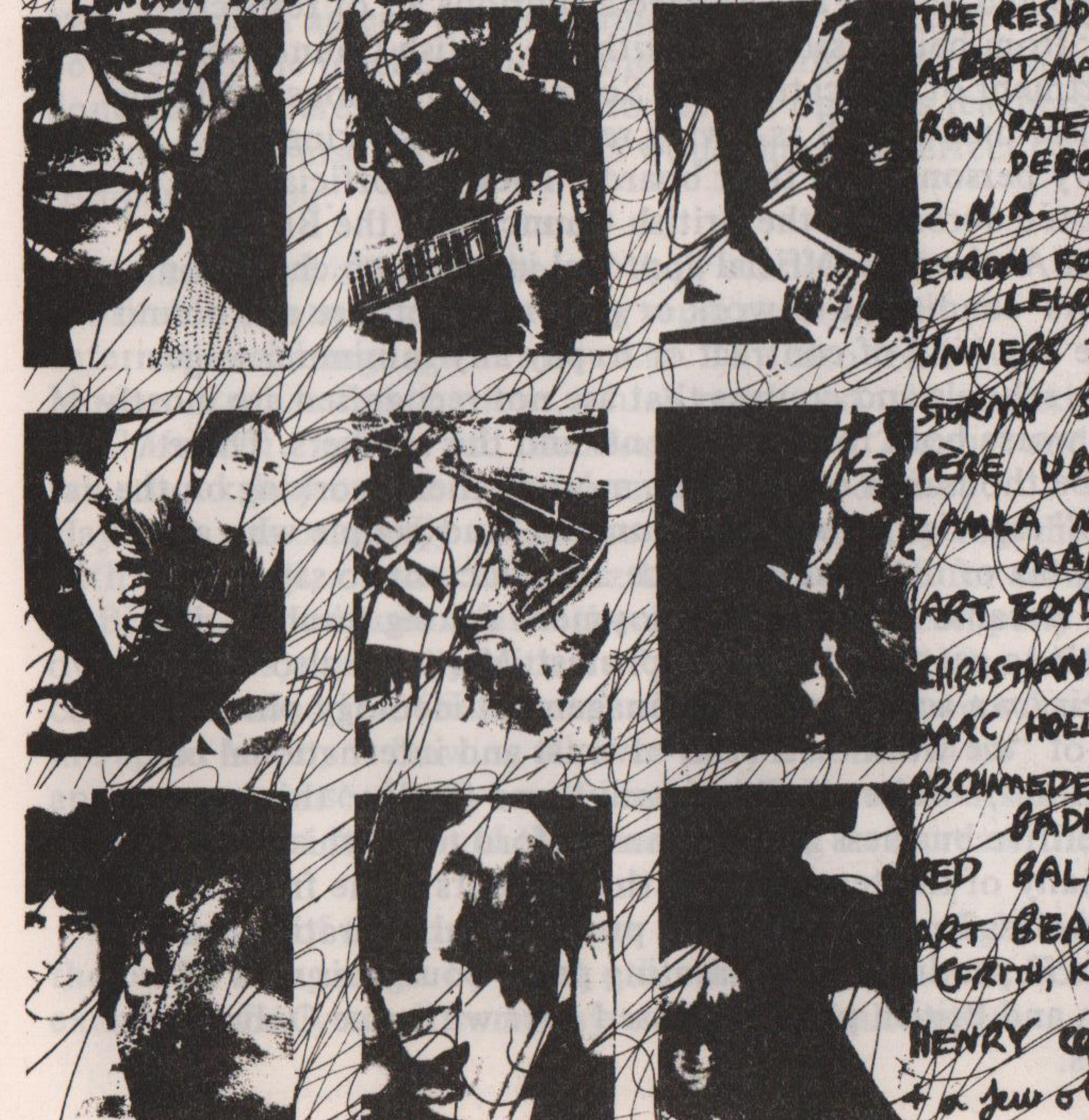
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Pic courtesy Interco-op

Students at Interco-op

# LINGO HALLS RAKE IT IN

EIGHT MILLION tourists troop into this country every year to see a few sights and to have their wallets lightened. Anything up to a million of them have the added pleasure of enrolling for English language courses and having them completely cleaned out. For courses can cost £750 per week.

Most people who come here especially for the summer courses can afford it or are subsidised, but others, often refugees from political or economic oppression, find that they are forced to sign on with a language school in order to be allowed to stay in this country.

A recent survey by ARELS (Association of Recognised English Language Schools) showed that 48 of the more respectable schools cleared £18 million in tuition fees; the students spent another £14 million on accommodation and something like £9 million on other things.

This is only the tip of a monstrous iceberg floating into the British economy. The British Tourist Authority knows of about 600 schools and courses, but many hundreds of others mushroom quietly especially during the summer. The quality of the teaching and equipment varies from some that have fully qualified teachers, language laboratories and all the modern paraphernalia, to the majority that have undertrained and underpaid teachers (many on a "freelance" basis with no contracts and no security) and little equipment beyond a blackboard and a few books.

There are two organisations that attempt to control standards of teaching English in the private sector. ARELS, concerned with permanent schools, and FELCO (Federation

of English Language Course Organisations) concerned with vacation courses for foreign students in the 12-20 age range. Both organisations have a code of conduct, filled with fine phrases, and are inspected periodically. The 73 members of ARELS and 46 of FELCO have a spurious air of respectability; from being associated with the British Council, the Department of Education and Science, and various academic organisations, as well as having retired high ranking ex-military personnel on their boards. They are officially promoted abroad by the British Council and the British Tourist Authority. Official approval involves no checks on teachers' conditions of work or pay; members are not bound to give any kind of contract or to pay any minimum wage.

The schools and courses that are not recognised are mostly much worse both for the students and the teachers. There must be thousands of teachers, most of them working on the "lump" especially during the summer, and people who aren't paying tax or national insurance are reluctant to say too much. Because of high unemployment among teachers, it is difficult to get them to act in protest. Many are also conned by their own acceptance of management ideology phrased in terms of "we work on a basis of trust and international co-operation", "we're all a big family" and finally "this is a very competitive business and we can't afford to do this now". Too many of the teachers and the students come from middle class backgrounds with professional aspirations and collude in producing a nauseating petty bourgeois view of Britain and British people, glossed over with nice Oxbridge accents.

However, efforts are being made to unionise this area. In 1964 MATSA, the white collar section of the GMWU set up an International Teachers Branch (ILTB) and it now has branches in London, Bournemouth, Brighton and Cambridge where most of the major language schools work. In 1975 ILTB hit the national press when a school was closed down, officially because of "continuous disruption by militant teachers, including active Marxists and Trotskyists". *Daily Telegraph* hacks managed to find one member of the Communist Party amongst the teachers. Bernard Levin, an old friend of the Mr Lindsay, the principal of the school, wrote in *The Times* a touching epitaph: "The loss of the St. Giles School of Language will not cause the nation to collapse in economic ruin. . . Mr and Mrs Lindsay and their children will not starve and soon the entire episode will be forgotten. And yet perhaps it would be a good thing if it were not forgotten." Mr Lindsay said it would cost him over £20,000 to close the school and yet he made a profit of over £30,000 on the disposal of the lease and his company made a total trading profit of £59,789 in 1975. Six months later he was back in business, under the name St. Giles College in Highgate. In 1976 his profits were only £5,000 below those of 1975. He recruited new, reliable staff and was quickly recognised by ARELS once more.

Many of the major schools are now unionised, but pay and conditions still leave a lot to be desired. The *Berlitz Schools*, owned now by American publishers Collier-MacMillan, pay a basic starting salary of £2,660 and only £3,003 after ten years. The *Language Tuition Centre*, owned by Westinghouse, pay at the bottom of the Burnham FE Lecturer Scale.

One of the major ELT empires has managed to avoid unionisation, so far: International House/English International which is officially run as an educational trust. The emperor of this outfit is John Haycraft, who has swallowed and spewed out again more than a fair share of liberal bull-shit; he constantly reminds protesting teachers that his organisation is built on trust and co-operation. He tells teachers that he is just an employee of the trust like everyone else. However, he goes frequently on trips, which his teachers could hardly afford, to visit the numerous affiliated schools abroad.

IH run a very neat system; they train their own teachers, giving them four, eight or twelve week courses, charging them for the training. This gives the organisation a pool of trained and vetted teachers, some of whom they employ here in London; some they send abroad to their affiliated schools.

In Rome the teachers at the affiliated school managed to organise and join one of the Italian teachers' unions. They negotiated proper contracts which were legally binding. Many of the teachers involved found themselves on a blacklist, which IH denied.

Recently realising that he couldn't resist unionisation for ever, Haycraft agreed to allow union recruiting literature to be given to the teachers and trainees but this hasn't been done yet. Apparently he hopes to get not only his teachers unionised but also directors; this would have the effect of a company union.

IH have hived off a number of their schools and more profitable summer courses into a separate company, International Language Centres Ltd. This also took over Modern English Publications, which produced two magazines, *BBC Modern English*, and the *Modern English Teacher* and ran a bookshop called the modern English bookshop. Haycraft was originally a director of this company together with Tom Hall, a financial whizz kid with an OBE for services to British capital, and a few others. Initially this company made overall losses, especially with its Paris school, but also with a company called ILC (East Asia) which now runs two schools in Japan. Money is flowing all over the place but to no apparent purpose. Last year at least the Summer courses made a modest profit and they are planning to increase their operations.

The losses of this company are surprising in the light of the profit being made by most other language schools. For example a fairly small company called the Shakespeare

School of English owned largely by two brothers, AA and SH Dalal, made a net profit before tax in 1976 of £19,395. This was after they had paid themselves handsome salaries and deducted various expenses. They also appeared to be making large payments or loans abroad, largely to Iraq. Their Piccadilly school was almost strike bound recently because one of their teachers was summarily sacked; union pressures managed to re-instate the teacher but most of the other grievances of the teachers concerning pay and conditions has not yet been resolved.

In contrast to these rip-off artists, there are two schools in London run on co-operative lines. The initial impetus came out of the St. Giles affair; some of the teachers involved in the strikes and the subsequent lock-out and close-down decided to set up their own school: the Marble Arch Intensive English School, and the International Co-operative School of Languages (Interco-op). Interco-op has a charter setting out their aims, the last of which states that they "support all movements designed to increase people's control over their places of work, habitation and leisure." All their teachers are, after four months, members of the co-operative and have a vote on the committee of management. They try to charge reasonable fees (£68 per month for teaching in the mornings). Students are encouraged to take part in the running of the school by attending management committee meetings. The atmosphere in these schools is very different from commercial schools because there are campaign posters all over the walls, and real discussions are encouraged, rather than the debating society type shows put on elsewhere. They also give free places to refugees like Chileans.



ELT is a boom industry and the government, through the British Council, the DES, and the British Tourist Authority, is supporting private initiatives at the expense of publically owned education. For there are also at least 40 LEAs that provide full time courses in English for overseas students, and many others that run part-time courses; these courses, while mentioned by British Council offices, are certainly not pushed strongly. Local authority courses are generally run by better qualified teachers with more equipment and charge lower fees than most private institutions.

This is an area where the local authorities could expand and offer more jobs to teachers at virtually no cost to the local rate payer. But many LEAs, far from running their own courses, rent out their colleges and schools to private companies during the summer to make a little money. In comparison to the amount of money they could earn running their own courses the rent they get is peanuts.

The teachers in MATSA have opted for demands beyond that of the state taking over the running of language courses for foreigners. ILTB have as part of their basic programme the take-over of language schools by the teachers to be run directly under their own control. Given that the main investment in language schools is the work of teachers this is a realisable demand. The rip-off artists who own and control language schools generally invest very little in their businesses and tend to make a very large profit. It is about time that the bubble is burst in the interests of the teachers and the students.



# Back Pages

## Grey vinyl

First off, records. Alan Fisher, NUPE trades unionist stalwart of anti pay policy fame, on clear grey vinyl. Yes, it's actually a record of his speech The Fight For a Living Wage. Unpredictably the B side is more interesting with Counter Act agitprop theatre group doing 'We're Underpaid'.

Next among the releases to note if you don't read the music press is Linton Kwesi Johnson's LP 'Dread Beat and Blood' on Virgin's Frontline label. Matumbi back Linton's poetry.

A new game will shortly be available in England. Called 'Struggle', its creator is Bernard Ollman, well-known American marxist academic. He says: "How do we convey socialist ideas to people who don't read socialist books and journals? ... I believe one answer which has so far been ignored is the board game."

On sale at the last CSE conference, it sold very briskly. Those who have played it report that it's difficult to get anyone to take the role of capitalist seriously enough. Talks are going on at PDC about distributing it in England. There'll be more news on it next issue.

A much-needed left/alternative bookshop has just opened in Belfast. Just Books have opened up at 7, Winetavern Street. They aim to be more than a bookshop, planning for example to hold exhibitions of pictures. One of their latest exhibitions was a display of French Resistance comix recording world events.

Pluto Press, the left's own answer to Penguin Books, are publishing left plays at the alarming rate of one a month in their Playscripts series. Two plays by the now household name Caryl Churchill, Trevor Griffiths' translation of Chekhov's Cherry Orchard and McGrath's Mum's the Word. Available now in left bookshops.

Pluto have also brought out a definitive and comprehensible guide to labour law: "Rights at Work" by Jeremy McMullen, formerly legal officer at the GMWU. Throughout the 400 pages of clearly-listed legal rights and remedies runs the political theme: Never rely on the law, but on the collective strength of organised labour. For the law has never worked for workers and their families. Pluto has kept the price low. While the hardback is £12.00, the paperback is only £2.25 and for orders over ten copies, only £1.50. Worth a year of weekend schools for the union activist.

Only three shopping months left before Xmas. Left and feminist diaries seem to be proliferating at an amazing rate and making choice difficult. This year's Big Red One from Pluto is about nuclear power, giving all the dope about side-effects and so on. Also out now is Zed Press's Pan African Diary, packed with socialist facts about that continent. The illustrations get a bit lost in it but there's plenty of space for appointments. Both sell at £1.50 and will be available in left bookshops shortly.

Does Arnold Wesker's *Fatlips* need a plug? The blurb says it was published on Oct. 12. A book for children with biggy print and some nice illustrations. The handout claims that this historical period we are in is something of a Wesker Year. I get a sinking feeling.

£1.75 will buy you *A Say in the Future*, but the local people of North Battersea, in inner London, don't have one according to a report published by Battersea Community Action. Their conclusion: "Public participation is only likely to be achieved if it is structured and continuous."

## Yellow press

Welsh readers may like to take in *Common Cause*. The second issue is just out and it's getting better. As the gaps between issues of *Rebecca* (Welsh radical and investigative magazine) get longer, it's good to have another magazine from Wales. Sub costs. £1.00 for four issues. Good value. Common Cause c/o VCS, 90, St. Mary Street, Cardiff.

The gap between issues of the *Liverpool Free Press* is now unfortunately infinite. The first and always the best of the big city alternative investigative papers folded earlier this year, which must have been a big relief for the Liberal Mafia and other crooks who run Merseyside. But some members of the collective are still around, running an alternative news agency (phone 051 708 7466) and they've just produced two valuable handbooks on the commercial media for the left to use.

*People and the Press* (32pp 35p) spells it out straight away: "The press does not exist to inform. The basic aims of newspapers are to exercise power and influence, and to make money."

After ten pages of this, backed up with cuttings showing the class nature of straight reporting, there are chapters on how to use the media, how to cash in on its values for your own campaigns, and how to complain against what it does to you.

*Libel, the Paper Tiger* (16pp, 15p) or "Rogues' Charter" as it is explained, follows the same line: the law "protects only the rich and allows the press to malign ordinary working people with impunity." But you can get round it - just as the impact is political, so there are political inhibitions on the actual likelihood of action being brought, which can be capitalised on. To prove it, the LFP comrades re-run some of their own stories, clearly libellous in law, but unproceedable with. Lessons for everyone to learn from this.

*ZAP!* is a brand new mag written by and for lesbians and gay men. Its opening editorial says: "We hope that the articles will be of direct relevance to gay people rather than theoretical. So much of what has been written in the past requires the use of a large dictionary to untangle and in the end has very little importance to the readers' lives." Copies at 20p each from The Peace Centre, 18, Moor Street, Queensway, Bham.

The first issue of *Scrounger* has reached us from Belfast, produced by the Claimants Union at the Workers' Resource centre, 52, Broadway, Belfast. BT 12 6 AS. The word for the day - Don't moan, Organise!

Just out, and I haven't read it, but six persons in as many hours have rated it ACE... *Where were you brother? An account of trade union imperialism* by Thomson and Larson. War on Want publications. £1.20. Bob Dent of News from Nowhere bookshop in Liverpool has compiled a critical bibliography on 'Anti-Fascism' and the Anti Nazi League. It includes wide-ranging material looking

at fascism from socialist, feminist and pacifist standpoints. Good, thought-provoking stuff. Send SAE to News from Nowhere, 100, Whitechapel, Liverpool, L1 6 EN Received....

No space to review the following *Feminist Review* To develop the theory of women's liberation and debate the political perspectives and strategy of the movement. Single copy £1.50. Sub £3.00 from 65, Manor Road, London N 16.

*Homosexuality, Androgyny and Evolution*. A simple introduction. 30p, post free from Quantum Jump Publications. 5, Caledonian Road. London N 1.

*Colonel HA Johnstone. A Bibliography*. Send for a copy to John Noyce. PO Box 450. Brighton BN 1 8 GR.

## Wanted - Your Money

The Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory is looking for your money. It aims to push for socialist policies in the forthcoming election - whenever that's going to be. Supported by, among others, Camden councillor Ken Livingstone, Ted Knight of Norwood and ex Clay Cross councillor David Skinner, it aims to mount a parallel election campaign in as many constituencies as possible. Send donations to John O'Mahoney, Box 127, Rising Free. 182, Upper Street. London N 1.

The recent London Weekend TV "Red Tsar" dealt with Stalin's purges of the 1930s of his former comrades-in-arms and anyone the great dictator considered a threat to his continued power. Perhaps the most outstanding victim was NI Bukharin.

## LIVERPOOL READERS MEETING

Very Brief Summary of Points raised at Leveller Readers Meeting, Liverpool, 20 July 1978.

A dozen people came. All non-party independents. All familiar with the magazine. All activists in different areas of the left. Most knew each other personally. Our paths probably cross most at Liberty Hall (in terms of formal set-ups).

Good response to the 'politics of sexuality' issue. Question raised as to how Leveller can cover 'womens issues' in view of the existence of Spare Rib. Suggestion that maybe more men could write about 'womens issues'. Some criticism was made of 'macho' style (eg. Ian's RAR article). 'Cosmopolitan Man' article also criticised for being too flippant. But someone else defended its flippancy! !

Question raised as to whether the Leveller was just a sop to ex-left activist who read the paper but do nothing. Such a readership base may disintegrate if society gets more polarised.

There was a strong positive response as to whether we welcome articles on the 'left'.

Question raised of how to avoid sectarianism in the form of being 'anti-party'. Suggestion that way out of this dilemma is to be 'non-party'... creating space for a left politics/culture not dominated by party structures. The Leveller could be an independent forum for the general movement.

What can we do...

We're going to meet again to discuss distribution promotion and possibility of contributions from Merseyside.

Contact will be Brian Whittaker, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool 1. 708 7466.

# Back Pages

A campaign is developing for his rehabilitation. Personal appeal from his widow and son have gone to Brezhnev, the Congress of the Communist Party in Moscow, the CP Politburo and the Praesidium of the Congress. The appeal was rejected, but the campaign grows with supporters from most countries of the world signing a petition for his rehabilitation.

1978 marks the 40th anniversary of his execution, and this year he would have been 90 years old. Further information from Ken Coates at the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, Bertrand Russell House, Gamble Street, Nottingham NG 7 4 ET

Workshops Galore at the Libertarian Festival, October 14 and 15 in Manchester. Anarcha-feminism, nuclear power, Eastern Europe and much, much more. Details from 178, Waterloo Place, Oxford Road. Manchester 13 9 QI.

All Out for Troops Out 1 Roy Mason, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, will have his constituency in Barnsley, South Yorkshire, invaded October 7, ten years after the police seized the streets from Civil Rights marchers in Derry. Called by Yorkshire United Troops Out Movement. c/o UTOM. 182, Upper Street, London N 1.

Everyone in the Midlands interested in British involvement in Ireland should already know about the conference on November 11 in Birmingham. Organised to break the clamp on informed discussion of "this delicate political issue", especially in Labour Parties and Trades Unions, it has already gained support outside these circles. Midlanders, especially from outside B/ham, please contact Mary Pearson, Planning Committee, 65 Woodville Road, Kings Heath, B/ham 14.

Is Scotland, perhaps, somewhere between the First and Third Worlds? Edinburgh hosts a conference to examine Scotland, under-developed countries and the role of multi-national corporations. November 3 & 4. Register with Scottish Education and Action for Development. 146, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh, EH 9 9 HX.

Meanwhile, the Aberdeen Broad Left are seeking the widest possible audience for their Festival of the Left. To be held, natch, on All Saints Day.

The National Abortion Campaign and the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign are organising a Trade Union delegate conference to be held at Caxton Hall on November 25. Get your branch to sponsor it and send delegates: forms and information from the NAC office, 30 Camden Road, London NW 1 (01 485 4303)

A weekend of activity to commemorate one year's occupation of Hounslow Hospital - starting on the evening of Friday Oct. 6 at 7.00pm with films and exhibitions in the hospital itself. Then back again on Saturday at midday outside the hospital for a march, arriving back at 2.30 for workshop discussions. Other groups and campaigns working on similar issues (women and health, cuts etc) are invited to come along with all their gear, preferably ringing the Hounslow Hospital Planning Committee for more information: 01 570 4448. To get there in person - Hounslow Central tube and the hospital is on Staines Rd.

"We've Always Done It This Way, Haven't We?" ATV networked, 10.30pm. Tuesday Sept. 19. Directed by Alan Bell.

The Lucas Aerospace Joint Shop Stewards Combine Committee and the corporate plan for the electrical group have been a focus for left discussion for quite a while - the first organised workers to think out a plan for the control of a big company, and of the products it makes, by the workforce.

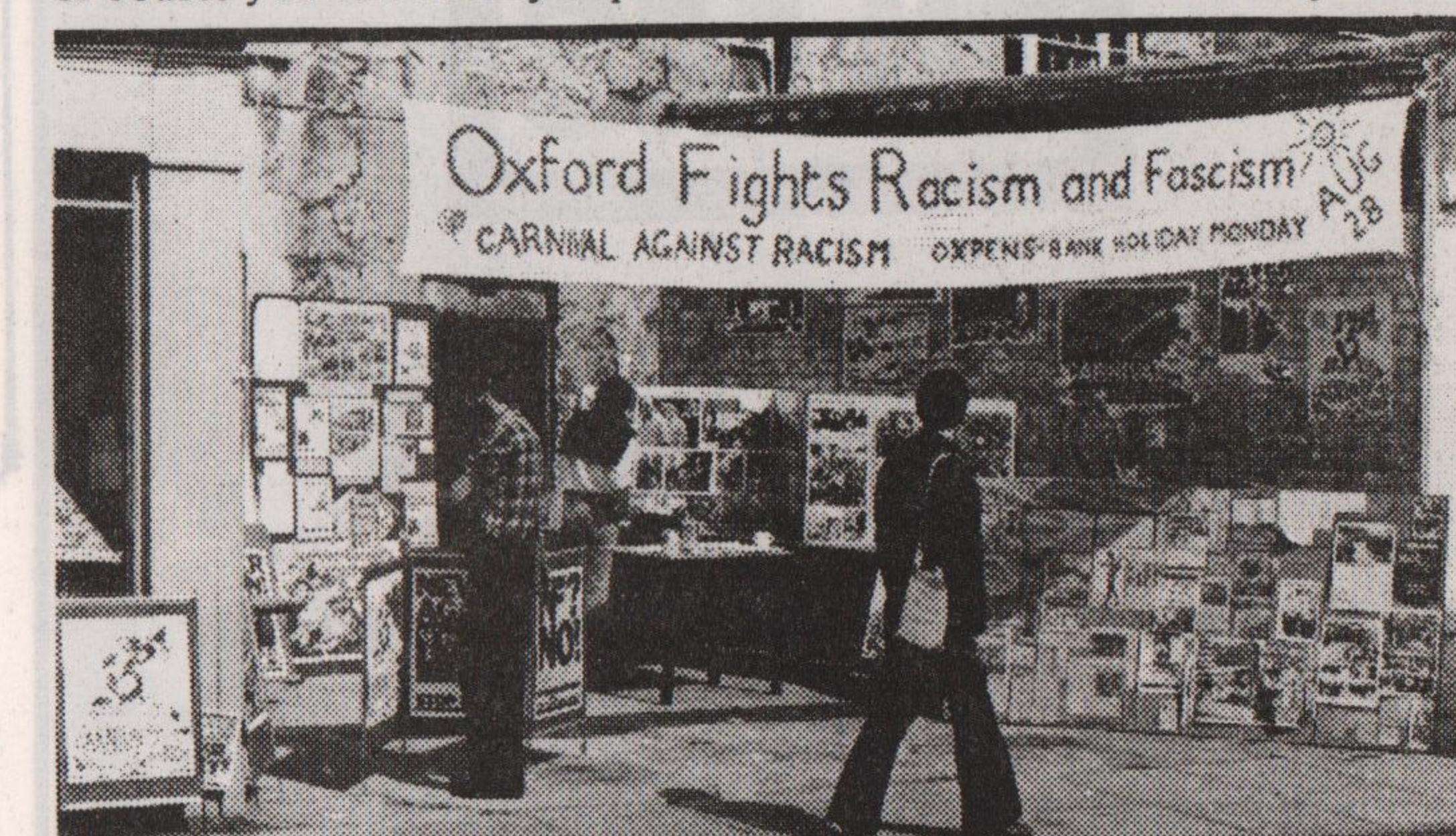
None of the importance of this comes across at all in this awful ATV documentary. It's true that the media, like management, politicians and yes, the big union bureaucrats, have so far succeeded in brushing it under the carpet, and so it should be good to see the issues getting a wide airing - indeed it would be if they were.

But Bell's team, in what must be called a determined effort to scratch at the surface, have simply assembled a meaningless procession of film, covering lay-offs and unemployment, the shop stewards go to Parliament, the bosses give a press conference, the Liverpool Trades Council meets, and so on. They've interviewed several stewards and their colleagues in the North East London Polytechnic Centre for Alternative Industrial and Technological Strategies, but their statements are not given any context at all.

And there are such huge factual gaps: no mention of the amount of Lucas' work done on defence contracts (a major motivation for the alternatives), nothing on the alternative products themselves, nothing on the workers' control element in the plan, and little on the crucial sell-out by the union leaderships: Ken Gill, the fashionable CP leader of AUEW (TASS) is filmed saying how the stewards' committee can't be talked to because they aren't the official channel. But the importance of this in reinforcing management's refusal to talk is not made clear. Instead we get endless film, usually

quite unconnected with the voice-over at the time, of unemployed workers' marches and so on. But of course you can't really expect

them to say that the take-over of closing factories under workers' control is the answer, can you? Tim Gopsill



An exhibition called 'Oxford Fights Racism and Fascism' is available from John Clark, Uhuru, 35, Cowley Road. Oxford. More

information on mounting an exhibition against racism is available from them.

## Theatre

The big story of the month is the continuing *Theatre Mobile* saga. Sacked on the spurious grounds of "financial and administrative mismanagement", the company are now awaiting the arbitration tribunal hearing set for September 22nd.

The company are optimistic about the outcome, however, expecting "complete exoneration". In that event, reinstatement will be the only acceptable course.

Meanwhile they are rehearsing a Theatre in Education programme called *Penhal*. It concerns events on board a trawler when the new captain turns out to be a woman. They are also rehearsing a community show based on Brecht sketches.

Things are not looking too good for *Pirate Jenny* either. Carrying a company of 14 (the minimum they need to maintain standards) on the same wages and conditions as the other companies, and doing a full programme of shows they are finding life impossible on the measly £23,000 grant they get from the Arts Council. This compares with the £54,000 given to similar outfits.

Companies are getting into trouble, both from grant giving authorities and from managers of halls, for their anti-fascist plays. *Cast* had two venues, at Launcetion and Redruth, cancelled at the last minute on their recent tour of Cornwall. Happily they were able to find alternatives but had to taxi their audience from one to the other.

If you're in the West Country, particularly around Bristol, you might try the latest offering from the *Avon Touring Theatre Co.*, Their new show, *Riff Raff Rules*, is promised to be "a scream from start to finish". Mainly for young audiences, it ties up youth culture (it's punk in a way) with

violence. Dates are: BRISTOL: University Union, Oct 9/10/11/13/14th.

Redland Coll., Oct 12. Avon Youth Assoc. Oct 19. Folk House, Oct 21.

They have also recently been at the Roundhouse in London with their feminist interpretation of *Measure for Measure*. With several of the leading roles changed from male to female (Claudio becomes Claudia) it has been rapturously received - "a daring triumph", (Grauniad). It's at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth on the 26th.

For other dates and venues. give them a ring.

A group that seems to cover most of the country on its travels is *Belt & Braces* (01 267 6722), who have a new music/revue/skit show called *Red Rock Revue*. With sketches on racism, unemployment and politics in general, the show is built around the company band (getting better all the time) helped out by a couple of members of the theatre group. I've heard that it was mainly geared to the election - now that that's off no doubt it will be revised.

NOTTINGHAM: 29th Sept. BIRMINGHAM: 30th (SC fest) HULL: Oct 2nd. WIGAN: 3rd, L'POOL: 4th MANCHESTER: 5th, OLDHAM 6th. MANCHESTER: 7th (SU) LONDON (City Poly): 8th, SOUTHALL: 9th, DEPTFORD: 11th, GREENWICH: 12th, JACKSON'S LANE: 13th.

*Broadside* (58 Holbein Ho., Holbein Pl., London SW1 01.450 6992) have four shows on offer: *Divide and Rule Britannia*, an anti-racist play, *We Have the Power of the Winds*, about Portugal, *The Working Women's Charter Show*, *Apartheid: the British Connection*.

(continued on Page 33)



# LIBERATION

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# Back Pages

They are playing the apartheid play at Imperial College, London SW7, on 25 Oct.

CAST (01-402 6087) have a powerful anti-fascist play on tour *What Happens Next?* which takes Social Democracy to task. It has been widely praised, though not by the Yorkshire Arts people, who were reluctant to keep up their rate of support for the production on the grounds that an anti-fascist play, to be seen by ANL type audiences, was too narrow an area of interest to warrant their support. They are reported to have recanted and are much embarrassed by the episode.

No such second thoughts for the Lines and Humberside authorities. They have postponed their decision on giving support until a full meeting of their committee - that won't be until after the company have already toured the play in the area.

NORWICH: 28th Sept., IPSWICH 29th, CAMBRIDGE: 30th, HUDDERSFIELD: 3rd Oct (Poly), LEEDS: 4th Oct (Holt Pk, Comm. Theatre, Addle), BRADFORD: 5th (Queens Hall), YORK: 6th, (St Samson's social centre), SHEFFIELD: 7th, LIVERPOOL: 10th (Netherley).

Gay Sweatshop (10 Marius Mansions, London SW17, 10-226 6143) have a new show, *Iceberg*, which takes up the question of gays and fascism. It's opening at the Oval House, London, on 27th Sept., and will run there until Oct 1st. Then Essex Univ on Oct 20th. They are hoping ANL as well as gay and women's groups will be interested.

"A very smutty, naughty feminist cabaret" is *Monstrous Regiment's* new show *Time Gentlemen Please*. A development of *Floorshow*, which the group felt was a bit safe, the new show deals with the "often painful and difficult issues that surround sex". Dates are:  
BIRMINGHAM: Oct 12-14th (Aston Univ.) BATH: Oct 21st (TASS conference) BARNET: 26 (Coll of FE), HACKNEY: 27th (Hoxton Hall), DAGENHAM 28 (Barking Drama Centre). For other dates and venues contact 190 Goswell Rd., London EC1. 01-253 2172.

A new show is also promised by North West Spanner (061-881 7845). Despite the fact that, at the time of going to press they had only just started rehearsals and had not even settled on the subject matter, they have fixed the following dates:  
PONTYPRIDD: Oct 5th (Poly), MANCHESTER: 11th (Francis Shaw Social Club, Corbett St). ASHTON-U-LYME: 13th (West End Comm Centre), WARRINGTON: 16th (Rly. club) BARRY: 17th (Crystals Club),

then a tour of the Lines and Humberside area Oct 21-28th.

Counteract (27 Clerkenwell Close London EC1, 01-253 4977) have their share of financial problems as well. They are broke at the moment but are hoping to recoup some money from performances of their new show, *Party Games*. This takes a swipe at Parliamentary Democracy (as does Ian Walker elsewhere in this issue).

SHEFFIELD: 4th Oct (Poly). ISLINGTON: 6th Oct (TC). CANTERBURY: 8th (Univ.) TREFOREST: 10th (S. Wales Poly).

The other show is *Muck and Brass*, an ecology piece which has received a rapturous response from SERA and others. Dates: LANCHESTER POLY: 5th Oct. SOUTH WALES: 13th Oct (Energy conference), PORTSMOUTH: 16th Oct (Poly).

Pirate Jenny (11 Acklam Rd., London W10, 01-969 9348), whose financial problems have already been mentioned, are touring *Emigrants*, by Peter Sheridan. This deals with the cause and results of the massive emigration from Ireland in the last century.

CRAWLEY: Oct 2nd (West Green Comm. Centre) SWINDON: Oct (Joliffe Studios), READING: Oct 5th (AUEW Hall), ALDERSHOT: Oct 6th (West End Centre), ETON: Oct 7th (Church Hall), NOTTINGHAM: Oct 9th (Trent Poly), DERBY: Oct 10th (ANL), LEICESTER: 11th (ANL), LOUGHBOROUGH: Oct 12th (Coll Tech), NOTTINGHAM: 13th Oct. (International Comm. Centre), HARLOW: 14th Oct (Playhouse), and then two weeks at the Dublin Theatre Festival.

Last on my list is the 7:84 company (01-253 4049), whose new production is *Vandaleur's Folly*, by Margaretta D'Arcy and John Arden. It tells the story of John Scott Vandaleur, a well-meaning country gentleman of County Clare, who turned over his land to a self-supporting co-op. This largely unknown but crucial event in Irish history has considerable contemporary relevance. LANCASTER: Oct 9/10/11th (Univ) WHITEHAVEN: 12th (Rosehill Theatre), IRELAND 16-20th Oct. MANCHESTER: 24Oct (Didsbury), BLACKPOOL: 25th Oct (Clifton LC) LEIGH: 26th Oct. ROCHDALE: 27th (Langley CS), PRESTON: Oct 28th (Poly).

That's all for this month. Apologies to all the groups that I haven't been able to include. Remember to get your listings in by Oct 2nd for the November issue.



Pic of our last benefit bop, with Tour de Force on stage. Next, film and band at Scala Cinema, London, Oct 1st, and bop, Manchester Poly Union Oct. 21st. Look out for details.

### THE THINGS YOU SAY !

\*\* "For a left-wing magazine you have a good grasp of English. But your mail order department seems to be in a shambles—I have no idea whether you are monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly."

R.H.S., 24, Walton-on-Thames.

\*\* "The magazine has some important things to say but I feel that its influence is somewhat limited by its school magazine (2nd rate, written guardedly) undergraduate attempts at humour. This limits its appeal."

R.W., 20, Middlesex.

\*\* "The black and white linear look of Issue 18 makes *The Leveller* look like many other (sterile) left publications. Don't confuse imagination with imitation."

N.H., 24, London SW8.

\*\* "The *Leveller* is the only reliable place (other than *New Society*) for good stuff on media/leisure/communications..."

"The left is only co-ordinated when fighting secrecy and conspiracy laws. I see *The Leveller* as coordinating struggle—or helping, anyway."

A.C., 22, Downton, Salisbury.

\*\* "The *Leveller* is more useful to me than all the other left publications put together."

P.T., 35, Tottenham N15.

\*\* "The balance seems about right. Perhaps a bit more feminist consciousness is needed in general articles. Just for interest I did a quick picture count over issues 12-18 of Men, Women, Both. It came out on an average per issue of: Men—14; Women—2.4; Both—6. I don't know if this gives a true reflection of content, but it's certainly something to ponder."

C.B., 31, Stourbridge, Worcs.

That's just a brief selection of the things you wrote about us at the bottom of the readership survey we ran in the last issue. Your replies came pouring in and it's gratifying that so many of you feel strongly enough about the magazine to fill in the questionnaire. We haven't closed the survey yet, so if you meant to fill it in and forgot, dig it out now and do it while you remember it. Photocopies are quite acceptable if you don't want to cut the issue, and if you haven't seen it, back-copies are still available from the office at 35p.

We've done a very rough preliminary analysis and some interesting facts are already emerging. 60% came from outside London. 81% of the respondents so far are male. 66% belong to a trade union. 25% belong to a political party and 83% are involved with some other political activity or campaign. 100% of the women respondents are involved in political activity somewhere.

Of those who belong to a union, 25% described themselves as 'very active' in it; a further 25% said they were 'middling'; and 50% said they were 'barely involved'. By far the largest party membership was the Labour Party, with 52% of the members. The SWP has 20%, while 12% described themselves as anarchist or anarcho-syndicalists. 8% are in the Communist Party, and 4% each in the IMG and SNP.

A fuller analysis will be published in a later issue. But if you want to help us with the survey, get your replies into the post now!

Pic: Tony Jones



# Classifieds

ESTABLISHED community printing group needs committed full-time worker. Details from Paupers Press, 87 Billington Road, Oxford.

FOCALIN: Ireland's only satirical magazine. 30p for specimen copy to Box 1, The Leveller, 155a Drummond Street, London NW1.

DOWN TO EARTH WHOLE-FOOD COLLECTIVE SHEFFIELD is looking for new workers. If you are interested in wholefoods, running a shop collectively, and a political awareness of food please contact us. One year commitment preferable. We aim at mutual support, skill sharing and personal growth. Tell us about yourself and we'll send more details. DTE Collective, 406 Sharrow Vale Road, Sheffield S11. (0742) 685220.



This tasteless badge has now been reprinted in vile blue with disgusting orange and white lettering. You can get it for 20p (+7p p&p), 10 for £1.70 post paid, from M.A.M., that is Movement Against A Monarchy, Box M, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1.

DIRECTORY OF ALTERNATIVE COMMUNITIES lists many such groups, £1.50 each (cash with order, please) from The Teachers (MHI), 18 Garth Road, Bangor, N.Wales.

UNDER a National Flag: Fascism, Racism and the Labour Movement by Frank Richards. This second edition of the pamphlet which sold out in two months contains a new afterword. 30p + 13p p&p. Cheques and postal orders payable to RCT Association. Write to BM RCT(1), LONDON WC1V 6XX.

CORNER HOUSE Bookshop for books, pamphlets and magazines on radical education. 14 Endell Street, London WC2. Open 10-7pm Mon-Sat. Mail Order Service. Send 27p for catalogue.

COMPASSION in World Farming, Lyndum House, High Street, Petersfield, Hants.

FREE PENPAL SERVICE. The Adam Trust has provided free leaflets on Stonehenge, Glastonbury, Avebury, Leyspower, NEW AGE FESTIVALS and related matters since 1973. Also for details of free penpal service or free marriage bureau write to the Adam Trust, 331 Goswell Road, London EC1.

National march and rally to mark INTERNATIONAL ANTI-APARTHEID YEAR, Assemble 1.30pm, Speakers Corner, Hyde Park, London, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21st. Information and publicity: AAM, 89 Charlotte Street, London W1. 01-580 5311.

NONVIOLENCE in Irish history. 24-page pamphlet. Lots of original research. 40p postfree from: DAWN, 168 Rathgar Road, Dublin 6, Ireland.

PAGAN New Year cards with traditional carols restored to pre-Christian words. Set of six 75p. Iles, 381 Marine Rd, Morecambe, Lancs.

Enthusiastic, committed person interested in research into FOOD POLITICS needed to work in COLLECTIVE WHOLEFOOD SHOP. Write Uhuru, 35 Cowley Road, Oxford by 25 Sep. for details.

SOLIDARITY FOR SOCIAL REVOLUTION NO.4 NOW OUT! Prague Winter, Teaching, Kolyma, Male Sexuality, Automation, Discussion. Libertarian Socialist. Subs £2 FREE SPECIMEN from 23 Solar Ct., Etchingham Park Rd, London N3 2DZ.

BADGE DISTRIBUTORS: political, feminist, gay, ecological, music. We also make badges for political/community groups. Write to: York Community Bookshop, 73 Walmgate, Yorkshire.

NEWS FROM NEASDEN, A catalogue of new radical publications. Available from 22 Fleet Road, London NW3 2QS.

PEDESTRIANS FIRST—3-colour badge available from 15 Matcham Road, E11. 15p each + sae; or 10p each if 20 or more are ordered.

GREAT GEORGES Community Cultural Project (The Blackie) offers hard interesting work to men/women 16+. Rebuild The Blackie alongside trained builders (skilled work and labouring), and work on cultural activities. Until September (cartoon-making; summer theatre; games; workshops). Also an autumn programme. Accommodation provided, food if staying a month or longer. Small wage negotiable after 6 months. GREAT GEORGES PROJECT, GREAT GEORGES STREET, LIVERPOOL 1. 051-709 5109.

THE TEACHERS is a community searching for hard-headed realists who are NOT into money, status, marriage, religion and politics. We're looking for those into social responsibility and reform through education. We work like stink and we don't allow agro. If it sounds like you, write for more information sending 30p to The Teachers (MHI), 18 Garth Road, Bangor, N.Wales.

Rates: 5p a word. Payment: Ads must be prepaid by cheque or PO. Make payable to THE LEVELLER MAGAZINE LTD. Send to: Leveller Classified, 155a Drummond Street, London NW1. Conditions: The Leveller reserves the right to refuse any classified ads.

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## RAIL AGAINST THE NAZIS

Meeting followed by a social in the evening. Speakers: Ray Buckton—General Secretary of ASLEF, Tony Donaghy—NUR EC, Bob Ayres, TSSA, Billy Taylor—AUEW Convenor, Action, John Smith—District Council 5 LT Paul Salvesson—Manchester District Council NUR.

All in a personal capacity. At the Fred Tallant Hall, 153 Drummond Street, London NW1. Saturday 23rd September, 2pm. Admission by TU or PT card.

WANTED flat s/c. Pref. unfurnished. Contact Bob Moulder c/o Leveller.

CUBA: will the person from the English delegation to the Youth Festival who sent a film to East Germany for processing please contact Bread 'n' Roses, 30 Camden Road, London NW1, as we have received your negs.

COMMON STOCK Theatre Co. is looking for 2 actresses to start 23rd Oct, initially until mid-April. £50 per wk. Community theatre or related experience and musical skills preferred but not essential. Please write fully for initial interview to 31 Fulham Palace Rd, London W6. Tel: 741 3086.

WHO NEEDS THE LABOUR PARTY? New pamphlet from the Revolutionary Communist Tendency; it analyses the evolution and politics of the British Labour Party and explains its pro-imperialist role today. The pamphlet argues against 'critical support' for Labour and provides a strategy for confronting reformism. 35p (+13p p&p). Payments to RCT Association, BM RCT (1), London WC1 6XX.

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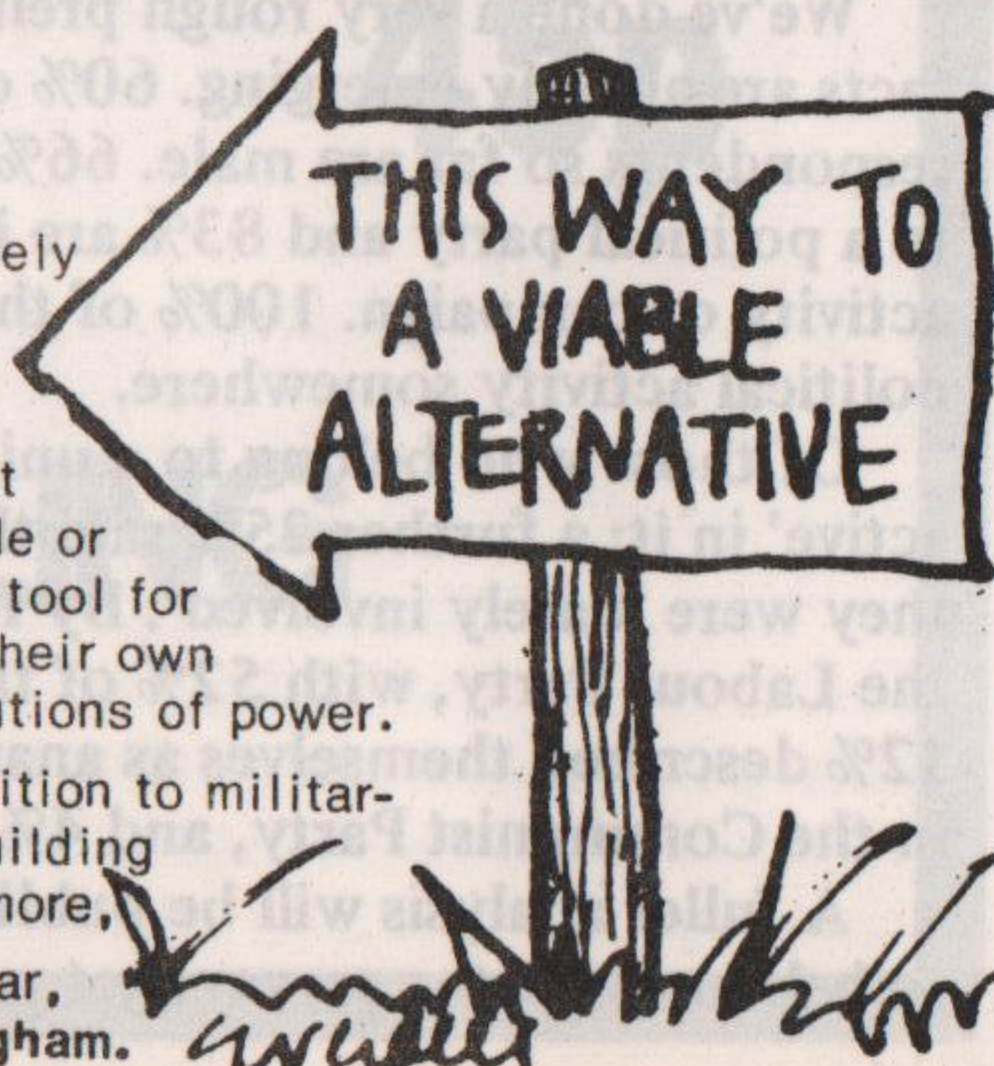
## Back Numbers

We are clean out of issues one and two and almost out of the pilot issue. Rush now while stocks last . . . etc.  
Pilot issue: Spies in Angola/Workers' Co-ops/Communist footballer

Issue Three: CIA in Britain/Fashion/Murder squads in S. America  
Issue Four: Bomb trial frame-ups/Sex mags/Bread  
Issue Five: NAC/NUSS/Labour Party/TV cops  
Issue Six: David Edgar/Catering workers/Women in History  
Issue Seven: Music for Socialism/Cinema Action/Real beer  
Issue Eight: Car workers/Jeans/TV-4/Drugs scandal  
Issue Nine: Corruption in Gulf/Czech rock/Claimants  
Issue Ten: West Germany/Provo interview/Advertising  
Issue Eleven: Contraception/Sci-Fi/Trashing the news  
Issue Twelve: Nukes/Pupil power/Heroin/Pedophilia  
Issue Thirteen: Poly Styrene/Scargill/Ministry of Truth  
Issue Fourteen: Zimbabwe deal/Socialist comic/Socialist-Feminism  
Issue Fifteen: John Berger/Job Creation/Bugging  
Issue Sixteen: DJs/Macho football/Rock Against Racism  
Issue Seventeen: Struggle for Africa/Ecology/Sexual politics  
All copies cost 35p each. A whole set of the above issues for £6.00. Send now for those you missed to: The Leveller, 155a Drummond Street, London NW1.

## peace news

for nonviolent revolution  
—is an independent paper produced collectively as a forum for readers' contributions. We are nonviolent anarchists—working to undo all relationships of authority and dominance (sexual, racial, economic, military...) without treating anyone as expendable in that struggle or as closed to change. The paper aims to be a tool for people making change in—taking control of—their own lives as much as for resistance to the institutions of power. It consistently covers sexual politics, opposition to militarism and secrecy, personal growth, racism, building alternatives, opposition to nukes—and a lot more.  
Peace News 15p fortnightly. Subs £5.50 a year, trial 5 issues £1 from: 8 Elm Avenue, Nottingham.



## DAILY DISTORTER

No. 123, 45c Anyday September 1977 The voice of a few of the people

Backlash by journalist militants over 'Lunatic Ideas'

By a distraught distorter  
A storm was brewing tonight, tension was mounting, and a row was breaking out, all over Fleet Street, as journalists recoiled under the vicious attack on them by the authors of the book *Lunatic Ideas*.  
"This is an outrage," one said angrily. "The report is nothing but a pack of filthy lies."  
"I am completely stunned," said another.  
"Me, too?" said even yet another. "I think it must have been that wine we had at lunch-time."  
"This report must not be allowed to fall into the hands of readers," said a pale-faced, trembling reporter cowering behind his typewriter.  
"What are we talking about?" queried a puzzled reporter, with Contd. on page 22.

## Sex Scandal

New series starting next week  
Sex scandal shock horror probe!  
"I was a teenage schoolgirl!" Carol, a sixteen year old from Salford, tells all. Read how every day she went to school and did Maths, Science, English and integrated studies, and how she came home every night and did her homework. How she sat 8.0 levels and passed it.  
This is no ordinary schoolgirl! Don't miss the series beginning next week only in the Distorter.

## Newspapers in shape

A top education expert said of the report: "At last the truth! heartedly praise these people for their bravery in publishing the 'It supports what ordinary readers have always believed' Angel was mounting tonight as horrors. Contd on back page.  
**SPORTS EXTRA SHOCK HORROR**  
TOP FOOTBALL MANAGER reveals how rowdies at a football match to get a story, he stamped out immediately," he said at his

# SACK of the century NEWSPAPER DUNCES!

A caning for Journalists  
FALLING STANDARDS IN NEWS

by a Distorter Reporter  
DISTURBING ALLEGATIONS WERE MADE today among journalists. A panicking committee of enquiry, Bookshop have issued a report under the title *Lunatic Ideas* which has alarmed journalists. "We are shocked and alarmed by the and discipline among journalists," they say. "This cannot. Urgent action is needed to halt this worrying trend."  
The report reveals some ugly facts:  
● 9 out of 10 journalists did not know what day of the week it was.  
● 2 out of 10 did not know what year it was.  
● 85% of journalists could not remember which newspaper they worked for.  
● 2 out of every 3 journalists found it impossible to write a story without mentioning sex or violence at least 6 times. One reporter did actually write a story mentioning sex only once, and he was working for *The Year's Weekly*.  
● An editor was knocked to the ground by violent journalists stampeding to get a sneak preview of this report.

*Lunatic Ideas*  
How the newspapers teased education during 1977  
our September 1978  
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## OPENING HOURS

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