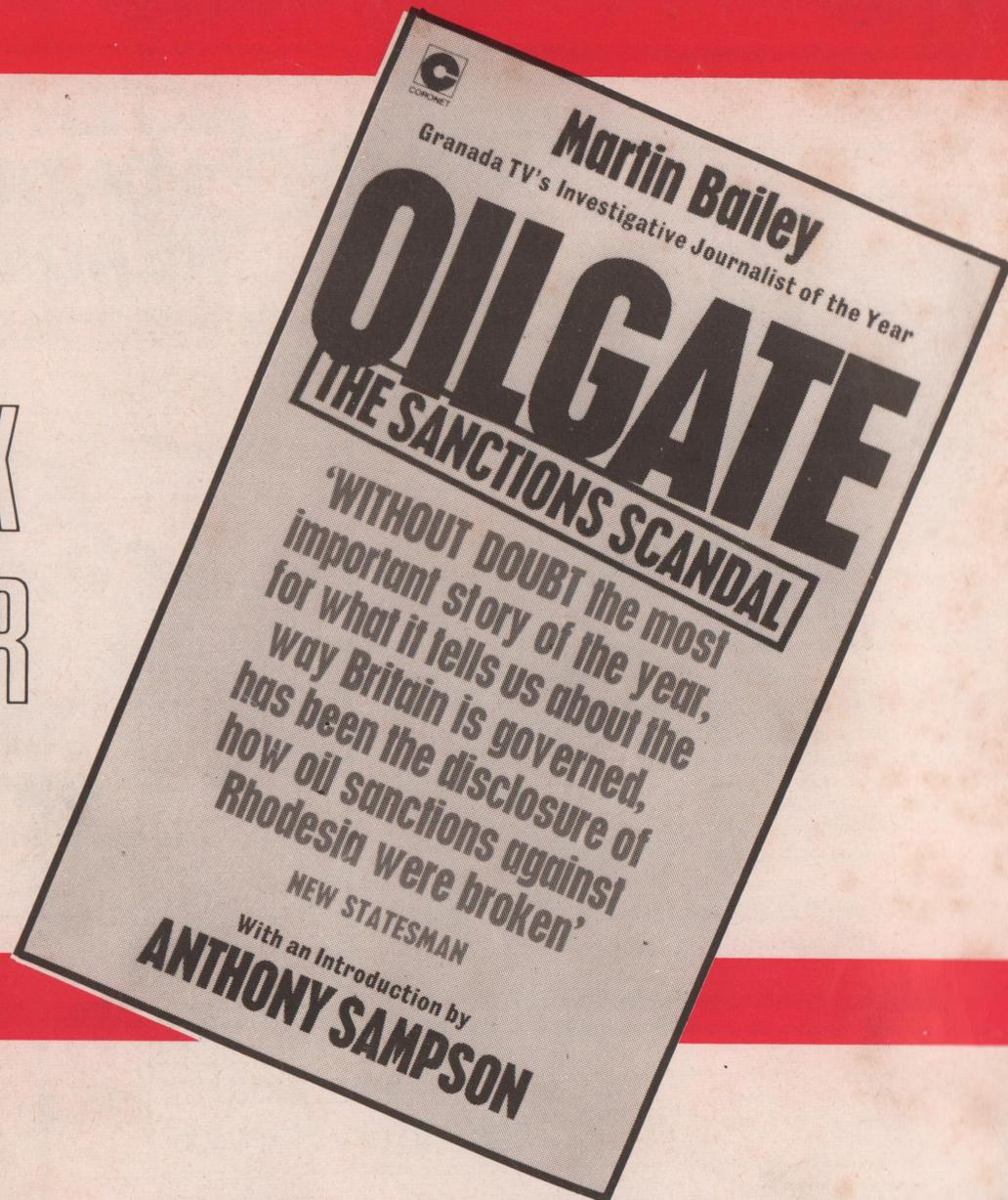


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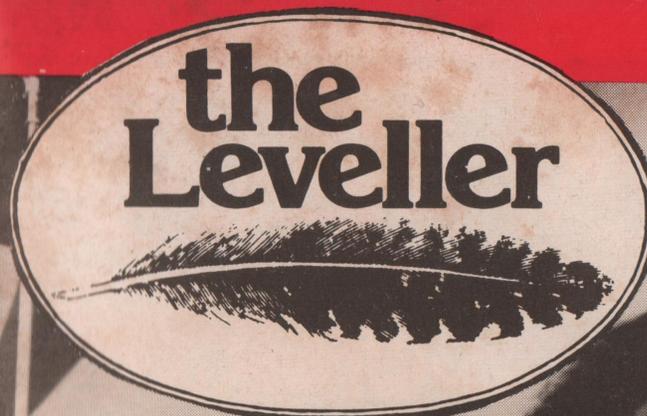
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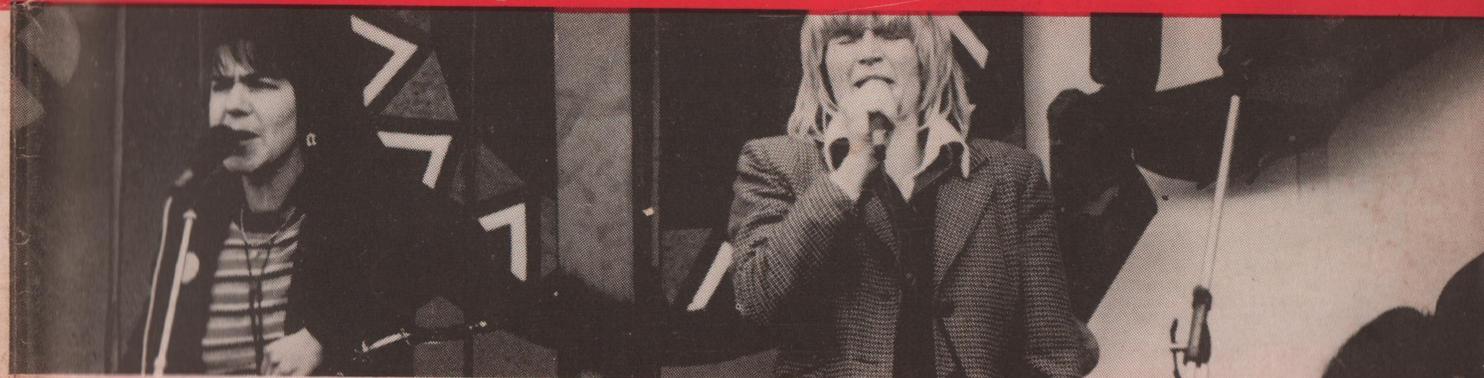
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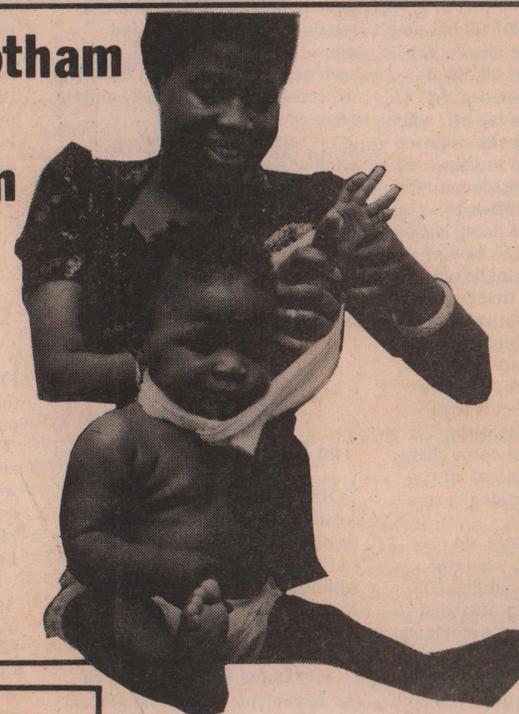
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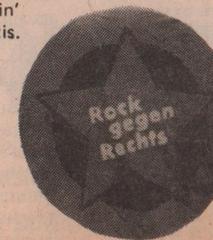
BBC NEWS: by public demand, more confidential minutes made public. Pages 25-27

YES, YOU CAN DO A FILM ABOUT POLICE CORRUPTION... AS LONG AS JACK WARNER STARS AS THE FRIENDLY BOBBY WHO HEROICALLY WEEDS OUT THE ONE BAD APPLE IN EVERY BARREL!

Tom Johnson



GERMANY: rockin' against the neo-nazis. Page 24.



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# Letters

## It helps the brain cells cope

I WAS DISTURBED to read in your socialist propaganda rag a moronic article entitled: "Dope: getting high . . ." etc. Having for years suffered from the imposition of wild mythology and outrageous misrepresentation (backed up by the full weight of the law) by straight capitalist society on the grounds that the so-called 'misuse' of cannabis leads to mental derangement, gangrene and death to the user, are smokers of the gentle herb now to become the butt of the 'left' on the equally mistaken grounds that our 'self-interested' activity leads to oppression in other countries?

Let's get a few things straight (ho ho). Firstly, Columbian dope hardly ever appears in Europe, so Sally Wilson's contention that: "the dope smokers of . . . Europe are participating in and perpetuating a process which is exacerbating poverty . . ." (etc) is hardly justified. Secondly, Sally is indeed a narrow-minded ignoramus if she thinks that all there is to dope is 'a nice buzz' - there's much more to it than that, but I daresay she wants everything to be nice and orderly in her ducky socialist paradise, with everybody dutifully voting on time (at risk of expulsion from the Party, no doubt . . . and we all know what that means!) and wearing neat brown boiler suits. Considerations such as inner peace and the development of spiritual awareness are doubtless all so much hog-wash in her eyes (oh sorry, I forgot, of course: Religion is the opium of the people" - naturally I'm assuming that she's got the wrong end of the stick with that one as well!).

Thirdly, legalisation on the kind of crude terms she puts forward (control by multi-nationals, high government taxation etc. etc) is *not* the ultimate aim of people who want the pressure taken off dope. Furthermore, it's perfectly possible to grow dope (good dope) over here in flower pots, back gardens and so on. In fact it happens all the time, but were it legal to do so I'm sure it would be done even more (in fact, I know darned well it would, because I'd be doing it myself!).

Notwithstanding all that, why attack dope specifically, anyway? Sally herself points out that land in Colombia is used for the cultivation of coffee, cotton and sugar. Do you drink coffee, Sal (and do

you put sugar in it)? I'll bet you do, and if by some chance you don't I'll bet about 98.5% of your socialist 'comrades' do - and tea as well! So lay off, will you! We're getting sick and tired of being used as scapegoats by people with some political axe or another to grind . . . All we're doing is trying to make some kind of sense out of this lunatic world, and it so happens that (we find) a bit of cannabis sativa (preferably *Afghani*) helps the brain cells cope with it all. Of course, the way things are right now this beneficial effect is largely offset by the fear that the blue meannies might come charging through the door at any minute . . . but nothing's perfect (yet!).

And it is a strange old doings, this world, whatever you with your Grand Plan(s) might think; on the one hand we get capitalist bods telling us our dope-taking's all a commie plot; on the other hand there are you lot telling us that we're just suckers to the capitalist machine. Well I *know* where I'm at, and you're both wrong. I'm me own man, I do what I think's okay and I say: Sux to the lot of you, you're *all* barmy!" And *that's* what you all, comicalist and capitalist alike, really object to. You're just blooming *jealous*, that's all!

Nick Godwin  
Eyemouth, Berwickshire

## I ain't got your freedom

CAROLE RUTHCHILD in her letter "No place for nice guys" (*Leveller* 27) used a strange and mistaken notion of freedom. . . "The very fact that women have little or no freedom means men have more". This implies a "zero-sum" freedom game, in which society possesses x freedom units, so if women have  $\frac{1}{2}x$ , men have  $\frac{1}{2}x$  plus 1. "I haven't got my freedom so you must have it".

As a way of looking at the social realities of power and freedom this is a non-starter. Freedom doesn't wait around like a cake waiting to be sliced. It is produced by social and productive relations, and can be extended virtually to infinity.

Marx's statement that "no nation which oppresses another can itself be free" is a statement of fact, which can be extended to other areas too, particularly sexual politics.

However I do agree with Ms Ruthchild's more general conclusions. Freedom for women cannot be given by men: they

haven't got it to give. It can only be produced by women themselves creating new, liberating social structures.

And men likewise have their own freedom to win. This can only be done by destroying those social relations which produce and reproduce the pornocrat inside each male skull. But men can hardly expect women to patiently endure while men change.

If separation has become a tendency in the women's movement, the cause clearly is the negative attitude which the male left showed towards it: overtly until circa 1975, covertly since. There has been a male:female contradiction. It might yet become dialectical.

Frank Roberts  
London W13

## The BBC - police pact

YOUR PUBLICATION of the details of the compromise agreement reached between the BBC and the Metropolitan Police was, without question, informative. There are, however, some questions which must be asked of the conclusions which are drawn.

It is stated that as a result of the agreement "a new climate had been set which will dilute investigation in the most sensitive area" and that while the Metropolitan Police did not get everything they wanted, "they had got more than any self-respecting independent broadcasting organisation should have allowed them to have". Now, what this conclusion assumes is that 'undiluted' investigation is only possible in a climate of 'independence', and, in so doing, gives credence to the myth of the professional independence of broadcasters.

In the course of the previous article 'Cutting Off the air' it is stated that "however assiduously they (the BBC) may post off transcripts of attacks on unions to their leaders afterwards, it doesn't extend to letting them on the air to defend themselves". It is also suggested that professional broadcasters and their editorial executives are separated from working class people "and have no comprehension at all of the relationship between union leadership and the rank and file". The conclusion that you do not draw here is that these are precisely effects of the same professional independence which is argued to have been compromised by the agreement reached with the Metropolitan Police.

Unquestionably the effect of this agreement will be a more rigorous scrutiny of programmes dealing with sensitive law-and-order issues, a scrutiny in which the Metropolitan Police will play a more decisive part. There are, however, positive aspects to this development which are not stressed. Yes indeed this represents

a crack in the edifice of professional independence. It establishes a precedent which must be argued for by progressive political organisations, the labour and trade union movement. They too must now forcefully demand the same editorial rights, they too must have "an infinitely greater editorial say than they had before". It is only by breaking professional independence will broadcasting become, in practice, more democratic and genuinely accountable.

Ian Connell  
Birmingham

## Leicester 87 appeal

IT IS JUST OVER a month since the events of Leicester and Southall occurred. During this time I have read many of the Left's publications and have noticed that although a wealth of articles have appeared concerning Southall and Blair Peach very little has been published about Leicester.

I was arrested at Leicester on April 21 along with 86 others and of course realize that Southall was far more serious; nevertheless £20,000 must be raised for Leicester's legal costs. I would appreciate that along with publishing appeals for the Southall defence fund, appeals for Leicester's fund would also be published.

Donations for Leicester defendants should be made out to: 'Leicester Anti-Nazi League' (April 21 defence fund) Acc. No. 50010176 Co-operative Bank, 5-9 Hotel St., Leicester.

Nick Holdsworth  
Hemel Hempstead

## Violence and socialism

THE HYSTERICAL, fascist mentality of Mike Gibbs (Letters, *Leveller* 28) is terrifying (says a petit-bourgeois opportunist desperately wanting to cover up for imperialism, obviously).

Violent action by those fighting a political war against repression, foreign occupation, or even simply capitalism is surely justified when used against the inanimate (property etc.) or animate (police, army, politicians) instruments of repression. But nothing, *nothing* can justify the indiscriminate slaughter of innocent civilians (and I say innocent because even those who passively support the British presence in Ireland are surely themselves victims of more subtle repression, of manipulation of their opinions and fears). I for one could never attack the Irish for fighting a war for the right of self-determination - but defending the Birmingham bombings (for instance) can be no better than defending the bombing of Dresden or Hiroshima, and I want no part of it.

# Letters

What's more, some of the Provo's tactics *can* be criticised on practical, as well as moral terms. After all, what did anti-civilian bombings achieve but the alienation of that British working class that Mike Gibbs says "would be much better served by having the words of liberation fights unadulterated by the cowardly equivocation and hypocrisy of the British left"? (Very helpful and comforting if you're dead, or have both legs blown off). And the Prevention of Terrorism Act which the apathetic, anti-Irish majority in the UK will hardly be pressing the Tory government they elected to repeal so long as they feel threatened by the Provos. Yet the de-stabilising terrorism directed against police, army, prison service and property has been effective in demonstrating the futility of continued British presence in Ireland. This, not the murder of innocent, or even passively culpable civilians, is surely the right tactic.

But not, it seems, for the blood-thirsty Mike Gibbs. It's a pity he and others like him don't realise that revolution in our society will only now be achieved by the support and co-operation of what is still in this country, as it always has been, an extremely conservative, materialistic working class - not by a gun-toting revolutionary elite who drive that class to reaction by foolish and bloody attacks on the people for whom they claim to be fighting (and one only needs to look as far as Italy for an example of the results of such action).

Mike Parker  
London SE17

## Values of sexist society

YOUR CORRESPONDENTS Vaughan and Weare (Issue 27, Letters) state that "the values of a sexist society are structured into us from the moment we are born" and yet women, they imply are able to overcome this conditioning, but not men - we have too much to gain from its perpetuation. To take their argument further leads me to conclude that there can be no middle class socialists and no white anti-racists.

Deciding to be anti-sexist is not of itself going to change the structures of dominance and hegemony, but taking action is not the prerogative of the oppressed group alone. Altering the male's consciousness can only be painful and slow, but we'd like help and support, not the put-downs we can expect from most other men and plenty of women in so-called straight society.

John Pease  
Carlisle

## The Rights of Gypsies

THANKS FOR David Brazil's article "Dukker for the Gaujos" (*Leveller* 28). People just would not believe what happens to the Gypsies if it were happening to any other ethnic group. Did you know that the education acts do not even guarantee them schooling? Local Education Authorities can say that nomadic roadside Gypsy children "do not belong to their area" and simply refuse them admission to school.

More often, however, sheer administrative neglect leads to a failure to provide any relevant educational opportunities.

The National Gypsy Education Council is a democratic association of Gypsy civil rights organisations (including the Romani Guild, which you mentioned, and the Association of Gypsy Organisations and the East Anglia Gypsy Council), Gypsy parents and teachers. If any of your readers wish further information on our struggle, we'd be happy to provide it (from 82 Eversham Road, London E15). We mail newsletters regularly, and have an irregular journal *Traveller education*.

Thomas Acton  
National Gypsy Education  
Council  
London E15

## Facts on community arts

GREG WILKINSON'S article (*Leveller* 27) on the Art's Council's treatment of the Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers points out all too clearly the inherent bias of accepted artistic standards.

However he falls into the trap of using the very criteria he attack attacks when he describes the Community Arts panel as being "the bottom of the barrel, where therapeutic considerations replace artistic standards".

Community Arts is a response of artists, writers etc, against established artistic standards, and attempts to "turn to the greater part of our people, our life and expression that the industries of Art and English Lit. mostly ignore."

Some measure of their success can be seen in the fact that in two regions whose Community Arts funding has been devolved to the Regional Arts Association, demo-

cratic procedures have now been established for the distribution of their budget, and unlike every other Arts Council and Regional Arts Association panel, the criteria for awards are discussed and decided on at public meetings. At both the panels concerned (Merseyside Arts Association and Northern Arts) many problems still exist, not least of which is gross under-funding.

As long as Community Arts are still considered to be the bottom of the barrel, and remain under-funded, then 98% of the population will still be presented with art that bears no relevance to their lives.

Sally Walker &  
Pete Thomson  
Association of Community Artists  
(northern branch)  
Newcastle-on-Tyne

## Collective apology

TRANSART RESEARCH and Marketing, which placed two advertisements in the May issue of *THE LEVELLER*, is thought to be involved in a dubious business.

The Carlisle-based company advertises both holidays and student scholarships. People who respond to its ads are sent a detailed application form and are required to send a registration fee of £5. In return they get some duplicated sheets of readily available information.

According to the June issue of *NATIONAL STUDENT*, it's the latest of a number of different companies connected with either Stan Randal or Barbara Sumner. In January 1978 a company called Interlink Planning and Promotions (working from a semi-derelict shop in Southport) advertised lucrative jobs abroad. Registration fee - £3. That folded when the company was exposed by the *NEWS OF THE WORLD*.

In December, Barbara Sumner started Granville Travel - working from her home in Southport. In February the company moved to Penrith, and the following month Roger Cook, of the BBC's CHECKPOINT programme, discovered that they were using a Carlisle address - the same office that Trans-art, run by Stan Randal, was working from.

When Cook traced Barbara Sumner to a house near Carlisle, which she and her husband shared with the Randals, he had a bucket of water thrown over him. And the police have now moved in and seized mail sent to Granville Travel. Just how lucrative the business was is revealed by the company's paying in book: in three months to the middle of April it paid £6,800 into its Southport bank.

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# The final solution to moral pollution

WHEN BRITAIN voted for Thatcher, it wasn't just a vote for law 'n order, and the freedom to pull yourself up by your boot strings to become the next Freddie Laker. It was a vote which gave the stamp of approval to a new breed of repressive moralism. *Rose Shapiro* puts the picture together.

BY 1981 BRITAIN could have one of the most restrictive abortion laws in Europe. The ideas and principles that motivate the anti-abortionists are precisely the same as those of organisations like the Responsible Society, Moral Re-Armament, and the Festival of Light. Anti-abortion organisations like the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) now feel confident to involve themselves in wider areas, as they see their other tactics succeed.

For example, in Dudley SPUC have organised a campaign against contraception for under 16's, on the platform of parents right of veto over their children's sexual activity. Doctors all over the country are within their rights to give contraception to under 16 year old girls on the grounds that they are protecting them from the possible "harmful effects of intercourse" - ie pregnancy. Dudley Area Health Authority decided to improve their contraceptive services by setting up a central clinic for all ages, which would, like other NHS clinics, advise and counsel under 16's.

In May 79 SPUC unveiled its plans to prosecute the AHA and individual doctors on the basis that they were aiding and encouraging illegal sex. They organised a march and petition in Dudley, and the campaign was fueled by the usual fetishistic cries of "destruction of the family! . . . moral pollution! . . . VD! . . . cervical cancer!"

Local papers made much of the reports that both Dudley Trades Council and NUPE branch had given limited support for SPUC when they criticised the AHA for not having consulted the parents of Dudley before making the decision to open the clinic. The only organised opposition to the march was from Wolverhampton Womens Voice, who travelled to Dudley to stage a small counter-demonstration.

A similar campaign is being set up in Tiverton, Devon, by local councillor Mary Turner. She says that the response has been so

great that she plans to set up a branch of the Responsible Society. "I do not think Devon is a den of corruption and sin", M Turner told the local paper. She appears to think that contraceptive provision will make it so. She also complains that nobody teaches young people how to say no. Another group, who call themselves "Parents in Suffolk" have been waging the same campaign, this time via the Community Health Council. Heavy and continuous pressure is being put on Suffolk AHA to change their policy.

"Teeny-Sex Centre In Top Gear" was a recent headline in the *Daily Star*, getting what kicks it could out of the fact that a large Doncaster clinic gave contraception to only 50 under 16s in the past year. All the campaigns aim for this kind of coverage, and usually get it.

-----  
*"the temptation to go too far when you are both alone may be hard to resist"*  
 -----

The ensuing moral postures taken by the popular press belie their own sickeningly sexist double standards.

And once these campaigns can say that they have whipped up enough public outrage, they start writing to MPs, some of whom will do their bit by asking questions in "the House". The DHSS is now considering a revision of its 1974 Memorandum of Guidance, which makes it possible for doctors to prescribe contraception for under 16's.

With their loins fully girded, our moral guardians will now send off for bulk orders of literature from organisations like the Responsible Society. A favourite booklet is *But Where Is Love* by Venetia Riches (daughter of Valerie, Responsible Society leader), who doesn't think that love is to be found "groping in a writhing heap in the back of an Austin 1100 on

Putney Heath" and suggests questions like "How would you feel if you were a bastard" as topics for discussion in sex education lessons.

In common with all the other material of this sort, Riches directs it largely as girls, and warns them against petting, pre-marital sex, abortion, and contraception, with VD and cervical cancer being the ultimate punishments for such deviant behaviour. The same views are expressed by Dr. Margaret White (who is also the SPUC doctor) in her Order of Christian Unity booklet *Sound Sex Education*.

She also draws attention to one of the lesser-known areas of danger in a young girl's life - baby-sitting. Dr White is worried that if you baby-sit with your boyfriend: "the temptation to go too far when you are both alone may be hard to resist". This material has been widely used as a basis for sex education in state-aided church based schools - the kind that Thatcher will be developing through her educational policies.

There is nothing so effective in the arsenal of the moral authoritarians as the emotive spectre of child sex. Mary Whitehouse must have worked late into the night to formulate ways in which she could use the outcry created by the Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE) to discredit other organisations. She came pretty close to succeeding with the Albany Trust, which works in the field of sex education and counselling - with particular concern for gay people, transsexuals and transvestites. The Trust was asked by PIE to publish one of their leaflets on paedophilia, which it decided against.

Whitehouse noted this contact, as well as the fact that the Albany Trust had annotated photocopies of a translation of the Speijer Report, which was commissioned by the Dutch government and looked (among other things) at the age of consent laws for gay people. Whitehouse, at a public meeting in Central London, said that the Albany Trust was



Festival of Light Rally Trafalgar Sq. 1971 - the beginnings of the Christian Crusade for the 'purification of the nation'

advocating child sex, and that given the Trust is partially funded by the Department of Education and the Home Office, so were the government. This was picked up by the national press. Once again, questions were asked in the House, and the DES was put under great pressure to withdraw the money for the Trust's youth and education project. The grant may well not be renewed this year. Alan Smith, Albany Trust Youth Project Officer, told me that he often has to spend half an hour explaining details of the Whitehouse smear when he speaks at courses for sex educators or youth workers, and that Whitehouse has generally made their work more difficult. Which is exactly what she intended - she must have known the Speijer/Albany Trust connection had no mileage in it whatsoever without her campaign of deliberate misrepresentation but is rightly confident that the credibility given her by the media (for instance in the recent Dimpleby interview) and the success of her prosecution of *Gay News* will carry her through.

You may remember the furore surrounding child pornography, which was outlawed last year. But where are the prosecutions? It seems unlikely that there is much child porn in this country, or indeed, if there ever was. But the image of it served to get MPs hot under the collar about porn in general, and will contribute to the easier passage of the Indecent Displays Bill that has appeared again during this parliamentary session.

This kind of publicity in relation to Parliament also comes in very handy for anti-abortionists. By generating horror about killing viable fetuses, they were able to push an ill-informed and masculist Parliament into giving the Corrie Bill a large majority at second reading. So far, all the "babies on draining board" stories have been discredited. Even Dr Gerard Vaughan, Minister for Health, has confirmed in a letter about the Whiston Hospital

abortion (the one where a pure young priest claimed to have spent 2/3/4 hours baptising and praying over a dying baby) that "there was no real basis for the allegations that have been made". SPUC and LIFE have pulled it off before with their proven fantasy *Babies for Burning*, the book waved triumphantly around by Leo Abse and James White in support of their anti-abortion Bill of 1975. They must be overjoyed to see that these same tactics were winners in '79.

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*if people really knew what Lifeline was "the phone would never ring"*  
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Even the anti-abortion group LIFE admits that it wouldn't get very far without calculated deception. Its organisation Lifeline runs telephone counselling services throughout the country. At its recent South East Regional Conference, vice president Nuala Scarisbrick stressed the importance of making Lifeline adverts look as much like pregnancy advisory service ones as possible. She pointed out that 80% of those who ring Lifeline do so for advice about abortion, and that if people really knew what Lifeline was "the phone would never ring". Lifeline has around 20 hostels for pregnant women, many of the houses given to them by local authorities.

No doubt other organisations will jump at the chance to describe themselves as counsellors, as it gives them the opportunity to undermine and frighten people when they are at their most vulnerable. Pilot is a christian "counselling" service for gays, based in Poole, Dorset. Its organiser, Geoff Percival, see psycho-sexual counselling as "tinkering", as it does not take his position that the only morally correct sexual relationships are heterosexual, and within marriage. He says that "after the christian 'new birth' (see St John Chapter 3)

there is sometimes a spontaneous remission of the homosexual condition. Such a person is now hopefully free to marry and raise a family, if he chooses".

He claims to have made 3,000 "contacts" in the past two years, and that he is funded by a legacy and donations, which make it possible for him to place ads in local papers as far away as Halifax. He does not receive direct funding from any organisation, but has, as he put it, a "hot-line" to the Festival of Light. And the "Council of Reference" listed on his letterhead includes some heavy FoL'ers. One of them, Philip Crome, is secretary of the Harrow (West London) branch, and has been travelling far afield in his mission to clear pornography from newsagents' shelves. As July's edition of *Forum* reports, he pretended to be a "local citizen" of Banbury, Oxon, so that he could take *Forum* and other magazines to court.

All these organisations, regardless of what area of life they concentrate on, basically believe the same things. Their conservatism extends to other manifestations of authoritarianism such as capital punishment and militarism. Mary Whitehouse fears that uncensored war films would undermine the national will to wage war. Research by Middlesex Poly sociologist Colin Francome showed that on the Parliamentary votes on capital punishment and abortion in the 60's; "there was a strong tendency for those supporting capital punishment to oppose abortion and vice versa." By the time you read this article the hanging vote will have been taken, and it will be interesting to make a comparison between that vote and the Corrie Bill, although some MPs, most notably Abse, have made this connection. He says that he is "pro-life" on both issues.

Other research points to the across-the-board reaction of anti-abortionists. Work published in '78 by the University of Missouri in the US showed that "people opposed to availability of abortion tended to express

continued over

from previous page

greater confidence in the military and to favour increased spending on the military and armaments", and that anti-abortionists were more likely to have supported the US intervention in Viet Nam.

The right-wing moralists have capitalised on many people's genuine fears and confusion, as Philip Hodson, editor of *Forum*, points out. "People's views are formed by information, and an awful lot of lies have been told", he says, and he believes that much of what is happening now represents the terror of the church as it sees society rejecting both it and its values.

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"an awful lot of lies have been told"  
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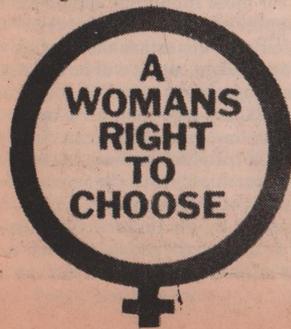
And if you examine the politics and activities of all these church-based organisations, from the Responsible Society to SPUC, it becomes clear that the anti-abortionists are not operating a single issue campaign. They have chosen abortion as the most winnable and emotive platform they have, with the aim of manipulating "public opinion" towards more support for authority in general. Much of the left will only fight on abortion as a single issue, but the National Abortion Campaign should be as ready to fight for lowering the age of consent for gays as it is for day-care abortion facilities.

NAC's current goal is a massive trades union demonstration, which the TUC has agreed to call, in the Autumn. That same Trades Council who tacitly supported SPUC in Dudley could well sponsor it. It will be able to do so without making the connections between the two events, and because we are so concerned that the demonstration is a huge one, we will allow them to get away with it. The present Bill is as much a manifestation of the move towards authority and strengthening of existing hierarchies, an attack on feminism, and a destruction of the right to sexual self definition as it is oppression of an economically defined working class.

No doubt it must be bewildering for some people to see how their pre-war moral standards have been challenged and eroded by the movements of the 60s and 70s. The anti-militarism, of Ban the Bomb, and the campaign against the US in Vietnam, which led to confrontations with police and state authority, resulted in a generation that rejected the values of the past.

The 70s brought an even broader re-appraisal by the women's, gay, and anti-racist movements, which provoked and supported radically alternative lifestyles and culture. What appeared in the past to be absolutes - sex-roles, religion, class, and morality - are being clung to and viciously re-affirmed in the face of those who undermine them.

The rise of the most reactionary and oppressive government in decades depended on isolating the progressive movements of the last twenty years as the enemy. The order that the right is attempting to impose upon us is not just an economic one, but one of rigid authoritarianism at every level of our lives and culture, initially achieved by Parliamentary legislation. We must recognise that this is what the Corrie Bill represents, and we must base our campaign on that recognition.



## Ex-Soldiers Against the War Getting Out of the Army

MIKE BIGGS will be one of the platform speakers at the August 12 demonstration demanding British withdrawal from Northern Ireland, ten years after the troops went in. Biggs was one of the troops himself for a while, and as one of the only two British Army officers to have left on conscientious objection grounds over Northern Ireland, he will be part of the Ex-Soldiers Against the War contingent on the demonstration.

After serving an Irish tour in 1976, Mike Biggs made his first application for premature voluntary retirement, the only way he knew of then for leaving the Army.

He told *Newsrelease*: "I wrote a letter to my commanding officer stating my views about Northern Ireland as grounds for retirement but was rejected." He made another bid in November 1976, and was again refused, hardly surprising as a seven month waiting list for would-be retiring officers was then in operation. "So many officers are trying to get out, they won't take being pushed around any more. But the Army sees everything in monetary terms hoping that by increasing the pay, they will be able to keep people in."

For the other ranks the position is even worse, for anyone holding Mike's views would hardly have received even the small concessions made to him.

Despite being offered a smooth bureaucratic job, Mike still wanted to leave, and in October 1978, he contacted At Ease, the soldier counselling service operated at Release's office (1, Elgin Avenue, London W9. 01-289 3878), following which he approached the Army Retirements Board as a conscientious objector.

"I said I objected to an armed presence anywhere, based on suspicion and antagonism... an army is a corrupt instrument by which states could bully or coerce weaker states."

The army continued to thwart Mike, and he was then forced to "down tools" being prepared, he said, to go to prison rather than continue serving in any capacity. In February this year he was charged with neglecting his military duties, using insubordinate language to a superior officer, and disobeying a lawful command.

He received a "severe reprimand", but persisted and at last was able to present his case to the Advisory Committee on Conscientious Objectors with a solicitor contacted through At Ease. The Committee were convinced of his sincerity, despite attempts by his commanding officer to besmirch him, and his immediate release from the Army was ordered.

"When I heard the decision I just collapsed in a heap, for it is no little thing to succeed against such a powerful establishment as the Army, they did not make it easy to get out."

Mike is now working as a social worker with the mentally ill in South London. He sees the Army as an increasingly sinister force, made more so by such operations as the joint SAS/SPG exercises at Heathrow Airport and their use to break up carious strikes.

His position on Northern Ireland is now that of calling for withdrawal and together with many ex-Army colleagues, he is now working on a pamphlet being produced by UTOM and the August 12 Demonstration Committee entitled *Voices for Withdrawal* which should appear by October this year.

Ten other ex-soldiers at least will be at the August demo, which is attracting a snowballing sponsorship list. It now has four Lords, 14 MPs, one Euro-MP (Alf Lomas) and a broad left and labour movement support, that promises to help make the protest the largest one in London on Northern Ireland seen for many years.



Newsrelease

Mike Biggs - a voice for withdrawal.

## London's CIA Men

THREE NEW officers have joined the staff of the London CIA station, headed by Dr Edward Proctor, 'under cover' as diplomats at the US Embassy. Two of the new boys have served in Africa, and two in the Soviet Union.

Most mysterious of the new arrivals is 39-year-old Rufus Stevenson. Although the most junior of the new comers, he hasn't yet appeared in the Diplomatic List. He served in Madagascar and Mali, and speaks French.

John Charles Hannon, listed as Second Secretary Political, is a mid-ranking officer, and saw service in Kenya and Tanzania in the late 60's and early seventies before moving to Moscow in 1977, from where he came to London. He's 41.

Like Hannon, the third newcomer, Gerald Loyd Engle, 44, shyly prefers not to give his home address in the Diplomatic List, which lists him simply as Assistant Political Attache, c/o The Embassy. He first saw field service in Switzerland, and after five years at CIA headquarters, went to Bulgaria and the Soviet Union returning from there to Langley before coming here, probably at the end of last year.

Given that two mid-ranking officers with recent experience in the Soviet Union have just arrived here, it would not be at all surprising if the CIA and MI5 between them weren't preparing to use the advent of a Tory Government to get a few Russians chucked out, just like Foreign Secretary Alec Home did in 1971.

(Many thanks to Covert Action Information Bulletin, PO Box 50272, Washington, DC 20044 USA, for helping us with this story.)

## With-holding what information?

23 MEMBERS of the Braintree Irish Society must turn up at London's Bow Street court on July 26 to face a motley bunch of driving charges, and Section Eleven of the Prevention of Terrorism Act - that of with-holding information.

This is the tail-end of the great Bomb Squad cock-up, springing from the IRA pursuit of January this year (see *Leveller* 24). It can only be hoped the 23 do not become victims of legal vindictiveness through police rage at the way their own investigations were bungled. Certainly, the cops by now would just like the whole thing to go away.

They wanted one of their own members to go away too. Poor DC Edward Morley, of the Surrey police force, who insisted that last December he was fired upon by IRA gunmen, is now retiring at the end of this month on a "sickness pension" - Surrey police would not reveal further details of their own investigation into the debacle.

Meanwhile, the controversial Section 11 of the PTA - its last resort, catch-all section - has reared its ugly head in another form.

While newspapers were stridently reporting Mrs Thatcher's bile against the BBC for broadcasting the INLA "we killed Airey Neave" interview, they suggested her legal side-kick Michael Havers, would be seeing if section 11 might be applicable. Scotland Yard encouraged this development by insisting the BBC contacted them only after the interview, and the heat is really on BBC's Broadcasting House.

All this is rather ironic to *Leveller* readers who have of late been studying the BBC internal newsminutes, which would suggest as far as the cops and Mrs Thatcher's cohorts were concerned, there should be no cause for alarm in what the BBC puts out in its news broadcasts.

Already, the BBC has mumbled in its defence it would "review its guidelines" over such matters as the INLA interview. All the *Leveller* can hope is that the BBC will not slide back even further on its independence, and that the Thatcher storm, stirred by Lady Neave continuing her husband's political stand on controlling the news media, will leave no lasting shift in emphasis.

## Woolworth Fire Risk

STAFF WHO used to work at the Woolworth's branch in Manchester which was gutted by fire in May this year, killing ten people, have told the community paper *Manchester City Enquirer* that the attitude of both the Company and city fire officers to fire precautions was very casual.

A statement made by a former stockroom worker to solicitors representing the shop-workers' union USDAW alleges that Fire Officers warned Woolworths when they were to visit the store, and that before each inspection staff, including junior management, moved furniture upstairs, away from fire exits on the sales floor. It was returned once the fire officers had left. Nine of the ten people who died were overcome by poisonous gases from foam-filled furniture.

A fire door on stairs between the second and the third floor was kept locked to stop customers going upstairs, the statement says. Other ex-employees say that the key for the door was kept on the fifth floor.

The statement adds that paint and white spirit were stored next to each other on the fourth floor, contrary to recommended practice and that stock, including electrical goods, was stored on the stairs above the second floor. One worker had complained about this in a written statement made in June 1978.

But the company is not breaking any laws in doing any of these things. And employees do say that the shop had regular fire drills for staff, and that fire extinguishers were kept in good order.

The USDAW solicitors, Rowley and Bluett, told the *City Enquirer* that, depending on instructions from the union, they would be interested in taking statements from people who have worked in the shop.

## Verdict on June Greig

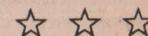
WOMEN WHO retaliate against violent men can expect hard treatment in the courts if a recent case in Edinburgh is anything to go by. June Greig, a battered woman who fought back and killed her husband was sentenced to six years in prison. Witnesses in the trial, including her daughters aged seven and eight, told the court of the kind of violence that she had been subjected to... how she had been kicked in the stomach while pregnant, slashed with a Ghurka knife, burned with cigarettes, punched, kicked, beaten and kept in constant fear.

Faced with evidence that the woman had

put up with systematic brutal violence before she retaliated, the judge in the case said that he had "made allowances for the fact that her husband had knocked her about a bit" but that the sentence was to serve "not merely to punish her but to deter other wives in the same position from killing their husbands."

A campaign has been launched to free June Greig, and to publicise the situation of battered women generally. Women's groups who are active in building the campaign feel that this verdict shows no understanding and sympathy for the situation that battered women find themselves in and the lack of any real alternatives to putting up with a violent marriage. We are pressing for more Women's Aid refuges, better protection for battered women under the law and quicker and more efficient rehousing.

Joanna Blythman



DAYS AFTER a man was savagely battered to death in Rotherham, South Yorkshire, last year, local police swooped on the homes of six members of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality in their search for the murderer.

None of those visited was under suspicion but the police said they thought the killing had a homosexual motivation. Indeed they said they already knew who was responsible and he lived in London. A man was later charged.

But CHE members were disturbed to find their names and addresses on police files. The information had apparently come from a plain clothes officer who had visited a CHE meeting some time before and noted the registration numbers of all the cars parked outside.

## Who bombed Brum? -cont.

THE WEST Midlands police have scored a hopefully small victory in their continued bid to sabotage the bid of the six Northern Irishmen to assert their innocence of the 1974 city centre Birmingham pub bombs that killed 22 people and ushered in the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

The background to the men's case was fully presented in *Leveller* issue 1 and we reported in issue 19 that the police in Birmingham were trying to have an assault case against them by the six struck out before it came to court.

The police failed then, but immediately lodged an appeal which should have been heard in late July. This however was postponed till November by Lord Denning who, it is said, wants to "carefully consider" the case, which lawyers acting for the men are interpreting in a somewhat pessimistic manner.

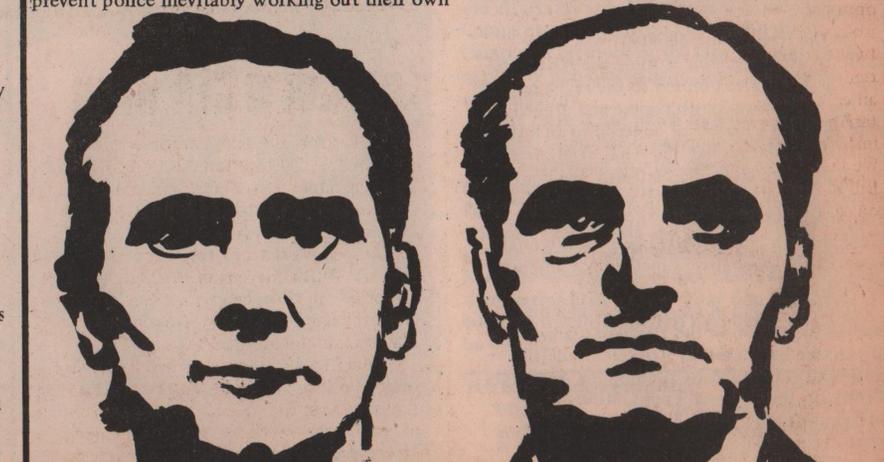
To counter this worry, the lawyers feel they are forced to reveal their "trump card", evidence they were hoping to keep under wraps to prevent police inevitably working out their own

ways of counteracting this new development.

Briefly, the men will present a forensic scientist, one Dr Yallop, who will say new technical ways of detecting the presence of nitro-glycerine on the body, such as under the fingernails, means the method used on the Irishmen in 1974 was "not specific" and could just as easily have meant the presence on the hands of such everyday substances as tobacco.

Such forensic evidence was used against the men at their 1975 Lancaster trial - as indeed it was against Mrs Annie Maguire and her family members in 1974, another controversial Irish case.

At this current snail-like pace, the assault case by the Irishmen against the police (assuming of course, they fail in November) will not take place until well into 1980, by which time they will have spent over five years in prison for crimes there is much to suggest they did not commit.



Richard McKenny and Hugh Callaghan - two of those wrongly imprisoned.

# ANL Conference Report

After the National Front's derisory showing in the May General Election, many people now feel the Nazi threat is not quite what it seemed. And, with racist policies high on the new government's list of commitments, the focus of the Anti-Nazi League is inevitably shifting. The ANL delegate conference in London on July 14th gave an important opportunity to take the temperature of the movement and to assess its future role. *Brian Deer* went along.

THE CONFERENCE brought together nearly 300 delegates from local ANL branches and affiliated organisations, to formulate policy for the coming year and to elect a national steering committee. It was a different kind of event from the first conference in July 1978. While last year's conference was geared to the exchange of ideas and experience between activists, this year's was more concerned with the structure and organisation of the League. Hence there was little discussion of local campaigning work and those young delegates who couldn't articulate The Way Forward remained silent.

Most of the speaking came from the platform – comprising six white men with an average age of around 40 who spoke before each debate, gave voting recommendations and replied afterwards. Most resolutions were moved formally and people who wanted to speak from the floor got only three minutes each.

The platform dominated but Ernie Roberts, Labour MP for Hackney North and chairperson of the morning session, came in for a lot of stick. His main concern was to get decisions taken as quickly as possible – giving some delegates the impression they were being "railroaded". There was a roar of laughter when Ernie declared: "I don't want anyone to get the impression they're being stopped."

Rightly or wrongly, this impression became fact when resolutions on Zimbabwe and the Prevention of Terrorism Act came up for debate. Nigel Harris, speaking for the Conference Arrangements Committee, said although the platform and most of the delegates would support them, these resolutions "go well beyond the aims of the ANL." Passing them could make the League "a fully-fledged political party".

Ernie took this as a signal to swiftly dispense with the problematic resolutions, but delegates would have none of it, and a vote was demanded. Ernie said okay and sought a single vote chopping both subjects off the agenda. Delegates, however, wanted to take them separately and Ernie was obliged to allow it. The PTA was lost, but the conference agreed by 102 to 94 to debate Zimbabwe.

In the five minute debate it was clear nobody was suggesting turning the ANL into a party. Delegates pointed to the racist nature of the Muzorewa-Smith regime and argued that this was a matter of concern to an anti-racist organisation like the ANL. And, despite more pressure from the platform, the conference agreed that the ANL would "use its resources and membership to publicise the Zimbabwean liberation struggle" and would support the Zimbabwe Emergency Campaign Committee.

This adoption of an ANL foreign policy was an indication of the League's dilemma: its success has stemmed from its explicitly anti-Nazi stance and by pinning the Nazi label firmly on the National Front. Moves to broaden its aims could lose it support, but were arguably inevitable if a new direction is to be found.

The ANL's dilemma came out in the

"Conference Declaration" drafted by the steering committee. The guidelines for future activity against the National Front were vague. Top of the list was this:

"The main orientation of the ANL – the fight against the Nazis – needs to be maintained. Precisely because there is a real possibility of a Nazi resurgence in the next couple of years, the ANL has to aim to maintain its structure intact and be in a position to respond should the need arise. There will continue to be sporadic and local instances of Nazi activity which must be opposed." This was certainly a far cry from the "go out and get em" spirit of last year's conference. And surely nothing could have been further from the minds of the 60,000 who marched to Carnival in Victoria Park. But it was a fair statement of the holding operation upon which the ANL leadership has embarked. The biggest item on the conference agenda was "structure" – some delegates, notably those supporting *Big Flame*, argued for more representation of activists on the steering committee.

But they lost the day and indeed ANL National Secretary Paul Holborow used his reply as an opportunity to announce an approved list of candidates. He said there were MPs on the committee, but "Bill Dunn, Peter Hain, Simon Hebditch and myself could be described as nothing else than rank and file members." He then stressed the committee's support for "Avtar Jouhl, Vishnu Sharma and Tariq Ali." Asked afterwards about his inclusion, Tariq Ali – editor of the International Marxist Group newspaper *Socialist Challenge* – told *The Leveller*: "It's a bit late isn't it?" But although his election biography declared him to be, like Holborow, a "rank and file militant of the ANL", many young people may well have left the conference wondering where people like themselves fitted in to all this.

The election for the ANL Steering Committee produced the following result:

Avtar Jouhl 196  
Vishnu Sharma 193  
\*Maurice Ludmer 185  
Tariq Ali 174  
\*Paul Holborow 170  
\*Dennis Skinner 164  
\*Peter Hain 160  
\*Simon Hebditch 150  
\*Nigel Harris 145  
\*Bill Dunn 142  
\*Ernie Roberts 137  
\*Audrey Wise 136  
\*Martin Flannery 118  
\*Miriam Karlin 117  
\*Arthur Latham 113

Anna Reese 106  
Dave Roberts 97  
Clive Gilson 95  
Neil Martinson 73  
Patricia Anker 72  
Patrick Kodikara 65  
Morris Howard 45

Those candidates above the line were elected. \* denotes a sitting member of the Steering Committee.

JUNE 18th. Will, me, Will's push chair and a big bag of 'in cases', (a mac, in case it rains; nappies, in case Will wets the one he has on; trousers, in case it goes through) set off to the photo exhibition and demonstration, *Who's Holding the Baby?* at the Hayward Gallery, London. We are too late for the bus so it's puff, puff on the tube. Watch the escalator. Someone told me a horror story of a child's wellington getting stuck down the side. Puff, puff up all those steps and down to the South Bank.

Will makes a dash for some swings down a temporary bridge. I heave him in the direction of the Hayward. Perhaps they will have all gone. It's getting very hot. We spot two run-away children. Relief. Turning the corner there they are still. Banners, children, anxious and bewildered adults. "I've just joined", says someone from the Southwark Child Care Campaign. "Will you sign my petition?". I sign thinking a mobile demonstration with floats might have been better. The problem with demonstrating outside the Hayward is that you are not really seen by many people and it's hard to watch the kids.

A worried man is wondering where to take the kids to next. A small group sets off in the direction of some gardens near Parliament. There are large contingents from several nurseries including two Hackney Community Nurseries, Market and Beatty Road. One of the Hackney Flashers, who took some of the photos in the exhibition, looks cheerful despite the problem of how to take photos while holding a toddler at the same time. She tells me to go inside and she'll keep an eye on Will who by this time has met the dog from Beatty Road.

I zoom round, spending most time on the Hackney Flashers work. I had already seen the exhibition on nurseries in a local community bookshop, Centreprise. There are collages about the politics of child care, photos of demonstrations. They look a bit entombed in the Hayward, their immediacy distanced by the atmosphere of a large gallery. But the pictures of the children and nursery workers in a Hackney Community Nursery are still direct. They are moving because they are not only protesting the injustice and disregard of capitalism, but asserting the intensity of people's ability to love and communicate, even despite these.

The London Nursery Campaign were demonstrating against inadequate provision for young children in the widest sense: not only the lack of nurseries but the problem of travel on public transport, lack of creches in shops, the banning of pushchairs in some museums and galleries – the whole question of priority in the design of communities. They have informal links with nursery campaigns in other places, for example, Sheffield, Leeds, Birmingham, Oxford and rather surprisingly, Bouremouth where the council did not know what had hit them! Myra Garrett, a member of the campaign who has been particularly involved in the trade union side, told me they act as an umbrella for a large number of varied groups, Under Fives, local child care campaigns and trade union branches. They have produced a booklet, *The Do It Yourself Nursery Campaign* (50p including postage), and have a copy of the cartoon about nurseries *Who needs Nurseries? We Do*.

A group exists which is concerned with the training of nursery nurses. They try to counter the ideology behind many of the courses. There is not only the issue of differing approach to girls and boys which has been most thoroughly discussed in the women's movement, but the emphasis upon the individual interaction between adult teacher and the child rather than upon interaction as a group and co-operative learning among children.

Myra thought it would be useful if some discussions of feminist and socialist attitudes towards psychology could be directed to these

# Who's Holding The Baby?

Last month our cover featured the exhibition of socialist and feminist photography at the Hayward Gallery in London. *Sheila Rowbotham* explains why she went to picket outside the exhibition and asks how socialists can communicate their vision to children.

problems which have such practical implications for helping us develop an alternative vision of child care. At the moment there is a lack of much theoretical connection between the women's movement demand for nurseries, much muttering and some practice over the years of men and women sharing childcare more equally in couples or in groups, and the growth of new forms of community childcare and trade union supported nurseries at work. It also occurred to me that while discussions about the personal experience of being with children is an obvious subject for women's groups and men's groups, it is less customary for a socialist group to talk about this.

Community Nurseries are a fascinating growth. They assume several shapes and forms. Some are partly operated by parents with the assistance of paid helpers; one in Hackney is funded by the Equal Opportunities Commission, others by various Council grants. They have often arisen out of play groups and nationally their existence is patchy. Hackney is really an exceptional case. The current waiting list for Council Day Nurseries stands at over 800 top priority children. Eight Council Day Nurseries provide only 400 or so places and there are now seven voluntary nurseries which have come into being on an ad hoc basis.

The council grudgingly gave them the nod because they were a cheaper form of child care. But this meant nursery workers were being forced to claim Social Security as they were under the poverty line. However last year in Hackney they joined NUPE and demanded parity with Council-run nurseries. They won much better pay conditions and holidays.

This is not to imply that Council Nurseries are some kind of utopia. Pay is still relatively low. Socialist and feminist nursery workers are full of stories of struggles against sexist and authoritarian attitudes. One Islington worker said to me that after work she was so tired she just wanted to switch off completely from the kids. In community nurseries, though, this is never possible. These nurseries have to argue bargy their way through the Kafkaesque world of council funding.

In Hackney, for example, they are becoming increasingly involved in the Under Fives, which links all aspects of activity in the area. They have managed to convince the councillors of their case even though many of the council workers remain suspicious. The argument is not only about cash but about control. The Hoxton group for instance, which includes two child minders, has fiercely impressed upon Hoxton councillors that they want a community nursery run by themselves. So the emergence of

community nurseries has created a group of people who have become increasingly aware of the lack of provision, of bureaucratic red-tape, of the dismissal of the needs of the under-fives, and are beginning to work out what kind of education they want for their children.

But this kind of development appears at present to be peculiar to certain boroughs in London. Perhaps *Leveller* readers know of other places? None of the people I spoke to knew of community nurseries in other towns. They suggested it might be even more difficult to get money elsewhere. They are very keen for ideas and information to be communicated. The 'Do It Yourself Nursery' was written with this intention.

My journey home was a mobile object-lesson in what we had been demonstrating about. I attached myself to the Beatty Road contingent. We decided to go by boat down the river.

That was great until we landed. No bus home so we trekked on foot like the Children's Crusade to Aldgate, twenty children, five adults and a dog. "Hold hands. Do you want to go now? We'll soon be home." Summer had decided to arrive that afternoon. My mac was redundant and heavy. The children were swathed in woolly coats. I staggered home shattered with no comforting notes. It had never seemed quite the right moment and I had a shortage of hands and quiet.

Two thoughts began to form hazily in my head. One was that in demanding child care, we are not only asking for a thing or for money, we are contesting for the use, control and distribution of social resources. This involves a concept of how we want to work, care for children and play and indeed to love. It means an argument about how life-time is apportioned between the sexes and between classes. In the present economic crisis, with the Tories on the offensive, this is going to be a very desperate struggle. This strategic vision is therefore particularly vital now. Otherwise isolated struggles will sink into exhaustion and despair.

Despite these problems there really is a strength in the wide range of community projects which have developed, particularly in the last decade. Not only those for under-fives but everything from community arts groups to law centres.

My second thought was that while some of these are implicitly contesting the dominant values of a profit-based society, how do we go about communicating our understanding of socialism more explicitly to children? How do they involve one another? Most of the energy seems to have concentrated on children's literature. Radical groups exist which try to develop co-operation and democracy like the Woodcraft Folk (who are helped by the Co-op Educational Fund), Forest School and Flysheet Camps. They all believe very much in education through doing. Woodcraft Folk from six year old elfins onwards elect leaders. Forest School Camps also have leaders but the Flysheet Camps, an offshoot of the late '60s and more explicitly non-hierarchical, have daily camp co-ordinators.

But there is not much socialist organising for children. There are occasional events planned with imagination like the creches at the Communist University, the Socialist Workers Party Skegness Rallies, or the Conference of Socialist Economists and the Men's Week with kids at Laurieston in Scotland. But now the Socialist Sunday School movement has dwindled there seems little for everyday life. I wonder whether socialist children's groups would still be popular today?

For information including

Film *Who needs Nurseries? We do*  
and pamphlet *The Do it Yourself Nursery*  
50p (including postage)  
contact London Nursery Campaign  
tel. 01-981-1221 (days)



Hackney Flashers

# Taking on the Tories

WHEN THE TUC General Council announced its "campaign" against Tory economic policies late in June, General Secretary Len Murray went out of his way to emphasise that it was *not* a negative campaign, it was *not* an attack on the Conservative Government, *not* an interference with the democratic process, but a *positive* campaign for alternative policies. (You know the kind of thing).

"Workers will not take any notice of these self-appointed leaderships," he told the press, for all the world as if he'd been *elected* to his job by the workers he "represents". "The job of the trade union movement is not to interfere in politics but simply to represent the justifiable interests of workers."

In the face of bureaucratic compromise, the rank and file movements have got a job on their hands. How are they going to organise? As the movement comes round from the shock of the Tory triumph, David Clark & Tim Gopsill have been looking at the main rank and file organisations: the Rank and File itself (SWP), the All Trade Union Alliance (WRP), and the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions (CP).

## 'Defend Our Unions'

THE ATTENDANCE of more than a thousand delegates at the June 23 'Defend Our Unions' conference in Manchester shows that the Socialist Workers Party is now placed to play a leading role in the coming industrial conflict. It is a position that would have been unthinkable even five years ago.

Initially sponsored by a dozen shop stewards' committees, the conference grew into the largest rank and file gathering since the 1970 Liaison Committee to Defend Trades Unions, according to Tony Cliff, *Socialist Worker* editor and leading SWP theoretician.

But, Cliff told *The Leveller*, "the Liaison Committee became attached to some of the trade union officials, supporting left wingers like Jones and Scanlon as they moved right. They supported the Concordat, for example. The Liaison Committee moved right and a vacuum remained... this is where Rank and File will intervene. We are trying to fill the vacuum."

The Manchester conference was attended by the representatives of 50 shop stewards' committees, 40 Trades Councils and 355 separate union branches and supported by the IMG. Cliff estimated that two thirds of the 1,100 attending were not in the SWP and that the "weight of representation was largely manual." Analysis of the delegate figures shown in *Socialist Worker* shows that 167 of the branches represented came from unions usually thought of as white collar (CPSA, NATFHE, NUT etc). But the great majority of the speakers represented industrial or blue collar unions.

John Sturrock (Report)



The conference passed a seven point Code of Practice which is being reprinted and widely distributed by Rank & File. It was passed overwhelmingly and is, according to Cliff, "really elementary, there's nothing great or revolutionary about it. There will be a sizeable minority within the unions who will support it. We are trying to do the same tactics in the trades unions as we did with the ANL. The united front is the key. I don't see members of the Labour Party or the Communist Party or non-political workers opposing it. Over the years we believe that we can create a strong anti tory movement."

The SWP are delighted with the results. The build-up started slowly in the Spring when the Party weren't sure who would win the election; until the Budget there were few delegates but it was the reality of the Conservative's plans that brought the credential applications flooding in. It wasn't all plain sailing within the SWP however: Steve Jeffreys, a full-time industrial organiser for five years, resigned his post on the decision to go for a national conference rather than placing the emphasis on rank and file work within the individual industrial fractions.

The conference was kept firmly in SWP hands under the chairpersonship of Dick North, NUT Executive member. The selection of speakers was done by an arrangements committee and didn't appear to indicate a preference for SWP members. But North did use the chair to try and squash a late amendment to the main motion from a non SWP delegate from Manchester CWS

John Sturrock (Report)



Sadie Blood: "Rolls Royces are luxuries for the rich; after the budget, toilet rolls are luxuries for the poor." Inset Albert Derbyshire MA - "it stands for Militant and Angry."

USDAW. And while there will be no continuing committee or permanent organisation, the follow-up will stay in the hands of John Deason and Jack Robertson, both full-timers in the SWP's industrial department.

Cliff is reticent about discussing the way the party control the sinews of the mass movement, arguing that "we may have 200,000 workers voting for a code of practice but it's different when it comes to meetings."

The SWP Central Committee are keen to supplant the Communist Party in the industrial struggle and saw the conference as central to that. In the "Political Perspectives" section of the May 1979 *Members' Internal Bulletin* they argue that:

"The Communist Party will hitch itself onto the Bennite trend and, because it is still a real organisation (weakened as it is now), it will probably play a disproportionately large role in promoting it in the unions. We have to address ourselves to a patient, sustained united front approach to it. The CP is going into a new phase of its prolonged crisis... The internal tensions will grow more rapidly to the extent that we are able to expand our industrial influence.

"That remains the task for the SWP. Conditions will favour the creation of a new industrial periphery... We must not expect very rapid results. It will take time for the consciousness of various layers of workers to shift. But if we can get a successful conference on June 23, and follow-up

systematically the contacts made in the process, if we can, by the end of the year, have added a few thousand to the circulation of *Socialist Worker*, and if we are on the alert to intervene wherever there is action, then we will have laid the basis for a bigger and more industry-based SWP in the years of struggle that surely lie ahead."

At the start of the last Labour Government in 1974 IS, as it was then known, was still a largely student organisation with a growing number of industrial contacts. Today it is nationally-known through its anti-fascist activity, an activity which has been accompanied by the less newsworthy but steady industrial growth.

The response to the Code of Practice, both in the number of union branches that take it up and those who are prepared to stand by its seven points when the Government brings in legislation to curb the power of the rank and file, will show just how wide SWP influence is within the labour movement. It will also challenge the Communist Party and the Labour left to either come up with something better or to effectively get into line behind the SWP - a choice that neither grouping can welcome.

## ATUA Wembley -

FOR THE Workers Revolutionary Party, the collapse of capital is at hand.

The collapse of the international dollar currency system means a worldwide slump in which workers of the Third World and the imperialist nations alike are poised to take power. In Britain, the weakest link in the imperialist chain, the WRP is offering leadership to the working class in its historic mission.

This analysis, rather than simple reaction to the triumph of Toryism, pervaded all the proceedings at the conference on July 1 of the Party's industrial arm, the All Trade Union Alliance (ATUA).

It was laid out in a 45-minute opening "political report" from WRP leader Gerry Healy. Healy ran through a history of capital since 1918 and ended up: "The All Trade Union Alliance's purpose is to launch a crusade to encourage the masses to come forward and unite - and to show that they can win. It is time to tell workers the truth and organise them in the Workers Revolutionary Party by building the Alliance in the common battle to win the struggle for power."

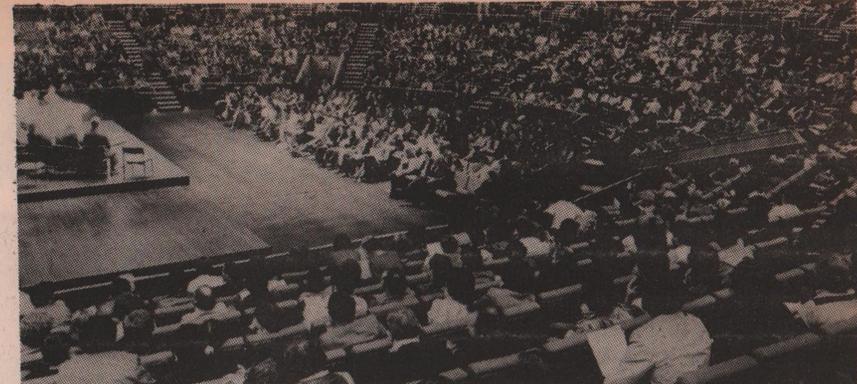
It was a big and impressive conference: about 2,000 militants, most of them from WRP and Young Socialist branches, almost half-filling the huge plush Wembley Conference Centre.

Impressive because of the level of discipline: what you'd expect at a Party conference, rather than a rank and file rally.

The Central Committee sat on a big platform, a good distance away from the rank and file in the audience. Microphones for floor speakers were set behind the stalls seats: most read prepared speeches.

There was no sense of personal liberation, no specific references to the oppression or struggles of women, or black people. No joy in the struggle. It was a grim matter of getting on with the job.

WRP general secretary Mike Banda said in the summing-up speech: "This has been one of the most important discussions to take place in the Labour Movement. There's been a lack of histrionics and demagoguery, a facing-up to the tasks facing the working class. It was a very sombre and serious conference. It reflected the mood of the working class, which now recognises that it is not operating under a reformist leadership but is face-to-face with its traditional enemy."



All Trades Union Alliance - filled Wembley Conference Centre.

The policies were set out in a 700-word resolution that was declared by chairman Dave Temple (NUM) to have been passed unanimously, for all that a few tentative hands were raised to abstain.

There had been no discussion of the text of the resolution, which started with a 500-word preamble setting out the Party's analysis of the world crisis, and set out 11 points ranging from:-

1) Nationalise banks, land and basic industry under workers' control! For state monopoly of foreign trade! to...

11) Make the TUC fight the Tory government!

The resolution went on to pledge the leadership of the WRP, "based on the revolutionary practice of Marxism and the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky"; and to call for: "demonstrations in all the main industrial centres to fight the Tory budget and closures."

Throughout the conference the importance of the revolutionary forces in the Middle East was stressed. (There were several hundred Iraqis, Palestinians, Iranians and Jordanians in the hall.) The oil-producing countries were facing increasing attacks from imperialism: Iraq, particularly, because of its role in promoting Arab resistance to the Camp David deals and Sadat. Editor of *Newsline*, Alex Mitchell, moved the motion of solidarity with the Ba'ath Socialist Party, but it never circulated or even read out and the conference voted, with two abstentions counted this time, for a resolution whose wording it was happy to take on trust.

Not all the delegates were in the hall for

## Halpin - LCFTU

THE "BROAD LEFT" rank and file organisation, the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, is building for a lobby of the Trades Union Congress at Blackpool in September, and for a big national conference in October/November.

Chairperson Kevin Halpin sets the strategy as being "for an alternative economic policy." He told *The Leveller*: "If you are fighting the Tories, unemployment and wage restrictions without that, you would be fighting a loser.

So with Toryism now mounting new attacks on the labour movement, what's the prospect for more unity among the rank and file bodies? Not that good.

"Anyone can come to our conferences provided they're bona fide delegates of a trade union branch, and we hope everyone will support our lobby at Blackpool." But that's as far as it goes.

And if the TUC decides to limit its fight to a Sunday afternoon demo in Trafalgar Square and doesn't sanction strike action, where will the LCFTU be? "Without question, we're for strike action. We don't buy the line of people like Murray and Gormley, that we have to

this: many were still queuing for coffee (at 24p a cup) and sandwiches (43p) at the single refreshment counter provided for the 2,000 people.

The debate featured speakers from half a dozen running disputes: a Corby steelworker; militants from Kitsons Insulation, Perkins (Peterborough), Massey Ferguson (Kilmarnock), Bethnal Green Hospital and the Reynolds occupation; all facing closure.

There were solidarity speeches from Iran, Chile and Zimbabwe and, strangely out of place, an appeal for support from one of the Huntley Street squatters. And there were WRP cadres from several industries, the keynote for the ATUA struggle being struck by D J Elliot, (ASLEF, London Transport), who set out the differences with SWP's rank-and-fileism.

"Unlike the SWP I don't think you have to tell people not to cross picket lines or break strikes. In this period we are living in now, characterised by speed-ups, redundancies, and closures, the SWP peddles the rank and file line, that the rank and file can organise on their own and combat the attacks on their organisation.

"There is nothing like a war to act as a catalyst. We live in a period where we could be caught off-balance. The state of the world, monopoly capitalism, is gearing up for a war." And in the only criticism of the main resolution heard all day, he added: "The resolution makes no mention of the threat of a war, and I think it should." Everyone knew what he meant.

respect the fact that the government has been elected.

"I know lots of workers who did vote Tory, but you can't find any of them now. In my depot," (Halpin is an AUEW steward, a fitter with London Transport) "we voted 1,120 to 20 for strike action last month. They've all changed their mind since May. They wouldn't have voted Tory if they'd known what was coming. The government doesn't have its mandate any more."

Halpin was scornful of the fact that the Rank and File conference had discussed the SPG and the murder of Blair Peach, "I don't see what that's got to do with the labour movement's fight," he says.

The programme is not therefore for a revolutionary solution. It fits its constituency, principally Communist Party and left Labour; for a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

With 70 shop stewards' committees affiliated, the LCFTU has a powerful industrial base. Probably, it can carry its message directly to more working people than the other rank and file organisations put together. It will also command the support of far more delegates at the TUC and individual union conferences. It could mobilise hundreds of thousands. Perhaps it will - for a defensive action against Tory attacks.

# Lambeth's South African builders

Eight million pounds worth of council building work for the Labour-held South London borough of Lambeth has been allocated to the Roberts construction company, a firm ultimately owned by a particularly voracious group of South African businessmen. *David Clark reports.*

THIS NEWS will come as a surprise to the predominantly left-wing leadership of the council, who inherited the Roberts' agreement from previous right-wing administrations. It will also concern many of Lambeth's rate-payers, a significant proportion of whom are black.

Roberts have gone to a lot of trouble to disguise the ultimate ownership of their British company, laying a trail which goes from London through holding companies in Guernsey, Jersey and Panama and thence back to South Africa.

But if the councillors are surprised, the permanent officers — who supervise the 'approved' list of contractors, which has included Roberts for the last seven years — may be open to criticism for not investigating Roberts' finances more closely before recommending them for eight million pounds worth of the public's money.

The current work for Lambeth is concerned with sixteen separate projects on the Myatts Field North site in Kennington, one of the largest municipal housing projects in Europe. It isn't the first job Roberts have done for Lambeth: work is nearing completion on a multi-million development in Kennington Lane which is also being done by the company.

The previous personnel manager on that site, a former right-wing building union official called Don Speakman, was the Labour Chief Whip on Lambeth Council when Roberts was awarded the Myatts Field North contract. Before that he was chairman of the Construction Services Department.

Roberts are known in Southern Africa for their work on building the notorious death

cells in the main prison in Salisbury, Rhodesia. Recent amalgamations make Murray and Roberts the largest construction company in Southern Africa. They were recently engaged in plans to develop the island of Dominica in the Caribbean as part of a complicated oil-for-development deal — plans smashed when the Dominican people overthrew Patrick John, the island's corrupt Prime Minister.

Roberts have built other 'sensitive' projects in the UK, including an extension to Brixton Prison, a Metropolitan Police building, and the new GMWU headquarters.

A. Roberts and Co was a family company from 1906. In 1974 that company wound up voluntarily, changing its name to A Roberts (Holdings) 1906 Ltd, and leaving the old name free for a new company to trade with. They still haven't had Inland Revenue clearance to close down (Holdings) 1906 Ltd but trade on happily under the old name.

In June 1977 the company turned over £9 million with a barely-believable declared annual profit of £165,000. In a clever deal in August of that year, four of the directors — Johnson, Cruse, Ely and Swainson — transferred half of their Roberts shares to Catton Securities Ltd and Catton was given special powers to transfer them to a Guernsey company called Guernroy. That company, together with a Jersey company called First Island Investments, holds the shares for another one called Joed Dale Investments.

Confused? You may well be, and so will the councillors be who attempt to unravel this little lot. But it's here that the South African connection emerges. Roberts' directors in

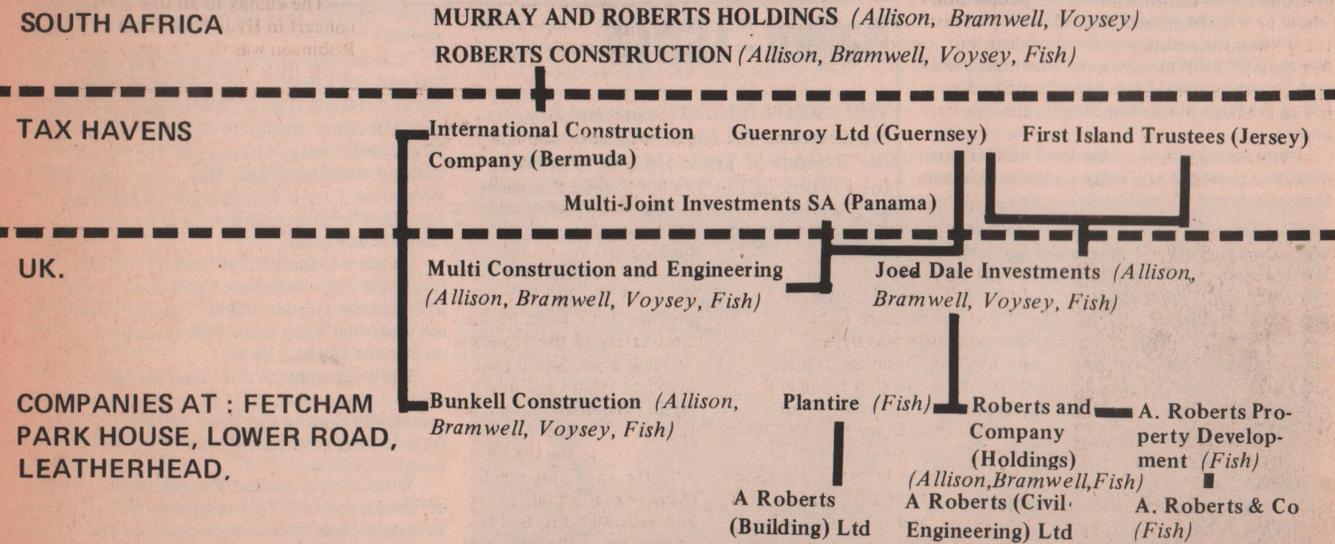
England all give their nationality as British. But in October 1977 directors George Allison, Leo Fish and John Edgar Dale Bramwell — all of whom have Johannesburg addresses and are on the board of Roberts in South Africa — were appointed to the board of A Roberts and Co (Holdings) Ltd.

While all this was going on, Speakman, by now Labour Chief Whip, was coming under pressure from his ward Labour Party for his non-attendance to party business. And his job as personnel manager at the Kennington Lane site meant that shop stewards, infuriated at his 'poacher turned gamekeeper' role, were complaining to other Labour councillors about deteriorating industrial relations. Speakman, they argued, seemed to be deliberately fomenting unrest to Roberts' advantage.

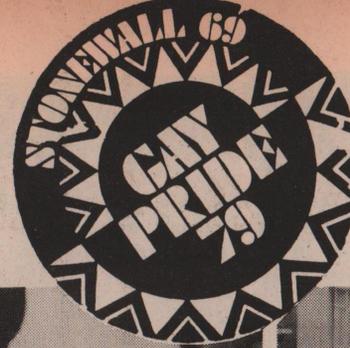
By 1978 Joed Dale Investments — set up by Monte Carlo accountants with the same South Africans on the board — was the ultimate holding company of all, except one, of the various Roberts subsidiaries operating in the UK. And the picture was even more confused by the emergence of Multi Construction and Engineering, whose shares were held by Guernroy and a Panama company called Multi Joint Investments SA — which had John Edgar Dale Branwell of Joed Dale on its board and a stake in Roberts UK operations.

A further company, Bunkell Construction, started in 1964 and registered in the Bahamas, has the same Leatherhead address as Roberts and many of the same directors.

Speakman has since been pushed out of the council and many of the councillors involved in the original decision to grant the contract have moved on. But the building work proceeds and the people of Lambeth find themselves paying out to a South African-owned company whose final statement of accounts is lodged in a series of international tax havens free from public scrutiny.



The Tangled Web: Why Lambeth councillors would find it hard to trace Roberts back to South Africa. Common directorships (in *italics*) show the trail to Johannesburg. Country of registration on the left of the table.



Gay Pride 1979: Excitable Evelyn; 7000 on the march; Tom Robinson (Right) commiserates with Polly Perkins. Pictures by: Laurie Sparham (IFL); Mark Rusher (IFL); David Clark.



## Leftists 2: Disco-roller-skaters 4

I must confess to being a bit of a groupie. I've now been to see Gay Sweatshop's play *The Dear Love of Comrades* three times. When I first saw it in the spring (see *Leveller 26*), the company were still performing before the baggy-trousered in-crowd who will show up sooner or later for anything Sweatshop puts on. But during Gay Pride Week there were more than a few leather jackets and moustaches among the men in the audience. And there were many faces more commonly seen in the gay pubs

and clubs than at anything nearly so political. It made me think about the blurred and confusing relationship between the gay movement (where right-on people read the *Leveller*) and the bigger gay community (where right-on people don't).

The distinction is not quite so clear, but something has to be about the extraordinary Gay Pride Week meeting organised by the Marxist *Gay Left* collective on "Pornography". It was very much a movement event. There was Elizabeth Wilson (of *Feminist Review*), Jeffrey Weeks (the movement's chief ideologist) and the usual collection of clever-clogs types who saw *The Dear Love of Comrades* last winter.

But sitting there rather conspicuously was Bryan Derbyshire, Colherne fixture, doyen of the leather scene and reputed to know more about bondage than Harry Houdini. While *Gay Left* members led the discussion about male domination and consumerist attitudes towards sex, Bryan chimed in with gems like: "we found the small-format mags just didn't sell, the readers like big colour pictures."

His deadpan candour about the problems of being a pornographer rendered him quite invulnerable to the theoretical contortions of the leftists. Even a rather loud-mouthed revolutionary feminist, who with

her sisters spent much of the week zapping various events, was stuck for words when Bryan claimed there was no money to be made out of pornography.

*Gay Left* got off lightly compared with a Gay Activists Alliance meeting on "Child Sexuality". A teenager who was to lead the discussion (presumably because he was more recently a child than the rest of us) couldn't come because he'd run away from home. Then the meeting teetered on the brink of madness when young black lesbian Evelyn announced that "nobody knows what they're fucking talking about".

But, of course, the high-spot of the week was the Gay Pride March on June 30th, marking the 10th anniversary of the Stonewall riot in New York. Seven thousand marched from the Embankment to Hyde Park, flanked by a massive turnout of police. *Gay Left* was there. So was the Gay Activists Alliance, the Campaign for Homosexual Equality, gay groups and organisations. But in the place of honour, at the very back, festooned in balloons, came the *Zipper* float. Bryan Derbyshire was on the march.

This was a march which everyone had come to. There were lesbian feminists and disco-roller-skaters, a former MP and S&M freaks, monogamous couples

(marching in twos) and young people who had never come out before. And, anonymous in blue uniforms, marched scores of gay policemen. It was, as the organisers predicted, the biggest gay occasion there has ever been in Europe.

The climax to all this was a concert in Hyde Park. Tom Robinson was the "comper" and made little speeches while everyone milled around looking for people they fancied. Lesbian club entertainer Polly Perkins was mercilessly barracked by the feminists for presenting images of women "straight out of men's pornography". And long queues formed at the nearby hot dog vans.

But then came the action. The women's rock band Spoilsports got people dancing, warming us up for top-of-the-bill disco with Kokomo. After hours of waiting, the moment had come: gay disco-dancing in Hyde Park. Evelyn got so excited she had to be carried away from a *World in Action* film crew.

And then the police turned the power off. Tom Robinson led a heroic but brief rendering of "All you gay women, all you gay men, come together, stand together and each other's rights defend." But nobody took much notice. It was 6.00 and the pubs were open. It was Saturday night and we all went home to get changed.

Brian Deer



# The Branch on every High Street

The Special Branch, part of Britain's secret police apparatus. How many of them are there, where are they and what exactly do they do? 51 police forces – Metropolitan and City of London, 40 provincial English, eight Scottish and the Royal Ulster Constabulary – each publish an annual Chief Constable's Report. In 1977 only Durham revealed an exact figure for its Special Branch. The 1978 annual reports go a bit further without giving too much away. Nick Anning read them to bring you the official line on what the Branch got up to last year.

"IT IS TIME the public realised, if they are not already sufficiently aware of it, that the Special Branch, like all other departments in (the) Force, exist to safeguard and protect the community. They are *not* a 'Secret Police' to be feared, but ordinary police officers doing a first class job": James Anderton, Chief Constable of Greater Manchester, in his annual report for 1978. There, for the first time, he gives a substantial description of the size and work of his Special Branch "to dispel silly speculation and doubt".

"Much of the criticism levelled at Special Branch activities in recent years," Anderton admits, "has been born of unwarranted suspicion created by an unnecessarily defensive and reticent attitude on the part of the police. Of course there are matters which, in the public interest and for reasons of State security, cannot be openly discussed and disclosed, but that should surprise or perturb nobody with an eye to his own better protection and a proper sense of loyalty to his country."

Given Anderton's public pronouncements on a variety of topics from pornography to forced labour camps for hooligans, many people might be tempted to ask how he would define terms like the "community", "the public interest", "State security" and a "proper sense of loyalty" – especially since the latter seems only to apply to males. The majority of other British police forces feel unable to follow Anderton's example and give similar details.

Out of 43 annual constabulary reports in Britain examined for the year 1978, only 11 gave exact figures, though several more gave general descriptions of the role of their Special Branch or their "Aliens and Immigration Department".

The picture of the Special Branch painted by Britain's Chief Constables doesn't contribute much to what is already known, though the manner in which they are described often gives an insight into the police's public relations angle on the Branch. Norfolk constabulary singles out for mention the following functions:

"... public order and National Security; naturalisation enquiries; the co-ordination of all aliens enquiries, the maintenance of aliens records and enquiries relating to the control of Commonwealth immigration. Another important facet ... is the carrying out of protection duties (usually in co-operation with

LONDON'S STREETS are full of unmarked police vehicles. Most frequently seen are the maroon Hilman Hunters used by uniformed and CID officers alike. There are a handful round every demonstration, and they undertake regular patrols. But the CID and the Special Branch have a wider car pool to draw on, of varied makes including foreign cars – presumably they argue that there are so many on the streets that the plain clothes men and women would be too obvious if they were always in British cars. But the attractions of zooming off in a new Opel must be great indeed.

The following list is some of the cars used in the past twelve months for Special Branch observations of 'sensitive' targets in London. If you're interested in car-spotting yourself, look for clean, new cars, without the clutter on rear shelves and back seats which any car being used

the Metropolitan Police) in respect of visits to this Force area by members of the Royal Family, Foreign Heads of State and other important persons as the need arises."

These are well-established Special Branch duties common to most forces, but the Norfolk Report gives interesting detail on the operation of the "National Ports Scheme" set up under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (1976). The PTA Supplementary Provisions appointed "Ports Officers" from either the Special Branch, Immigration or Customs & Excise at a list of "designated" ports. So the head of Norfolk Special Branch has "... responsibilities for Ports Officers at Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn. These officers are a valuable aid to the CID as they are able to observe passengers entering or leaving the United Kingdom who may be of criminal interest".

David McNee, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, is more perfunctory in the description of his Special Branch. They carry out "... invaluable work, particularly in the anti-terrorist field and in protecting British and foreign dignitaries."

West Yorkshire constabulary's report is more outspokenly cagey: "The complement of the department varies according to its commitment. To publish details of police manpower would impair the efficiency of the police ... Details would be extremely useful to criminal elements and for that reason precise details are not published, but the strength of Special Branch is known to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Police Authority in confidence. Except for occasional temporary additions, the strength has not varied for the past five years."

Otherwise, the report tries to be bluffly reassuring: "The role of the Special Branch is for the proper purpose of protecting the Security of the State and to preserve order which enables ordinary citizens to go about their peaceable and ordinary lives. ... Members are subject to the provisions of the Police Discipline Code and the law in exactly the same way as any other police officer."

Once again it was left to James Anderton to give frank details: "The work of the Branch is concerned with security matters, investigating or assisting in the investigation of 'Offences against the State' and subversion. It operates as an intelligence gathering agency to counter

for legitimate purposes collects. Most don't have dealer stickers in the back window, except for those two marked here which seem to have been bought from Ottershaws, the Surrey dealers. They tend to be parked without the occupants leaving, and they're usually crewed by two men under forty; sometimes there are three, and very occasionally, a woman is one of the crew. Obviously, registration numbers close to those given here should be given particular attention; the police often register their cars in blocks.

If you have any other good candidates, please let us know; and if you spot one of our identified cars, we'd be very interested. Good hunting!

KYH 713 P Maroon Triumph 2000  
KHM 574 P Brown Triumph 2000  
KUW 876 P Brown Triumph 2000

terrorist activities and provide the Chief Constable with early warning of public order situations which may require the deployment of additional police strength in a particular area or situation."

The familiar list of Special Branch duties is covered, with the addition of investigating complaints of incitement to racial hatred and offences under the Representation of the People Act: "The understanding and experience of differing ethnic groups gained by the Branch is often useful to operational detectives investigating serious crimes occurring within those communities".

Only two reports mention "subversion", the most recent official definition of which was given by former Home Secretary Merlyn Rees in the Commons last year:

"... activities which threaten the safety or wellbeing of the State, and are intended to undermine or overthrow parliamentary democracy by political, industrial or violent means." (Hansard April 6 1978)

By far the most significant admission is in the Merseyside constabulary report, which states: "The Branch maintains a close liaison with the Security Service, the Armed Forces and all police forces throughout the United Kingdom, endeavouring at all times to keep in touch with the current climate in respect of subversive activities."

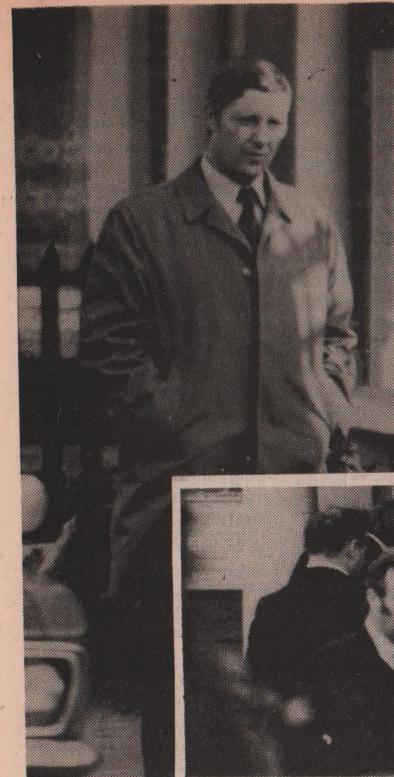
Given Merseyside's key role in monitoring Irish passenger traffic, this is hardly surprising, but the report is the only one to be so open about Special Branch links with MI5.

It is also significant that the RUC annual report has no entry for its Special Branch, revealed in a written Commons answer last year to total 279, though there is a long section under "Aliens". Quite a contrast to the four glossy pages of praise lavished on Ulster's ten-unit, 368-strong Special Patrol Group.

A Parliamentary debate on the Special Branch on May 24 1978 showed that there were 1259 Special Branch officers in England & Wales, of whom 409 belonged to the Metropolitan Police. Exact figures are now available for the Special Branch in these forces in England & Wales:

Metropolitan Police	409
Avon and Somerset (Aliens & Immigration Unit)	22
Cheshire	13

KUL 956 P make not known  
ULE 643 M Blue Ford Cortina  
VUL 407 S Datsun 180B  
VUL 382 S Blue Open Manta coupe, black roof, 'Ottershaws' deal sticker in rear window  
VVL 312 S Opel (?) dealer sticker 'Ottershaws' in rear window  
UJD 412 S Ford Cortina 2.0  
UYE 489 S Ford Cortina, red  
UW 435 S Ford Cortina, green  
WYH 251 S Red Vauxhall Cavalier coupe  
WYL 635 S Beige Ford Capri, with black rear spoiler  
WIX 483 S Datsun 200B, blue  
OYO 587 R Audi 80, red  
OYP 183 R Audi 80, red  
SYR 691 N make not known  
YUU 927 T make not known  
YYR 721 T Red Vauxhall Cavalier 4-door



Faces in the crowd. Centre - Det. Chief Supt Harry Nicholls. Top right - Mr. Shaw. Bottom right - Mr Moffatt. Bottom left - an unknown officer. Side left - Inspector Battye.

Durham	14
Essex	20
Gloucestershire	5
Greater Manchester	52
Leicestershire	20
(Aliens Unit)	
Lincolnshire	5
South Yorkshire	27
West Mercia	12
West Yorkshire	45*
Wiltshire	8
North Wales	23
South Wales	36
Total	711

(\*this figure is taken from State Research Bulletin No. 6)

This leaves a total of 548 Special Branch officers to be distributed between the remaining 29 forces, updating the estimates of Special Branch strength made in State Research Bulletin No. 2, based on Shirley Summerskill's claim (House of Commons May 1977) that the Special Branch consisted of "one per-cent of the total size of the police force". The figures in the table are higher than State Research's estimates, though that could be because their figure for the Met was set too high.

Three figures out of Scotland's eight forces are now known: Fife (1), Lothian & Borders (21) and Strathclyde (61). Dumfries & Galloway have a "Ports Unit" of eleven officers plus eight civilians and a support unit of eight officers from Strathclyde. Grampian have an Aberdeen Harbour Unit of nine and an Airports Unit of eighteen, but not all of these are Special Branch. In all, the Scottish Special Branch probably totals about 100, slightly more than the figure of 70 given by the Secretary of State for Scotland last year.

Only eight provincial forces provide information about distribution of ranks though the names and ranks of chief Special Branch officers are often available from other sources (see table). The known distribution for provincial forces amounts to: 5 Detective Superintendents, 10 Detective Chief Inspectors, 17 Detective Inspectors, 29 Detective Sergeants, 86 Detective Constables.

The Met Special Branch, which accounts for a third of the England & Wales total, is under

the command of Deputy Assistant Commissioner R P Bryan, "C" Department, New Scotland Yard. Immediately under him are Commander J Wilson (Operations) and Commander P Saunders (Administration). They are supported by eight Chief Superintendents: Bicknell, Davies, Dickenson, Kneal, Nicholls, Phelan, Radford and Sinclair. Given the average Met. CID ratio a possible distribution for the Special Branch ranks might be: 11 Detective Superintendents, 17 Detective Chief Inspectors, 44 Detective Inspectors, 130 Detective Sergeants, 196 Detective Constables.

Where no exact figures for Special Branch are given in the reports, or there is no entry at all, there are occasionally mentions of Special Branch training courses attended by officers. (Durham Special Branch receive their hand-gun training at Catterick Army Camp, Essex receive theirs, along with Colchester CID, the local Regional Crime Squad and the Essex "Support Unit" (SPG), at Colchester Barracks.)

The rest is patchy. In the case of Hampshire constabulary the curious reader learns of the existence of Southampton Special Branch only through mention of the intrepid police launch "Ashburton", which held up a ferry in Stokes Bay so that they could arrest a man suspected of fleeing the country.

Thames Valley, in a ritual six lines devoted to its Special Branch, laments that "... acts of terrorism by politically motivated extremists continued to bedevil our society in 1978". South Yorkshire's only notable candidate for VIP protection during 1978 appeared to be the then Secretary for Northern Ireland, Roy Mason.

Northumbria Special Branch's security duties involved it in enquiries into terrorists "... whether political, Irish or international". Lincolnshire's team of five Special Branch kept the county's terrorists at bay during 1978, but were stretched to counter illegal immigrants and smuggling: "quite a task in a county with so many landing strips inland and such a long coastline." No arrests were made under the PTA at Boston, nor at Sturgate and Wickenby airports. However, nine foreign seamen were held by the vigilant team for theft and immigration offences.

Leicestershire Special Branch keep a close watch on East Midlands airport at Castle

Donington and during 1978 the "Nationality Department" helped convict 103 "aliens" or Commonwealth citizens for various offences. Avon & Somerset "Aliens Department" made 23 arrests for the Immigration Service – seven of these were illegal immigrants, the rest had simply overstayed their visas. Durham report that increased passenger traffic at Teesside airport forced them to exercise greater vigilance in carrying out their duties under the PTA, but much of the increase was due to flights carrying foreign nationals in transit to the Ecko Fiske oil platforms.

Essex Special Branch had one officer on secondment to Scotland Yard's National Joint Unit, while the remaining 19 monitored traffic through Stanstead and Southend airports and the ports of Harwich and Tilbury. Out of a total of 71,196 aircraft movements carrying 627,830 passengers they arrested 11 people and assisted in the arrest of 11 more. At Harwich, a major port of entry into the UK, they filtered out 174 of the 1,711,888 passengers passing through, though whether these were under the PTA or routine arrests is not stated. At Tilbury only 5 people were arrested out of a total of 86,109, though Special Branch assisted in arresting 27 more.

Humberside's report does not go into detail about its "liaison with port authorities controlling persons entering and leaving the country". Sussex do not even mention their Special Branch, though they do claim that "Gatwick Police Division can properly be described as the 'shop window' of the Force". Wiltshire, one of England's smallest forces, is presumably upstaged in its security functions by the Army (Warminster, Salisbury Plain) and the Air Force (Boscombe Down). Not being plagued by terrorists or having a major airport "... the supervisory officers are employed only part-time on Special Branch duties".

No half-time for Lancashire's Special Branch though, estimated to have some 20-25 officers. Their supervision "... is exercised at all ports within the constabulary area. This surveillance has resulted in 8 men being detained under the PTA. ... one was excluded from the country by the order of the Home Secretary. Coverage was also extended on four occasions to non-designated airfields where aircraft had been granted permission to land."

Andrew Ward (Report)

Mike Wells

From previous page

Warwickshire has only a small Special Branch, estimated at between 5-10 officers "whose duty it is to collect and collate information about terrorist and other criminally subversive groups". Coventry (Baginton) airport is designated under the PTA and three Warwickshire Special Branch are in a Joint Unit (with West Midlands) supervising Birmingham airport and undertaking unspecified "other work".

Dyfed-Powys Special Branch (estimated 10-12), unlike most others, is selected from uniformed officers. One of their main jobs is to monitor passenger traffic through the port of Fishguard. 101,023 vehicles and 410,145 people passed through during 1978. Of these 107 were arrested, including 6 under the PTA. Port Officers "... submitted 3,964 reports on persons of criminal and security interest". The unit also undertook "supervision of air landing facilities and small harbours on the coast", yet no mention is made of Haverfordwest or the oil terminals at Milford Haven.

North Wales Special Branch: "... concentrated on sea and air ports within the Force Area. Continuous vigilance is maintained at Holyhead Port with its direct shipping link with Southern Ireland and the continuing threat of the IRA". 17 people were detained under the PTA in North Wales during 1978. South Wales, on the other hand, has Cardiff airport (221,289 passengers in 1978) and Swansea airport (208,035 passengers) to watch. "Both terminals provide direct links with Ireland and flights to Israel were introduced during the year". Perhaps these duties, in addition to frequent guard stints for former PM Callaghan on his constituency visits, account for the largish Special Branch establishment of 36 officers.

The situation in NI and the working of the PTA has hardened up Special Branch activity and looks to have been the main reason for the increase in Special Branch numbers in recent years, especially in the large urban areas. Movement in and out of the UK provides an ideal legal and socially acceptable excuse for large-scale monitoring of British nationals on the pretext that the PTA requires it. Much of the information gathered in this way finds its way into the Special Branch's computerised Registry (estimated to hold about 1.3 million names).

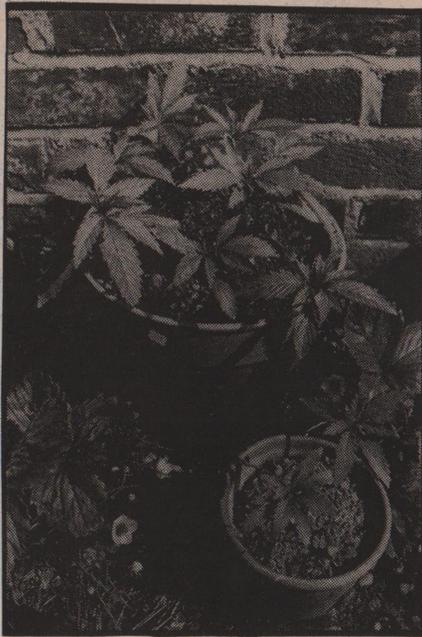
The Index of Aliens resident in the UK, supplemented by a detailed Register of Commonwealth Immigrants, provides an ideal starting point for harassing individuals or whole groups under the Immigration Act. The "detailed knowledge of ethnic communities" which Anderton talks about does not automatically guarantee their sympathetic treatment by the police, as Southall events proved conclusively.

The 1978 annual reports lift, fractionally, the veil of secrecy surrounding the work of the political police. Nobody can be satisfied with Anderton's arrogant prose, but he at least puts the subject on the public agenda. Those forces - still the vast majority - which don't even mention their Special Branch are far more culpable and open to accusations of secrecy.

But even those reports which do discuss the subject are as important for what they leave out as what they put in. It's not enough to report, on publicly-accepted work to do with 'aliens' or 'terrorism' and ignore the day-to-day work of political surveillance, the documented cases of spying on students, trades unionists or gay people.

The whim of the Chief Constable still limits public knowledge of a crucial branch of police work and the 'national interest' remains a cover for the interests of the state. For the time being Home Secretaries and policemen will continue to define what is 'subversive' with little public debate.

## Dope report trashed as inaccurate



THE LONG awaited report from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs was published on June 22nd, two years after beginning their "urgent inquiry" into the present cannabis penalties.

Their recommendations include: the reclassification of cannabis from a class B to class C drug, the reduction of penalties to a maximum of two years imprisonment for possession (presently five years) and seven years for all so-called supply offences (presently 14 years) and cultivation (which they propose should be charged as production).

With these reductions, possession would cease to be an arrestable offence, and magistrates would lose their power to send people to prison for simple possession. They also recommended that the government continue to pursue the aims of the UN single Convention on Narcotic Drugs "with the utmost vigour".

The Government has yet to comment on these proposals, but it seems likely that this document will be used to form the basis of our future cannabis laws - it is the first

## NUSS switches direction

THOSE HEADMASTERS who recently spluttered about "Blot", its articles on wanking, and how the National Union of School Students (NUSS) must be stopped, are in for a further shock. The NUSS has changed, and dramatically.

Their July conference saw a sweep-out of the old Young Communist dominated committee and president John Munford (amongst accusations of "ego-trips"), and the installation of a left group who want to shift the NUSS direction.

Blot will stay, although altered towards presenting the NUSS policies and coming out on a more regular basis, to overcome its financial problems, less expense will go on its production. Wanking will stay on the editorial agenda, so to speak, but if it is written about it will be linked to general NUSS policy, thoughts on abortion, contraception and the like.

This new-look NUSS has already set itself two main objectives; one, the abolition of corporal punishment which formed the theme of a "Ban the Cane" march earlier in July, and second, the pursuit for recognition as a union, by the TUC, by the Government's Education

examination of the issue since the Wootton Report ten years ago - and to those who hoped that at last a chance for real changes had come it is a bitter disappointment.

The Legalise Cannabis Campaign has condemned this report as being hopelessly inadequate and full of contradictions and mistakes. Although the Technical Sub Committee of the Council reported that the health risks - from both short and long term use - were unproven and, in any event, unlikely to be significant, the Council refused to consider any meaningful reform of the law. Their proposals will, in practice, make very little difference to those facing a cannabis conviction, as the penalty reductions are well within the normal sentencing practice of the courts. There was no mention at all of the distress and hardship caused by the criminalisation of cannabis users, nor to the ridiculous cost of enforcing the present laws.

The LCC has produced a detailed criticism of the report, titled *Trash Rehashed*, with our own proposals for immediate reforms. We are demanding that:

all penalties for possession and cultivation of cannabis for personal use be removed; that the offence of allowing premises to be used for smoking cannabis be abolished along with the police power to stop and search for drugs; that cannabis be available for prescription by doctors for medical treatment; that supply offences should only apply to supply for profit and that maximum penalties be reduced to two years imprisonment; and finally that a public inquiry be immediately set up to investigate legal means of distribution and supply, with a time limit on its deliberations.

The Advisory Council's "Report on a Review of the Classification of Controlled Drugs and of Penalties under Schedules 2 and 4 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971" is available on written application from the Home Office Library at £1.75, but the LCC has copies for sale to those who don't particularly want their name and address stored in Home Office files. (*Trash Rehashed* is available from 26th July at 95p from the Legalise Cannabis Campaign, 2 Blenheim Crescent, London W11. 727 8805).

Megan Doolittle

Department, and especially by the National Union of Teachers, whose own disputes and possible industrial action, the NUSS is pledged to support.

NUSS's un-named spokespersons - they're claiming the dole y'see - say other HQ will be in greater mobility; they'll be less HQ-bound as they roar around their branches in the country on support-raising tours.

As their post National conference (their eighth) put it: "The NUSS needs a new leadership dedicated to the fight to change our schools. A leadership which will urge its members to take direct action, e.g. strikes, sit-ins, walk-outs, pickets, against the authorities who run our schools."

The statement goes on: "We are preparing our members for a campaigning school year, during which we will ultimately gain union recognition. We believe that school students, as with any other section of the working class, have the right to belong to their appropriate union, in order to have a major participation in the running of their schools - after all, whose schools are they?"

Speaking on Italian television a week before the elections and clearly anxious to touch again on foreign policy after his much publicized meeting with White House officials, Almirante was parading Mrs. Thatcher's victory as a kind of Advent Lady Godiva riding on the Wind of Reason - and pointing to the right-wing direction taken by "wise" countries like Britain. The Christian Democrats were equally enchanted by the Northern Wind and the whole spectrum of Italian conservative forces was clearly counting on a big victory British style.

"A hole in the water" is how the Rome satirical magazine *Il Male* (Evil) summed up the actual results of the elections a week later. A modest definition. Except that in a country where so many holes are produced by bullets even the most innocuous saying acquires a certain sharpness. In this particular case the target of *Il Male* was the big theme of the electoral campaign: law and order.

"A hole in the water" means that the strategy used by the parties to "hit" the electorate hasn't worked as they hoped. On the contrary, it has produced the opposite of what they expected. In this the Christian Democratic Party is the big loser, not only because Moro was one of their men and they were hoping to cash in more than anyone else on his death, but also in view of the fact that every possible device had been tried to restore faith in the believers of strong medicines: more fascist bombs at home, a witchhunt against the "extremists" of the left and the stolid device to send the Pope on a big tour of Poland to coincide with the elections.

There was no reason to doubt that the strategy would not work. A week before the voting was due to start, opinion polls were given an increase between 5 and 7% to the Christian Democrats and a 4% loss for the Communists.

But while the latter prediction was fulfilled, causing disappointment but no real surprise, the small but politically crucial loss to the Christian Democrats produced shock waves throughout Italy and alarm in the Party's Headquarters. After a campaign verging on necrophilia round the Moro case, feverish appeals for law and order, and promises to strengthen both legislation and the police, Italians have indicated their complete lack of sympathy for strong measures.

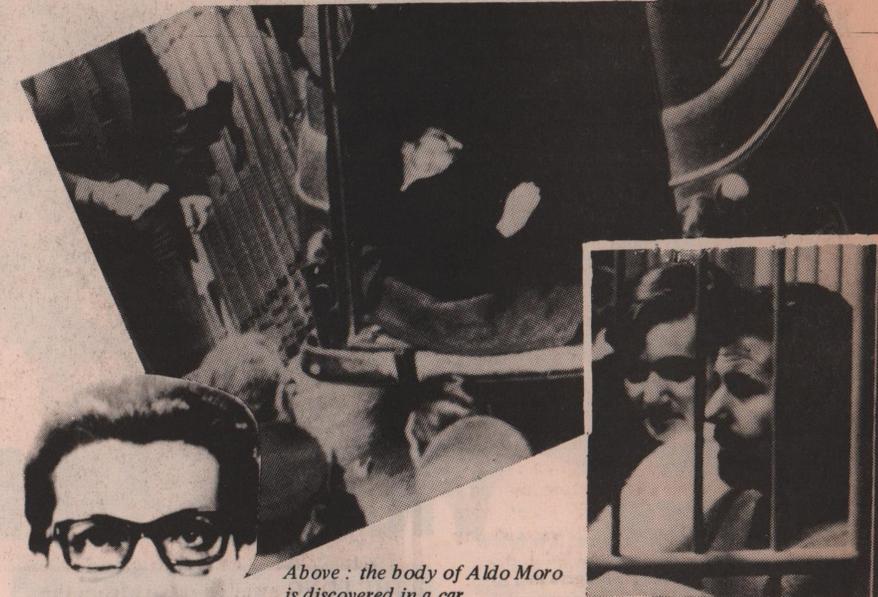
The success of the Radical Party, which trebled its vote, stressed even more clearly abhorrence of the proposed reliance on more severity - aimed especially at the extreme left - and shows a naive but very strongly felt desire to re-assess the whole political structure. The Radical's favourite word is "rompere" which means to break things up, including the "balls" of the men in power.

On the other hand the number of abstentions increased dramatically by Italian standards, a phenomenon which was accurately predicted in an article published in *Metropoli* by three of the men arrested in the so called "blitz". The magazine itself has now been seized by the police.

Thus the results of the elections show the embryo of what could be a decisive departure from the bleak picture of contemporary European politics built on achieveing consensus for more police powers. While in Britain and West Germany results show that the strategy of scaring the electorate into giving support to policies aimed at strengthening the status quo can work, in Italy this traditional device is beginning to show signs of weakness.

The elections took place almost exactly a year after Moro's death. The Red Brigades had promised that the outcome of his interrogations would be made available to the police but this hasn't happened yet. But nobody has any doubt that Moro had some important revelations to make. His celebrated "silences" began

"SIGNORA" THATCHER has many friends in Italy. Should she be as lucky as Barbara Castle and cruise the Mediterranean on Sir Charles Forte's yacht she might find a perfect host in Signor Almirante, the head of the Italian Fascist Party (MSI).



Above: the body of Aldo Moro is discovered in a car.

Left: Professor Negri, imprisoned in post-Moro crackdown.

Right: Red Brigade members on trial.

# ITALY: The Hole In The Water

in 1964, with the first attempt at a coup d'etat, and continued well into the seventies, always protecting people involved in financial scandals, more attempted coups and massacres such as the bombs at the Banca dell'Agricoltura which killed 16 people. In 1976 a high court judge lost his patience and asked the Constitutional Court to rule as to whether Moro had really this supreme right to keep quiet "in the interest of the nation".

By this time Pasolini had written his famous articles calling for the "Palazzo" (the government) to be put on trial and the idea was beginning to make its way into the body of public opinion. A motto had come about: "Il silenzio e Moro" (Silence is Moro) and even a moderate commentator like Giorgio Galli could write articles under the headline "One hundred people to be liquidated"; needless to say, the list included signor Moro.

Leonardo Sciascia, the author of a controversial book about the Moro case seems to have come to the conclusion that the Red Brigades failed to extract any information from their prisoner. This is of course possible. But those who had hoped that the whole episode would end with "revelations" have been bitterly disappointed.

What would have been the results if important people had been named in the 'verbals' of the Red Brigades? The answer must be that the same persons instead of becoming the object of a judicial inquiry would have been able to claim immediate immunity and declare themselves "victims of terrorism". Is it possible that the Red Brigades whose aim, they said, was the heart of the State, have in fact hit a target well beyond the physicality of the power structure?

Moro's body simply refuses to lie down. People are still looking for an explanation to his extraordinary volteface shortly before his execution. "I don't want the men in power at my funerals", he wrote. Despite the clumsy

efforts made by his party to minimize this last wish, the result became evident when millions of viewers actually saw what it meant: a basilica crowded with "the men in power" listening to the Pope's demented sentence: "God you have not answered our prayers". And empty space where Moro's body should have been.

It was at last a free statement coming from the man who had devoted his entire life to the Christian Democratic Party and had remained imprisoned in its manoeuvres. The message to the viewers was too immense to be immediately understood and it has taken time for its meaning to become truly public and political. Another passage from one of Moro's letters is also entering into the political consciousness of many Italians. "I will die if this is what you have decided" - he wrote to members of his own party - "but my blood will fall upon you."

It is now widely believed that the Red Brigades, in spite of their initial demands asking for 13 "political prisoners" to be freed by the State, would have contented themselves with a token evasion or the liberation of one single person. But the Christian Democratic party, supported by the Communists, decided to ignore this chance to save Moro's life. "I can't believe it" he wrote in one of his last letters already embittered by the fact that his Party was advising Italians to consider him doped, no longer himself", actually "another Moro", in preparation for the great epitaph "a great statement".

Italians have always been sceptical about official definitions and in this particular case they seem to have learned something from a mediocre politician struck by clarity at the end of his life: asked to give more power to parties seeking to legitimize more repressive measures against the working class and the revolutionary left, they have said "no".

Alfio Bernabei



Refugees picked up by a British freighter.

## VIETNAM REFUGEES:

TWELVE YEARS ago many of us helped to build a massive movement of solidarity with the Vietnamese against the imperialist invasion headed by the United States of America. Much has happened since the liberation of Saigon in 1975. The conflict between Vietnam and Cambodia, the Chinese invasion of Vietnam and now the exodus of the 'boat people'. The Western press is currently concentrating on the 'boat people'. Kind-hearted British captains pick up the refugees at sea; even more warm-hearted British agencies provide relief and British politicians congratulate each other on their collective generosity. At the same time as the 'boat people' are greeted with flowers at Heathrow Airport, there are others, not so lucky, waiting in detention centres . . . to be deported! They too are Asians, but they are not 'refugees from communist tyranny'. They are the victims of British bourgeois democracy. Few politicians or papers will shed any tears for them . . .

It is the utter hypocrisy of the British ruling class and its media which is the most striking feature of this campaign. The Heath government kept out large numbers of Chilean refugees, fleeing from Pinochet's dictatorship. Subsequent Labour governments deported Philip Agee and numerous unnamed Asians. There was no hue and cry over the victims of Videla in Argentina, not to mention the activities of the South African Gestapo (BOSS) which is allowed to operate in this country with impunity.

The BBC TV news still talks in a 'neutral fashion' of the bombing raids carried out by the White Settlers against the Zimbabwean refugees in Zambia and Mozambique. The plight of those refugees is buried in the biased, bland, 'objectivity' of the British media. For the 'boat people', however, nothing is spared.

Does this mean that socialists should bury their heads in the sand? Can we seriously argue that it is not 'our problem'? Or is it sufficient merely to solve the problem with some magic formula: the Vietnamese are 'degenerate', 'deformed', 'gangsters', etc.? That may satisfy those uttering the phrases, but is not very illuminating.

The refugees fleeing the shores of Vietnam fall into two categories. The first are those who would leave after the outcome of any successful revolution. They had their counterparts in Russia in 1917-24, in Cuba in

# Victims Of Hypocrisy

Nobody could fail to be moved by the fate of the refugees now pouring out of Vietnam. But how should socialists respond? Tariq Ali, a leading activist in the solidarity movement of the sixties, examines the issue.



Socialist Challenge

1959-65 and now in Vietnam. It was Fidel Castro who decided quite correctly that if people wanted to leave Cuba, they should do so. He termed the refugees 'gusanos' (worms), but they were allowed to leave. The United States sent in planes to take them off to Miami. Merchants, middle-class families, pimps, etc., have no desire to stay in Vietnam. Should the Vietnamese have built a "Berlin Wall" around their coastline to keep them in? Or stationed armed soldiers behind a coastal barbed wire fence? Suppose they had. The propaganda barrage in the Western press would have been deafening. The demand then would have been to let them go! This type of refugee would wish to leave no matter who led the revolution. Even if the Vietnamese leaders were Trotskyists/Libertarians/anarcho-syndicalists (make your own choice) there would have been refugees. . .

The second category are the ethnic Chinese. And here the Vietnamese leaders could have handled things in a different way. Instead of responding to numerous Chinese provocations, and finally the invasion, by rekindling Vietnamese nationalism, they could have argued and fought in the name of internationalism. Instead of victimising the

ethnic Chinese in Vietnam, they should have made every effort to integrate them. At the same time they should have appealed directly to the Chinese masses and stressed the historic past struggles of Chinese workers and peasants against imperialism. The most successful way of isolating the Deng regime would have been by appealing to its base.

Here the theory of 'socialism in one country', a cornerstone of the official communist movement, had devastating consequences. It is the bitter fruits of this theory that help us understand the roots of the wars between the non-capitalist states in Indochina. The ethnic Chinese are the victims of this theory and its practice. They are unwilling refugees.

But whatever category the refugees belong to we must fight for their rights as human beings. France, Britain and the United States are the colonial powers who inflicted untold misery on Vietnam for five continuous decades. Let them open their doors to those whose hopes they once aroused. If the Cubans could be taken to Miami, why not the Vietnamese to Marseilles or New England or Britain?

The future of the revolutions in Indochina is bound up with the whole question of socialist democracy. The defeat of imperialism, the eradication of capital and landlordism has transformed the economic landscape. But the masses in Southern Vietnam have less access to information today than they did under the hated puppet regimes. The Vietnamese leaders have (like the Russians and the Chinese) established a complete monopoly of political power and information. This as the USSR, China and Eastern Europe have conclusively proved, severely deforms and ultimately destroys the hopes aroused by social revolutions. While refusing to join the propaganda chorus of the imperialist press, socialists must nonetheless develop a socialist critique of the lack of democratic structures in these states. Our criticisms, however, have validity precisely because of our solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution at its most critical hours. We would happily do the same again. Our support for the Indochinese against imperialism is unconditional. But we cannot be uncritical of numerous aspects of the states that have been established. In the words of Spinoza, we must "neither laugh nor cry, but understand".

# Doing Europe: the Five Year Plan

"Next to the USSR and China, Western Europe is the US Intelligence Community's most important continuing intelligence target. . . ." Phil Kelly examines the CIA's continuing concern with spying on their friends.

WESTERN EUROPE ranks as a major target for the US Central Intelligence Agency, and the CIA is seriously concerned that American interests may be threatened by the growing economic strength of the EEC countries, according to a secret CIA document which *The Leveller* has obtained. The document, 'Perspectives for Intelligence 1976-81', attributed to the Director of the CIA, is classified 'Secret-NoFor', indicating that it is not to be disclosed to non-Americans. The CIA draws up guidelines for the next five years' of intelligence collection each year, and though the document is now three years old, it indicates current US pre-occupations. Its guidelines apply to the whole of the US intelligence gathering community, and cover material obtained from electronic surveillance (SIGINT), and satellite snooping (known as 'imagery') as well as human sources of intelligence.

"Next to the USSR and China", the document says, "Western Europe is the [US Intelligence] Community's most important continuing intelligence target in view of US economic and security interests in the region and its importance to the overall relationship between the US and the USSR. The means Western European nations will adapt to cope with the increasingly serious economic and sociological problems confronting them, and changes in their attitudes towards integration and Atlanticism will be constant and major intelligence targets. Sub-sets of these targets will be Western Europe's internal political developments and foreign economic policies."

The document deals only with intelligence collection, but provides an indication of the priorities laid down for the CIA's covert action.

The emphasis on spying on your friends parallels that in two other US intelligence documents which have recently come to light. The first, known as A30-31B, was a directive to US military intelligence units to infiltrate military and security services of 'friendly' governments; the second was the disclosure of a detailed report, from an officer of the Defence Intelligence Agency in the US Embassy in Rome, on Italy's chaotic and divided internal security forces, evidently compiled from contacts within those forces. Philip Agee, writing in *The Leveller* in April this year, ascribed such leaks to dissension within the US Intelligence Community.

The Cold War is still the essential focus of American concern. "In a situation of rough equality in intercontinental nuclear forces between the US and the USSR, other national assets will gain importance as elements of the 'strategic' balance of power," it says. Hence the growing fuss from right-wingers, from Defence Secretary Pym on downwards, about the Soviet naval and conventional military strength.

But a major US worry is that in Western

**"neither in Portugal nor in Spain will the new Government be as . . . amenable to US influence as their predecessors"**

Europe and elsewhere, power is slipping not from one super-power to another, but away from both. "In some respects events are working to diminish US influence," the document says of Western Europe.

In the "potentially more fragile states of Southern Europe" (as the report calls them) whatever the results of the political changes which they were then going through, "neither in Portugal nor in Spain will the new Government be as . . . amenable to US influence as their predecessors" — which is a great tribute to the services which the Salazar/Caetano and Franco regimes rendered to the US. "The USSR did not create this potential in either state," the document admits, which is rather different from what the right usually tells us, but "it has already encouraged it in Portugal and may do so in Spain".

In the Third World, regional conflicts are serious insofar as they may have an impact on the super-power relationship. In particular, the report stresses that in the Middle East conflict, "considerable distrust will persist, providing a favorable (sic) atmosphere for those Arab elements rejecting a final settlement." The report confirms that Israel already has 'a nuclear capability' and predicts that as well as India, South Africa, South Korea, Brazil and Taiwan and possibly Iran could develop one. The last must be worrying the US right now, but there's no sign in the 1976 list of the current front-runner among alleged potential bomb-owners, Pakistan.

The perception of the growing rather than narrowing gaps between rich and poor nations, and the gaps within developing nations "will create turbulence", not a shatteringly novel conclusion. Though "this turbulence may be temporarily stilled by some authoritarian governments, particularly those benefitting from increased oil revenues . . . they will have difficulty maintaining themselves in the long term." Unfortunately for the CIA, the Shah's long-term proved to be rather shorter than expected. One wonders what they had in mind for his replacement. But do they also think the skids might be under King Khaled and Co? The recent confirmation by US Defence Secretary Harold Brown that the US does have a mobile military strikeforce for intervention outside the NATO arena, makes it seem that this fear is still a basis of policy. At any rate, the force is obviously intended to warn the USSR not to indulge in further "encouragement".

Economic intelligence from throughout the

world will increase in importance. European nations "may become important intelligence target . . . raising complicated problems for intelligence coverage". Sorting these out will provide "the most difficult and important tasks faced by intelligence during the next five years".

Hence the call for greater co-ordination. In the military field, the document suggests a trade-off within the US intelligence community: military intelligence will pay greater attention to 'national' goals, and the other agencies will pay greater attention to the needs of the military.

The 'Perspectives' document emphasises the need for rapid analysis of the masses of data which the US Intelligence Community gathers, and for "sorting the wheat from the chaff". Closer liaison is required between those who analyse the reports from the 'spooks' and those analysing SIGINT, satellite 'imagery' and spy-place information. On satellites, the document says that "advanced imagery systems will be capable of providing a deluge of intelligence material."

But the unification of US intelligence effort, bringing together all the data for analysis in one place, presumably under the aegis of the CIA, is more evidently a bid for CIA leadership among the US intelligence agencies, which the Colby regime, reeling under the effects of US Congressional investigations, decided on as part of a fight back. The Key Intelligence Questions — KIQs — which were published three years ago as a pamphlet by Philip Agee's Defence Committee — are part of that. They are designed to ensure that all US government agencies with personnel abroad address their attentions to a set of questions which directly concern the economic performance and political conditions of foreign countries including 'friendly countries'. The 'perspectives' document recommends that "Contributions of such agencies as State, Defense, USAID, USIA, Agriculture and Commerce can be enhanced substantially by more effective approaches to information gathering and in the reporting aspects of their activities. . . . We need, particularly, gains in the interrelationships between overt and clandestine and technical and human sources." (Italics in original.)

So every American official abroad must be a spy. It is, in the end, an admission that covert activity for the gathering of intelligence is at best of marginal use. But then, as secrecy is mainly to protect covert intervention, that won't change much.



## About the band

**Carol** (Keyboards & backing vocals): Being in this band is more to me than just playing good music. I'm really concerned about what we write down lyrically, about the way we actually perform the music. I don't mean in terms of presentation but in the way music is constructed and the kind of space we allow each of us as musicians. I don't see Barbara as the vocalist up front, but she's another instrument with all of us.

**Leslie** (bass guitar): Barbara also said that its the first time she'd sung lyrics that she could associate herself with and that could become a part of what she's at anyway. Which is really nice.

**Barbara** (vocals): I imagine that all the lyrics that come from us are going to be OK. I'm not going to be bothered about singing those, but the outside material... I feel funny about singing "Itchin in my heart" with Spoilsports, it doesn't ring right at all. But the others mean a lot to me, they're all words you can really stand there and be proud of.

**Carol**: I love "Itchin in my heart". I think it's really funny.

**Angele** (saxophone & backing vocals): What I think is important about this band is that nobody's got superior knowledge of what's politically right. We agree to disagree rather than insisting on having the right line — something I find extremely irritating.

**Leslie**: One band I was in they were so extreme about lyrics — they wouldn't sing the word 'baby'. I couldn't understand why not. They were against playing to guys in the audience. I think that was down to lack of experience plus the fact that women audiences are renowned for applauding just because it's a women's band. I think it's changed now but it was a case of "Oh they're only women's gigs so it doesn't matter if its not together".

**Chris**: They actually said that?

**Leslie**: Oh yes. But now there are so many excellent women musicians that standards are a lot higher in the rock field. You can't get away with being a woman musician and not being able to play your instrument.

**Sheelagh** (drums): The most sexist band I've ever worked with was an all-female band. The women were all gay but on another gay scene — beautiful gay. They all wore makeup all the time and beautiful Kings Road type clothes. They didn't veto any words and were quite prepared to accept that a by product of appealing to one another meant that they'd appeal as a sexy looking band to men as well.

**Chris**: What did they care about?

**Sheelagh**: They did care about being women who were doing it.

**Chris**: What's the difference between you and them?

**Angele**: I think they were getting off on the fact that they were prancing about on stage being looked at whereas

in this band it's something we all want to do — we all want to really get into our instruments.

**Leslie**: A friend left a band because he said to the guys "Why are you in it?" and they just said "Drugs and Groupies" and so he just said "Bye bye", straight away because he's a musician.

**Carol**: What I pick up on when we're on stage — I think it's a really sexual relationship that a person has with his or her instrument and to be making that visible to an audience is a very powerful message. I think women respond to it and men feel threatened by it. They say "Look at Sheelagh really getting off on her drums", and it's such an autonomous person you're looking at. A complete personality that isn't defined by having a man behind the scenes and I think that all of us are putting that out and its so powerful. I can see women responding to it and men thinking "The music's really good but wait a minute, wait a minute."

**Leslie**: So many people have come up to me after a gig and said "For a women's band that wasn't bad."

**Angele**: I think that a lot of political bands play only for political audiences but as far as I'm concerned they're preaching to the converted. Last Saturday at the gig in the Old Swan, apart from about three women in the audience no-one had a clue what sexism was all about and after I'd introduced one number and explained the lyrics — well you explain them, Carol.

**Carol**: It's addressed to someone in your life who's in authority like a parent or school and its just a woman saying that I'm not going to conform — you've told me a load of rubbish and I'm not going to believe it — put very crudely.

**Angele**: After that I just felt that a lot of guys were literally staring at us.

**Isobel** (congas & percussion): I thought the response was really good — really positive.

**Carol**: We had all the contradictions there in the audience. I mean people were clapping us because we played the numbers

really well but at the same time there were all these lyrics coming over like 'I don't want to do it with you.' It was wonderful... What I really get off on is younger women in the audience actually seeing women can do it. Not women in the women's movement or even women involved in left politics but women who come in on their boyfriends' arms and rush straight down to the Ladies to comb their hair again and put on more makeup.

**Isobel**: Yes and they come in with these beaming smiles on their faces.

**Sheelagh**: What's great about Spoilsports is that you can hear the lyrics and what's most unfortunate about new wave bands who are in fact non-sexist is that they're putting over really right-on lyrics and you can't hear the fucking words.

**On whether to wear/not to wear makeup for Rock Against Sexism Gigs**

**Angele**: Some women doing Rock Against Sexism gigs have been criticised because one of them wears makup or one of them sometimes wears high heels. I just feel that's in no way as important to be tackled as a male band which sings Gloria Big Tits — I find that really offensive... I just feel that the criteria for criticising male bands on sexism are different from criticising female bands on sexism, because we happen to live in a male dominated society. Its actually much more important that we come over strongly as musicians and as women rather than frightfully right-on politically.

**Carol**: In this band it always occurs to us before we go on to

# SPOILSPORTS

"What I really get off on is younger women in the audience actually seeing that women can do it. Not women in the women's movement or even women involved in left politics but women who come in on their boyfriend's arms and rush straight down to the Ladies to comb their hair again and put on more make up." *Chris Stretch* talks to *Spoilsports*, the London-based women's band who'll be playing the big Rock Against Sexism gig at the end of July.



do the gig, shall we or shan't we, some people think they will and some people think they won't and it's always a relevant question. I don't think that any one of us is laying down that there is this right answer, we're going through a whole process and trying to work out ideas as we do it and I'm really proud of that.

**Sheelagh**: I wear makeup if I'm in the mood to wear makeup and it's as simple as that.

**Barb**: I don't think you can deny the issue. No men, or very few men, wake up and think shall I put makeup on. I don't think you can pretend that putting on makeup has got nothing to do with sexism. I can't imagine any of the male musicians I know ever wearing makeup. In a way their attitude is also sexist, they see it as ultra-fucking feminine. Every single time these days I put a bloody mascara stick to my eyelashes I go through troubles about it. There's no way you can bullshit yourself and say "Oh I just happen to feel as though..." I mean very few of us "happen to feel" spontaneously anything in this society.

**Isobel**: If I choose to wear dots on my face which can look hideous to a lot of people, it's because that's what I choose to do to my face. I'm not doing it for any other person and that's the truth.

**Angele**: Why does it always have to be assumed that if we put on makeup or put on fancy clothes, why does it have to be assumed it's directed at the opposite sex? I mean where does that leave me, I'm a lesbian? I think all people, both men and women, want to

be very careful not to throw away what are considered to be female attitudes and what are considered male attitudes. I think basically we want to get on with whatever is inside of us, both the male and the female parts of us, let them out and what's wrong with it. If making a peacock of yourself happens to be a female aspect why would you throw it away?

**Carol**: The only time I would ever consider wearing makeup is going on stage. I just wouldn't wear it at any other time. I feel if I put it on there's no way it could possibly be interpreted as making myself look feminine because I just think it's obvious that I'm gay. What I feel it does to me — most gigs that we've done I've always gone up there not particularly bothering about what I look like and I've always felt really nervous about my own personality not the music. But as soon as we dressed up a bit or put different clothes on or just looked ridiculous I felt completely different. I feel I can say anything, I can be anything and I'm just so much more relaxed and confident and that's why I put makeup on.

**Leslie**: I don't think the makeup issue with this band is important. I think its really a small side issue.

**Chris**: For you a RAS gig is just like any other and you're not particularly enthusiastic about it?

**Leslie**: Yes, in a way, but I feel that because my politics are Left anyway I'd feel the same about a RAR gig or the gay thing we're doing next week. I obviously wouldn't do a NF gig or anything that I disagreed with.

**Angele**: I was in this feminist band Jam Today and for a laugh on our last gig we all wore dresses and some of the women in the audience thought it was disgusting — the ultimate capitulation to male fantasies. It's absolutely ludicrous that people can't see something for what it's worth — it was so over the top — it was obvious what we were doing.

**Carol**: The only way I could wear a dress on stage would be if it was absolutely over the top.

**Leslie**: Since I've joined the band and begun to feel much stronger in myself I think I might do it now — but I'd still think twice about it — which is a drag that you can't just do it if you want to.

**Isabel**: Sheila wore trousers this evening for that very reason. She's been wearing a skirt all day. Some of us do wear skirts and dresses sometimes.

**Angele**: There's been this pressure in the feminist movement — almost like not to make cups of tea for each other just in case...

**Isabel**: Absolutely. In the band I was in before they were just absolutely certain that they would not be put upon by anybody — certainly not the opposite sex but even their friends and lovers. They just say "you fuck off and make your own tea".

## Some Problems

**Sheelagh**: I find that most of my problems are not sexist issues at all. My day-to-day concerns are the pressures of society to conform — pressures on the individual. Problems come from being an individual who want to be creative in her life confronted by a society that wants to prevent you doing it. That is my day-to-day struggle.

**Angele**: I think you've been lucky not having any problems because you're a woman. A friend of mine answered some *Melody Maker* ads and when they heard she was a woman they just said "Oh... we've found somebody".

**Leslie**: There was this woman we auditioned and when she rang up she said "I'm a lesbian and I'm thirty", straight away and I said "So what, can you sing?" But she'd been to so many bands that as soon as they found out she was a lesbian or as soon as they found out she was thirty, she was sort of pushed out which I think is a real shame.

**Isabel**: But it happens to men too, they're always being asked for their age and their image — it happens all the time.

**Angele**: Yes but it hasn't been said "Oh, you're a bloke, no thank you" and put the phone down. And I mean she put an ad in and of five who phoned, four put the phone down as soon as they found out she was a woman — it's the honest truth.

Rock Against Sexism's (which I'm involved with) main aim is to help and promote women musicians — to give them an opportunity to present themselves as aware female performers, but the gigs are not all women, the only stipulation is that every RAS gig should have a few female musicians.

**Sheelagh**: I think it sad that while we are getting the chance to express ourselves creatively through a political movement, lots of bands, like the bands some of our blokes are in, don't.

**Chris**: Yes... perhaps the next issue...



David Clark

# BURY THE NAZIS SMASH THE KLAN ROCK 'N ROLL THROUGHOUT THE LAND

Rocking against racism, sexism and repression is taking off into a world-wide movement. *David Brazil* looks at Germany, Northern Ireland and the United States.



THE FIRST Rock Against Repression tour of Belfast took off last June in a way its predecessor Rock Against Sectarianism, led by Stiff Little Fingers, never did. This earlier attempt had foundered on being too student-orientated, too intent on declaring its policies rather than organising gigs, too utopian in expecting catholic and protestant kids to come suddenly together under the banner of rock music, and furthermore, a London Rock Against Racism suspicion about Fingers' attitudes not being based on the Irish conflict being a war against imperialism.

The success of the RAR gigs in the Ardoyne and Andersonstown areas of Belfast owed much to the bands over from London. Oxy and the Morons are strongly influenced by American new wave but are thankfully minus its fascination with the Super-artist as Flower of Evil. Oxy have replaced this Sympathy for the Devil and Patti Smith with surrealist politics;

"I hear the rich have taken to naked bathing

Riding on the backs of driverless cars

Hiring someone else to write their suicide notes."

Belfast appreciated the fact that these words, from a number called "Moro", were dedicated to Airey Neave.

Even more appreciated were Charge who play old time punk but with more fluidity and vigour than the currently touted Lurkers and UK Subs. Charge also have a thoughtful lyrical side which owes a lot to the Doors.

Indeed, after one gig, Charge were uncoiling in their billet to the sounds of this very band, when at 4am in burst the RUC despatched by one Gerry Fitt, who was but three doors away trying to rest his weary social democratic head. The RUC came to his assistance, and the MP's grey matter was spared undue stress.

The Belfast tour had the support of some very young and very good local bands like the Producers and LSD. Voltage especially stood out with their masterpiece of agit-rock "Zimbabwe". These bands rout the patronising attitude of the Anglo-centric music press which sees the Undertones, Stiff Little Fingers etc, as if they were some unique mysterious Irish teen phenomenon.

Finally it was the audiences who made this RAR tour successful. Punk's early mixture of idealism and nihilism still has a meaning for the youth of Belfast who alternate pogoing with their own brand of disjointed "Disco Death" dancing.

Organisers are at pains to stress Rock Against Repression is neither a Provo nor is it against so-called Provo "violence". It is against the presence of British troops there.

There still remains the obvious problems in Northern Ireland, although the short tour left behind quite some momentum which should lead to setting up a steering committee and putting on several other gigs.

There's little enough going on there in the music world, and as the local organisers put it: "The campaign is against all sorts of cultural repression which make it very difficult or impossible for local punk and rock bands to find places to play, and for local youths to get to see and hear the bands they want to."

Again those problems; the tour they said, did not mean "Rock against Terrorism, not Rock for the Provisional IRA. Please do not misinterpret".

THE LOCAL Christian Democrat mayor tried to ban it, the cops were there in huge numbers, but some 50,000 young Germans still gathered for a massive anti-fascist bash "Rock Against the Right" — Rock Gegen Rechts — in Frankfurt on June 17.

The venue and the time had been deliberately chosen to coincide with the annual meeting of the neo-fascist NPD (Nationalist Party of Germany). With people listening to Dutch, German and Austrian "new wave" bands, there were no arrests or violence despite a police spokesperson referring to it all as a "powder-keg" — no doubt he meant the ammunition of 5000 armed police officers.

They succeeded in some way as the NPD were forced to hold their gathering out of Frankfurt in a small town called Alzenau where they vented their frustrations by starting several fights.

The festival interspersed political discussions with the music, and talked about the "breufsverbot" (the ban on leftists in state employment), discrimination against gays and immigrant workers, surveillance of the population by police computers, and much more, in an unusual sinking of the differences by the divided German left.

One interesting aspect was the involvement in the festival of large numbers of trade unionists. 5000 members of the DGB (the German TUC) had arrived in Frankfurt for their own rally which was banned by the local authorities. Instead of dispersing and going home, the trade unionists joined the festival while advice went to the crowd from the state saying: "Some older people from the DGB are coming. Show some solidarity".

The festival initiative had come from a coalition of left-wing groups and was hailed, like the great 1978 ANL Victoria Park festival in London which served as the model, as a great success. The style of the campaign and ideas were openly borrowed from ANL and RAR.

The German RGR, offshoots of which are appearing

in Italy, France and the Netherlands, hope to organise a similar event next year in Munich, the capital of German conservatism. It will be called "Rock gegen Strauss", and the hope is to damage the outspokenly reactionary Bavarian Christian Democrat leader Franz-Josef Strauss's chances in the fight for premiership of the Federal Republic. PNS



ROCK AGAINST RACISM USA has taken off, with the OK slogan "Bury the Nazis, smash the Klan, Rock 'n Roll Throughout the Land".

Injecting the customarily staid American rock scene with the energy of new wave music and its political direction, RAR concerts have been held since April in Texas, New York Central Park, Columbus Ohio, and Chicago. The lovable old YIPPIE outfit have taken up the cause with total enthusiasm, and an article in the first edition of their new paper *Overthrow* remarked; "By opening an offensive not just against organised racists, but against the whole system of control — schools, police, television, and the nuclear family — Rock Against Racism can set a new beat for the coming decade, a beat that'll shake the walls of Babylon to their very foundations."

Using the RAR energy to promote the whole range of things from legalising cannabis to stopping nuclear plants, this invigorating development could well be the first merciful step to sweeping away the Linda Ronstandts and all the coke-sniffing West Coast music millionaires.

Tom Robinson is amongst the sponsors together with such familiar old names as Abbie Hoffman, and they have pledged; "We won't stop until RAR is everywhere".

# BBC & Francis of the Yard

THE REVELATION of the BBC's agreement with the Metropolitan Police in the last *Leveller* has brought the Corporation a great deal of embarrassment; and a great deal of trouble from its staff, whose unions, principally the National Union of Journalists and the Association of Broadcasting Staff, are refusing to work the agreement.

The day *The Leveller* came out, journalists at Lime Grove, the current affairs

HQ, circulated photocopies of the article, and a mandatory meeting of their chapel (office branch) was called. A resolution condemning the agreement was passed without opposition; and the union's

Broadcasting Industrial Council decided the next week to "advise" members not to operate it, pending talks with the Director, News and Current Affairs, Dick Francis.

The ABS general secretary Tony Hearn, who described the agreement as "unacceptable, a clear breach of editorial independence", also sought a meeting with Francis; and if he doesn't pull out, says Hearn, "we'll instruct our members not to work it."

But Francis has been too busy to see anyone, making TV appearances, writing letters to the press,

attempting to justify his position. There's nothing so strange about agreeing to let an outside body (whoever it is) have a say in what programmes you make about them, is the Francis line. He does it all the time. And the agreement only covers a small number of programmes: those about the police, which the police consider sensitive or delicate, which require police facilities.

But it is precisely the "delicate" areas that matter, it's when you want to make programmes about

police crime or corruption, about Special Branch or the Special Patrol Group. These are what the police want to prevent; so even the fact that the agreement has yet to be put into practice, that no requests for facilities within its terms have yet gone to Scotland Yard, doesn't reffect to the BBC's credit.

At any rate, people who care about the independence of media organisations from state

pressure, can take some reassurance from journalists and producers working under Francis, who don't intend to bow to it.

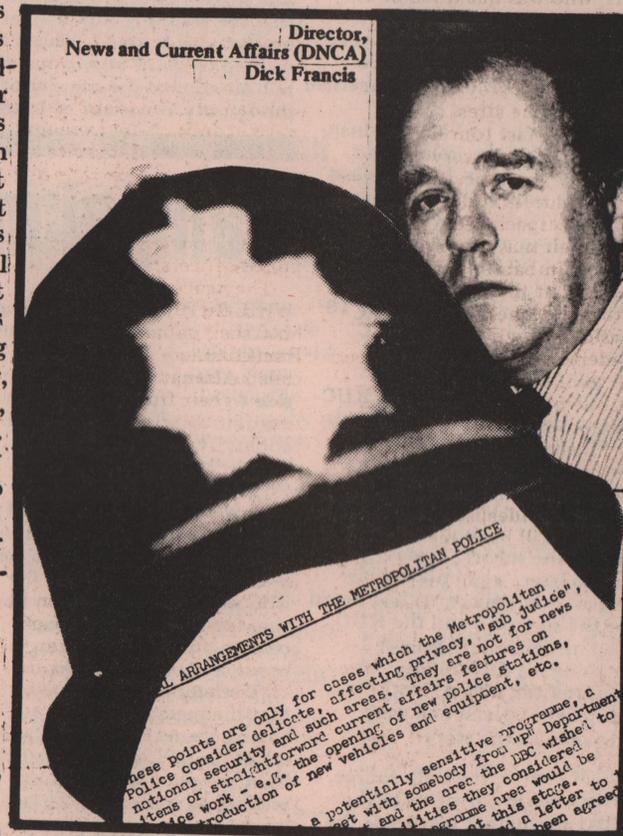
Francis has also said the agreement is not unique, and that he'd be willing to come to similar ones with other organisations. The BBC's attitude to police may not be unique, but as a written document it is. Even Scotland Yard say they've no prospect of such a deal with anyone else, and every other TV station says they would never come to such an agreement. So who will be next to bully a self-denying ordinance from the BBC?

An oil company? The Catholic Church?

*The Leveller* will try to be the first to find out. In the meanwhile, we are running here more extracts from the leaked minutes of the BBC's weekly News

and Current Affairs meetings, from which the police agreement was extracted.

Here we monitor the Corporation's attitude to the coverage of Northern Ireland . . . another "sensitive area", as the stupid row stirred up by Thatcher over the INLA interview has just shown. We show how the NCA people denied facilities to the Campaign Against Racism in the Media, and how they are concerned to ensure the National Front get their share of air time.



Director, News and Current Affairs (DNCA) Dick Francis

## who's who

Director General: Ian Trethowan, High tory, ex-political correspondent; Chief Assistant (CA to DG): Peter (Hardiman) Scott, likewise; Director, News and Current Affairs (DNCA): Dick Francis, former Controller, Northern Ireland; Head of Political

Broadcasting, (HPB): Martin Wallace; Editor Radio News: Stan Taylor (now shunted to Scotland); Editor External

Services News (EXSN): Ken Brazier, vague, studious type; Deputy DNCA: Andrew Todd; Editor TV News: Alan Protheroe,

unspeakable; Head of Current Affairs Magazine Programmes (HCAMP): Alan Rogers; progressive in BBC terms; Political Editor: David Holmes; Head of Information Department (HID): Peter Woon, a BBC meteor.

# Blanket on the North

COVERAGE OF NORTHERN Ireland has always been a sensitive area for NCA: since the appointment of Dick Francis as Director of News and Current Affairs (he took up the post after a period as Controller in Northern Ireland), discussion of the subject has fallen noticeably.

Francis has ushered in a self-satisfied regime, noting on October 17 "that the date of the previous week's meeting had coincided almost exactly with the tenth anniversary of the start of the trouble in Northern Ireland, (and that he found it singularly appropriate that Northern Ireland matters, which had for so long dominated the thoughts of the meeting, could now have suitably been placed as the last item on the Agenda. He hoped that they would remain there." And indeed they did, as a glance at the chart shows. The last time they held a major discussion was last December, over *Nationwide*.

Francis felt at the October 17 meeting that the BBC had evolved a system of editorial discussion and decision — making that has "helped to reduce the temperature in Northern Ireland as far as the BBC was concerned". The system, which many critics say is censorious, is one of reference upwards in any difficult case. Apart from some concern over the possibility of the RUC using as evidence a video-recording of a speech by Provisional Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams, most of the controversies cover providing air-time for the Republican point of view.

The BBC is particularly keen to be seen as independent of the state forces in Northern Ireland yet neither should it be seen as offering a platform for terrorist views — an accusation levelled at the Corporation during a meeting on February 2

1978 with Conservative MPs. Reporting back to the February 7 NCA meeting DNCA said he "had detected a desire for reassurance about the treatment of such programmes (the Tories were particularly concerned about the *Tonight* film), and felt that the procedures adopted by the BBC, upward reference etc, the care given and the level at which such decisions are taken, had come as news to some of them".

The contrast between the treatment accorded to the state and to the rebels is well illustrated by two incidents at the turn of the year. The Minutes for the December 19 meeting record direct suppression of news at the request of the RUC: "DNCA said he had had a very useful note . . . from Richard Ayre (Dep N.E.N.I.) It concerned the case of Father Hugh Murphy, who had been kidnapped in Northern Ireland and held for a day, in June, against the safe return of Constable William Turbitt — who was later found dead after having been abducted by the IRA.

"A reliable report had been received on December 13 saying that a number of RUC men were being held for questioning about Father Murphy's abduction. The RUC asked the BBC to withhold publication of this report. It was decided to do so very temporarily, not just on account of the RUC request, but because of a lack of absolute certainty about the report. Twenty-four hours later, when other journalists and policemen had heard of the situation and the RUC had not given any precise reasons for their request to withhold the report, BBC Northern Ireland had gone ahead with the story"

Of course, the only source which could corroborate the story in the first place was the RUC itself and they didn't want it published. So it wasn't

until it was obvious that the press was going to go ahead with it anyway that the BBC decided to report it. The point was missed on DNCA who "noted the circumspect approach . . . in sensitive editorial areas and quoted (it) as an excellent example of the BBC's care and attention in such cases".

By contrast, the previous week's meeting had discussed a report by Bernard Clark on *Nationwide* about prisoners "on the blanket". The item had come in for almost universal criticism, in particular from the Minister of State (Mr. Concannon) in the House of Commons. The NCA meeting apparently agreed: "Robin Walsh (News Editor, Northern Ireland) gave *Nationwide* full marks for taking on this subject but he was afraid that the resulting film had left much to be desired". Walsh wanted to know why it had not mentioned the murder of the Deputy Governor of Long

Kesh; why were there four people putting the Provisionals point of view, and only Airey Neave against; why hadn't there been a representative of those Catholics who didn't support the "Blanket" campaign?

Walsh's remarks opened the floodgates of reaction from the meeting "John Gau (HCAP Tel) said that Bernard Clark had not revealed whether the prisoners had gone "on the blanket" voluntarily or had been ordered to do so. Bob Milne-Tyte (HTF WS) wished the reporter had recounted a few of the heinous crimes that these people had committed and Martin Wallace (HPB) added that to have done so would have countered a widespread impression that people were imprisoned more easily in Northern Ireland, under the 'Diplock Court' system, than was the case elsewhere".

On and on it raged, the long-

## Campaign for...

WHILE THE BBC relies on its famous "impartiality" to allow racists the air, with more or less hostility, there is another side to race questions the Corporation bosses are quite clear about. They don't like anti-racists.

The Campaign Against Racism in the Media (CARM) got permission to do an *Open Door* programme, the arrangements for which are that the BBC makes all facilities available for community or campaigning organisations to produce their own show.

To demonstrate its point that the media (the BBC among them) are racist, CARM asked for BBC news film. The NCA people discussed the request on November 21 last year.

"Members of the meeting expressed strongly divided views. Peter Scott (CA to DG) said such film would be used in a different context from its original placing . . . The makers of the programme should seek their material from other sources. Andrew Todd said . . . the media should be strong enough to accept that its reporting might be questioned . . . Alan Protheroe said the programme would be outside the BBC's editorial control and would thus violate the principle that the BBC did not hand over material for use to outsiders without restricting how it should be used . . . Why should an organisation which

might well accuse himself and his staff of racism be given privileged treatment?

And what redress would he have if such an attack were made? Stan Taylor strongly supported this view . . .

Andrew Todd said that material brought from outside the BBC might be less accurate, and he did not see the logic of refusing news film to any organisation once the BBC had decided that it should open its studios to access programmes. Alan Rogers (HCAMP) thought the BBC should be brave enough to stand by what it broadcast. David Holmes (Political Editor) shared this view. It would look strange if the BBC assisted *Open Door* programmes to pillory everyone else, but not itself.

But it was Protheroe, as Editor of TV News, who took the decision, and CARM got no news film, though it did get some current affairs footage. After the programme was shown, even without his film, Protheroe returned to the attack. The issue now was much more clear (6:3:79): CARM's attack on BBC racism.

DNCA said: "this programme had clearly been biased, but it would be wrong to dismiss all the points it had made. Alan Protheroe said (it) totally vindicated his decision. The insertion of comment, the removal of sequences from their context, and highly selected editing had all added



# ...racism in the media

est and most critical discussion on Ireland contained in the Minutes. And the viewpoint was universal: the report hadn't been nearly critical enough. DNCA summed it up by saying: "It had been right and relevant for "Nationwide" to seek to illumine these issues but it had fallen in to come old traps and the flaws in the item had eroded its credibility . . . CNI had protested in this instance at the lack of consultation with his own staff in the final stages. CNI was reluctant to insist on previews for professional reasons, but this reluctance should be respected and editors should allow a wide margin of safety in dealing with Northern

Ireland affairs. The Belfast staff could spot errors which others could not and they only wished to be helpful . . ." It is alarming that a perfectly straightforward report of the "blanket" campaign, rarely mentioned on the BBC anyway, should earn such a universally critical reception. But so effective is the 'reference upward' system as a filter for eliminating republican views from the screen that on the rare occasion the viewers are actually offered a report on what the other side thinks, universal outrage breaks out round the NCA table. It's not really 'censorship', just the BBC's view of the world.

*Nationwide* that NF policy was "to exterminate black people". In fact Hain had said it was "to exterminate the legal rights of black people". *Nationwide* editor Hugh Williams said that: "Had Hain said what was alleged he would almost certainly have been challenged, even though the remark had been made in the last seconds of a programme. DNCA said that complaints often arose in such circumstances. Time must be allowed for an interviewer to challenge or distance himself from dubious statements."

And the NCA people dismissed cursorily Peter Hain's letter, on behalf of the ANL, last September, asking the BBC not to transmit any Front election broadcasts, nor report its activities. DNCA said: "DG, with the Socialist Workers Party also in mind, had acknowledged that there was a special problem with small extremist groups of the left and right."

Again, when the Front complained about an interview with an anti-racist in the East End of London (17:10:78): "Peter Woon considered she should have been challenged to provide evidence for her allegations. DNCA said that programmes must not allow interviewees to get away with incorrect statements of fact on political matters . . . There was a duty to challenge provocative statements, especially where legal and emotional issues were concerned, and programmes must look to their ability to mount appropriate challenges.



Val Wilmer

up to a deliberately false picture. CARM was using the techniques of Dr. Goebbels . . . In his view, the whole concept of "access" programmes was a violation of the BBC's charter, which laid upon it responsibility for everything it broadcast. The BBC could not abrogate responsibility merely by making a disclaimer at the start of each *Open Door* programme."

The ANL, too, is poorly regarded by these people; it is, of course, "extremist", in the same bag as the Front itself. In January this year the NF solicitors complained that Peter Hain had said in

THE BBC'S backsliding on the historic policy of former DG Sir Hugh Greene, that people who speak in favour of racial intolerance are not entitled to the same treatment as those who condemn it (*Levellier 11*) has been continued under the Francis regime. In a discussion of coverage of the NF on February 28 last year DNCA felt that the policy: "Might now be oversimplified. In the new circumstances that obtained with the National Front, it was appropriate to re-examine the BBC's policy. . . It was important to cover the National Front."

George Fischer (Head of Radio Current Affairs) said there was a potential dichotomy between this policy and the requirements of the law (that is, election law). In the run-up to the election (24:4:79) "DNCA said there appeared to be misconceptions over the NF's Party Election broadcasts — that the criteria by which their suitability would be judged depended more on the BBC's undertakings (in the old policy) that the limitations defined by the Race Relations Acts. George Fischer made a point the DNCA acknowledged — that it might be highly revealing to report fully what the National Front was saying."

We've heard that one before, George. Even the more liberal NCA people can see through it: "Desmond Wilcox (HGFTel) said all the Front stood for was so abhorrent that it was not entitled to the protection of the BBC in the same way as it had obtained the protection of the police. . . He was convinced that the principle of giving it enough rope to hang itself had not worked."

Right on Desmond. And Andrew Todd: "was concerned that by broadcasting the Front's own suggestion that it had become the third force in British politics the BBC was giving it some kind of imprimatur."

But the reactionaries held sway: "CA to DG did not think the BBC should discriminate against the Front except in so far as the Front was racistist, and therefore acting against the law." Which is, of course, nonsense. For Peter Scott's, and anyone else's information who chooses not to recognise the fact, racism is not illegal — only certain types of racist propaganda, and even this the courts will not uphold. "Peter Woon" felt that discrimination by the

BBC against the National Front was the beginning of a slippery slope. Who would come next? The Communist Party? Extreme Socialists?"

On April 3 this year DNCA spelt it out further: "As regards broadcasting other than Party Election Broadcasts, the National Front has exactly the same rights as other minority parties within the law. The position was regulated by the Representation of the People Act, by normal considerations of balance and BBC policy for the coverage of radical issues. It would be unreasonable to exclude the National Front altogether but no fringe party could expect parity with the major ones."

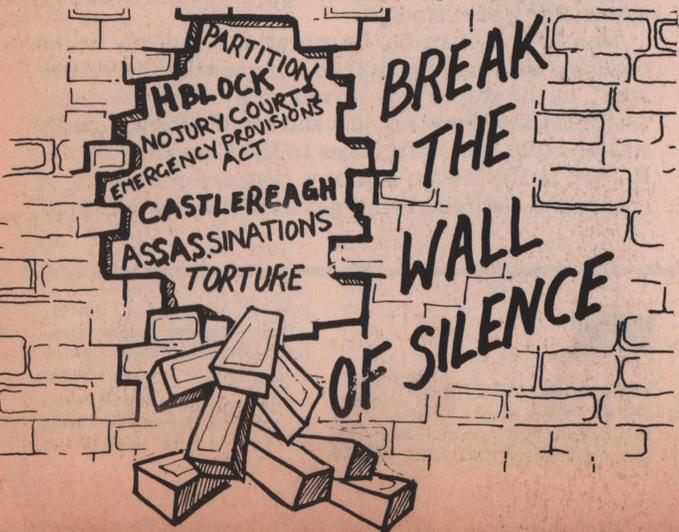
He justified this by saying he thought: "the National Front would be careful not to develop a racist line during the campaign. They would probably adopt an entirely reasonable attitude to this subject."

How *naif* can you get? That meeting also rejected the suggestion from the NUJ that its members should be allowed a conscientious objection to working on Front broadcasts.

As far as party broadcasts are concerned, the meeting of May 1 this year was told the BBC wanted the system changed, particularly to stop minority parties getting them, though CA to DG (Peter Scott): "foresaw problems in devising a way of affording a platform to "harmless" parties like the Ecology Party, while excluding the purely frivolous or extreme."

On April 4 last year there was a wrist-slap for Radio Solent; a National Front caller to a Solent phone-in had been cut off, it appeared. DNCA said it was important "not to censor the proper expression of opinion. Broadly speaking it would be wrong to shut off a caller simply because he was a member of the National Front."

It is very big of the BBC to treat the NF with such consideration. The compliment is not returned. In March last year John Tyndall phoned to complain about the BBC reporting an anti-NF speech by David Steel. When told he could not have a right of reply to Steel's speech, "Tyndall had become vehement, and had said that when the National Front were in a position to control the media, "you people will be the first to squeal and yelp."



The viewing public has only a subliminal knowledge of Balance; in the last ten years his name has flitted through at the end of the credits on a number of documentaries, talk-shows, and current-affairs specials — in modest capital letters. Balance prefers such discreet publicity, which attracts only the attention of his peers in the media.

If he only had skills with the image or the word, he no longer has the inclination to display his talent for public scrutiny. His attitudes and perceptions are now expressed only in private words and confidential memos, secure from assault, never put to the test, inside the whale.

As a servant of the corporation, hopeful of preferment, he has a clear view of his purpose: he must provide 'good' television which attracts an audience without provoking the wrath of the Independent Broadcasting Authority which administers the Television Act through which the Establishment governs the conduct of programme-makers within ITV.

Balance is disconcerted. He has just watched the last of a trilogy of programmes about South America. *The Children of the Miracle* is a 27 minute report from the Brazilian city of Sao Paulo which examines the plight of the impoverished mass of the people who live in the biggest richest city on the continent.

With the distinguished exception of a few of its more sceptical observers the Western World has been unstinting in praise of the Brazilian 'miracle' which in the last fifteen years has propelled the nation's economy into capitalism's first division where its power will soon rival that of West Germany. In short, Brazil matters.

In *The Children of the Miracle* we sought to examine the price which this industrial revolution has exacted from those whose labour made it possible. We virtually ignored the barbarous history: the dictatorship, with its repressions, tortures and murders. Instead our point of departure was the rate of infant mortality, which is now higher (at around 80 per 1,000 higher in some parts of the city) than it was when the 'miracle' was conceived (at 60 per 1000). We translated this startling indicator of social progress into film via the emergency ward of a children's hospital, where the staff asserted vehemently (but not to the camera — fearing reprisal) that the root cause of the rise in the rate of infant mortality is

## On being 'balanced' about starvation

MR BLAND BALANCE has no identity. He is a corporate man who inhabits the corridors of power within an ITV company which is dedicated to the renewal of its 'licence to print money' next year. Jonathan Dimpleby, formerly a reporter with Thames TV, recently tangled with Bland Balance over three films made in Latin America



Brazilian photographer Masda Peres captures one of Brazil's sick children.

poverty. The condition of the children in their care — emaciated and wizened by malnutrition and disease — derived, so they explained, directly from the economic 'miracle', which, they whispered, should more properly be described as a 'human disaster'.

Another statistic — based on government figures and not challenged by any authority — demonstrates that six out of ten citizens of Sao Paulo (the figure for the rest of Brazil is higher) live at least fifty per cent below the poverty line as defined by the Brazilian constitution. In practice this means that some 8 million people in Sao Paulo have to choose between a decent roof over their head and an adequate diet. Moreover, while the 'miracle' has flourished their purchasing power has steadily fallen.

Our film related the misery thus inflicted upon the children of the miracle to the spectacular growth of the city, asserting — by inference but without equivocation — that the extreme wealth of the few is one side of a coin upon the other side of which is indelibly printed the extreme poverty of the many. So much for the 'miracle'.

Balance is disturbed — but not like those who were

moved, shocked and distressed by the predicament of the people of Sao Paulo; who phoned and wrote to express their outrage or offer help or demand solutions, thereby exposing the hollow claim of the complacent that the British are by nature selfish and apathetic. Nor is Balance upset by the ratings which underlined the same point — the series attracted a bigger audience each week than the comedy show which preceded it on the same channel.

Balance's anxiety is of a different order. He is no fool: he does not challenge the statistics or the facts or even the analysis. He can only frame his doubts in the form of questions. Where were the experts? Why no voice from the middle classes (a letter in the *Observer* from the Brazilian Ambassador has defended the 'miracle' on the grounds that the middle class is 'burgeoning')? Why no account of the social services? Why no honourable defence of the system?

We answer that in 27 minutes such elaboration is impossible; that in a longer film we would have incorporated such elements and more; that fully examined they would form not contrary evidence but additional pieces in a jigsaw that time alone

had forbidden us to fit into place; that neither our argument nor our conclusion would have altered.

Balance is silent but no less unhappy. The source of his distress is not evident. *The Children of the Miracle* has broken an unstated rule. In the process it may have alighted upon a truth, even an important truth, but television executives are not hired to pre-occupy themselves with such niceties. Balance is concerned with means not ends, with balance not truth. And, within the confines imposed by his imagination upon the concept, he finds *The Children of the Miracle* 'unbalanced'. Why?

Because it distinguishes clearly between the oppressor and the oppressed; because it gives closer attention and greater sympathy to the plight of the latter who form the great majority of the population; because it seems to side with those who suffer at the hands of the status quo rather than with those who seek to sustain it; and, because it silently asserts that morality — a notion which Balance finds professionally uncongenial if not dangerous — enjoins civilised humanity to cry out against such a state of affairs.

A few days after the last programme, the first leader in the *Guardian* observed the series had dramatically underlined the fact that 'Latin America is still a continent of unforgivable contrasts, a place where there is virtually everything to be said in defence of the struggling mass of the people and almost nothing to be said in favour of the tiny oligarchies, topped by military potentates, that remain almost everywhere in control — supported by a lifeline to the outside world. The grey areas of doubt are few and far between.'

Balance remains unmoved. It is in the grey areas where he is at home, where judgement can be postponed, where thought implies no action, where the conscience can remain unruffled, the supine mind at rest. And he wishes that the rest of us would remain there with him.

As I said Balance is a mythical figure, more a frame of mind than person, a collective psyche which is everywhere and everywhere more powerful. And since he controls the slots, distributes the money, and selects the broadcasters, he can impose his will by stealth, never stating his purpose. By default if not design, he is committed to the status quo, an instrument of the Establishment, an enemy of free thought and free expression. And, for the moment, he is winning.

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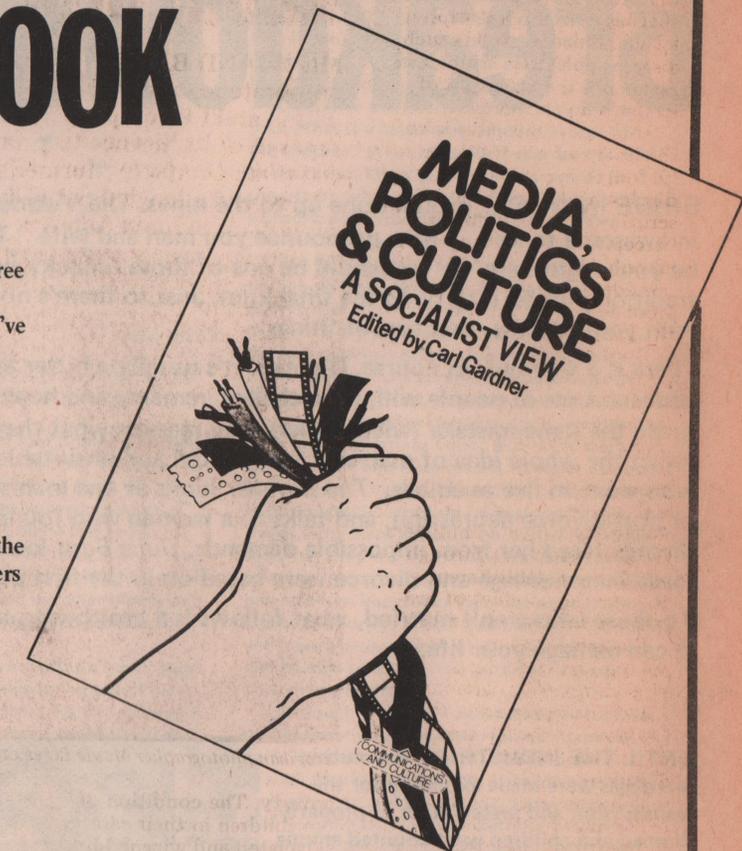
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## QUIZ.....

- 1) On what date last year did the police break up a National Abortion Campaign disco at Waterloo Action Centre? (21)
- 2) Who wrote "while the solidarity movement itself cannot mediate between Vietnam and Kampuchea and Vietnam and China, we should support initiatives to do so on the part of those who might, and our own embarrassment at the conflicts should be made clear". (20)
- 3) What was the total defence bill for 1977 according to Defence Estimates? (18)
- 4) Who said "When I stroke my eyebrow it means I love you"? (27)
- 5) What's Compendium's phone number? (21)
- 6) Who, briefly, is Sidney Burnett-Alleyne? (23)
- 7) How many States of Emergency did Mr Heath call between 1970 and 1974? (24)
- 8) Who wrote a collection of short stories published in 1978 and entitled *Between the Sheets*? (28)
- 9) On what grounds might a prisoner "be temporarily released from mechanical restraint"? (21)
- 10) Who ran away "with only a light sweater and 2p in my pocket"? (23)
- 11) What magazine was "like a modest *Playboy* without the fleshy bits"? (17)
- 12) Who is the undesirable journalist"? (19)
- 13) Who has "instant access to a handy armoury of weapons: .38 Model 10 Smith and Wesson revolvers (apparently to be replaced soon by Colt 45s), 7.62mm Lee-Enfield High Velocity rifles, Hale .22 high-velocity sniper rifles, Viking single-action shotguns and Webley & Scott "anti-riot" 1.5 inch CS gas guns"? (22)
- 14) When was the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist Leninist) founded? (20)
- 15) Who thinks "It is in the interests of every man that women should be more afraid"? (25)
- 16) Whose civilian puppet Pereda Asbun took over after the July 9 elections? (18)
- 17) Which prominent Conservative MP hosted a meeting at the House of Commons for mercenary recruiter John Banks (17)
- 18) How many redundancies were the Triumph Motorcycle workers' co-op forced to accept recently? (28)
- 19) Who wrote: "So we had sex, or at least I lay and allowed him to fuck me and thought as his prick shot in and he kissed my neck, back and shoulders, that it was a most unappetising position for an internationally known playwright to be in."? (21)
- 20) Who had a dog called Pigfucker? (20)



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- Issue Nine: Corruption in the Gulf Czech rock/Claimants.
- Issue Twelve: Nukes/Pupil power Heroin trade/Paedophilia.
- Issue Thirteen: Poly Styrene Scargill on nukes/FO Ministry of Truth.
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- Issue Sixteen: DJs/Macho football Rock Against Racism/Ireland and the left.
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- Issue Twenty: China/Films/ANL
- Issue Twenty-one: Prisons Palestinians/Mutinies.
- Issue Twenty-two: Gays Monetarism/EPThompson Interview.
- Issue Twenty-three: The Family Linton Kwezi Johnson Mozambique.
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- Issue Twenty-five: Rape/Squatting Agee/Goa/Crass.
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# Divorce: Breakdown, breakup

**BRIDE IN WHITE, groom done up to the nines. The Vicar pronounces in awesome tones: I now pronounce you man and wife. This may be your nightmare. Or you could be one of those unlucky people whom tradition pushed into tying the final knot. Just so there's no trouble with your parents, that sort of thing.**

**There is a way out, of course. Divorce. It's usually a bitter and damaging process. Lots of people will, nevertheless, remarry and hope they haven't made the same mistake twice. Others may reassess what they want and reject the whole idea of marriage as outdated and unsuitable for lovers who want to live as equals. *The Leveller* looks at one man's description of post-divorce depression, and talks to a woman who found that divorce freed her from impossible demands. *Julia Bard* looks at the ideas that marriage and divorce were based on in the first place.**

**To those who aren't married, what follows is a health warning. Don't. It can damage your life.**

**UNTIL THE INDUSTRIAL Revolution marriages were made explicitly for the transmission and preservation of property. Women and children were counted among the assets of the family and the family "belonged" to the community. If the terms were not right in the first place, the marriage generally didn't happen, which is what Romeo and Juliet is really about. *Julia Bard* traces changes in society's attitude to divorce.**

Apart from the occasional high drama, this worked for centuries. The first cracks in the edifice appeared with the emergence of the bourgeoisie, who were moneyed but not landed. They had acquired their wealth within the space of a lifetime and as a result had entirely new ideas about freedom and individual happiness. This new individualism came into direct conflict with the traditional role of the family. It wasn't until 1857 and the establishment of the first divorce court that the lumbering process of legislation took its first step towards bringing the law on marriage and divorce into line with the needs of the new industrial society.

The role of the family had changed imperceptibly. Children were now educated to be an industrial workforce, and were assets of the state rather than the family. But although the new law reinforced the changing place of the family in society, the structure appeared to remain the same. Women, classified together with children and lunatics, still gave up all their worldly goods to their husbands, which virtually ruled out any possibility of their reverting to single status. Apart from that, although a man could divorce a woman on the grounds of her adultery (and claim damages from her seducer!), there was only one ground on which a woman could get rid of her husband — adultery combined with "incest, bigamy, rape or some other beastliness"!



The 1882 Married Women's Property Act allowed a wife to retain her own possessions, but it wasn't until 1923 that a woman could petition for divorce on the grounds of a husband's adultery. The First World War had created massive and unforeseen changes, and divorce figures rose rapidly in the 1920s, encouraged by a limited form of legal aid introduced in 1925. In 1937 after the publication of A.P. Herbert's *Holy Deadlock*, the law finally began to catch up with reality. Only then were desertion, cruelty and incurable insanity introduced as grounds for divorce.

Under capitalism, marriage is essentially a property contract much as it has always been. But it's only in the last 100 years or so that the contract has been suffused with "Mr Right" romanticism. It is seen as an awe-inspiring inevitability shrouded in a rosy, romantic glow — for a while. "And they lived happily ever after" usually lasts between three and nine years — the period during which most divorces occur.

Only then, when they are squabbling over custody, access and maintenance do most people start to consider their proprietary rights, when they're no longer communicating about the most fundamental aspects of their lives. And then they find that they are bound by remnants of ancient laws, customs and social mores. So although a husband and wife are no longer "one person in law", they usually see themselves as a single unit both socially and financially. And that can take some unravelling when the time comes.

But it wasn't until as recently as 1971 that it was officially recognised that a marriage could irretrievably break down. A couple could live together for a number of years and then find that they couldn't stand the sight of one another. Of course everyone but the legislators had known for years that this was what usually happened, and there must have been thousands of headwaiters who had received large tips for taking breakfasts in bed to fictional adulterous lovers and then given evidence in court. Even now, with our relatively humane divorce laws, escaping from a marriage which has become torture for both parties can be a gruelling process. In the first place it can take years. But the real problem is that most people marry without having any idea of the kind of contract they are making. Nor do they want any idea. And if things don't turn out as they'd imagined, they'll find that in spite of divorce procedure appearing to be simpler, the problems of property and children remain.

The ex-wife (who is usually awarded custody of the children) discovers that with severely limited child-care facilities and only low-paid work open to her, it is very hard for her to support herself, let alone her children, so she is awarded maintenance. Her ex-husband realises with a shock that when he blithely repeated the words "with all my worldly goods I thee endow . . . till death do us part", like any other contract, he is bound to keep this one. And as with any other area of the law "ignorance is no defence" and they really should have thought of all that before they married.

But they didn't, and they won't. Because it's very hard to be single, especially if you're a parent or want to be one. In a society where the architecture, tax system, wage structure and child-care facilities are all geared to a 2+2 family, it's so hard that most people don't consider it an option. And all the experiments in alternative life-styles in the world won't change that, because it can only be in a society where mutual and communal responsibilities are recognised that our relationships are no longer tethered to the Dark Ages.

**"THE ONLY EVIL of divorce is the prior evil of marriage," David Cooper wrote in *The Death of the Family* (1971): it seems a standard view of socialists actively involved in personal politics. But that is not the attitude of most people. Around 85% of women and men over the age of 25 are married. Although divorce is increasing so is re-marriage — in less than 25% of divorces do both partners remain unmarried after five years. *Robert Smith* tells what it's like to get divorced.**

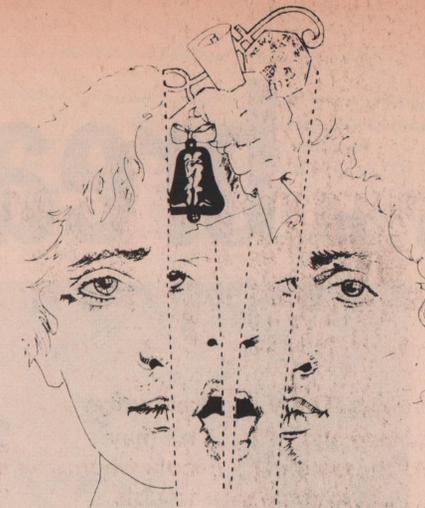
The belief that marriage is a life-long bond and the nuclear family the natural living unit does not die with just a few attacks from radical writers. Most of us want a close, stable, major relationship with one person (at a time) and, given the way things work, whether we are socialists or not most of us will finish up getting married. Usually those of us who don't believe in monogamous relationships or the nuclear family get married because it is convenient. We want to get a house, we need to get a ticket paid abroad or a residence permit or maybe we are going to have children and cannot face all the pressures from relatives and others about illegitimacy.

So we go through the little charade at a registry office or even a church, synagogue or wherever. We might even enjoy it and, if we do it properly, we get all kinds of presents. But of course we are not going to let it make any difference to our free and equal relationship.

Slowly the pressures build up and most of the time we are unaware of them. The pressures not only come from outside, from relatives, friends, banks, employers, social security offices and the Inland Revenue. They also come from inside ourselves and we are caught more deeply in a marriage than we want to admit. When finally a divorce court prises open a deadlock between us, we find not only a sense of relief but also one of despair and loss. The women's movement has quite rightly focussed attention on the inequality of women in society and how in marriage they are often specifically oppressed by particular men. Without trying to draw attention away from that I want to write about some of the things men experience in the process of getting divorced and how they reflect assumptions made about men and their roles in society.

One of the first things you feel in breaking up with someone is that you change part of who you are. In any relationship your personal identity is shifted and the longer you have been living with someone the more the shift. You have built up a strange balance of expectations and dependencies. When it finally became clear that my wife and I were splitting, I became very depressed about having to change everything. I had been walking along in one direction for so long, suddenly there was a huge gulf and I couldn't even see the other side. I felt that I might drown and at times even wanted to before I got anywhere.

The person I would have talked to before when things went wrong I couldn't talk to now. When you are really down most people don't want to know and anyhow you have lost your confidence in approaching strangers. Many of your friends have been living as couples and they often prefer you to keep out of the way — you represent a challenge to their relationship because you make them look at themselves. Outside the fairly narrow circle of people who don't accept the necessity of marriage, you are often seen as a failure and this affects the way you see yourself. Luckily I had some good friends. The men in particular were the most supportive; women often demanded a strength I did not have just then. I also had a job which



UNA RILEY

provided a framework that I could not afford to tear apart and I found the time again for more political activity.

Another big problem was finding somewhere to live. Again I was lucky to have friends who could help. It was summer and there were people coming and going so it was always possible to find a bed. Later I had to try to find a place of my own. The local council was not interested, even though I worked for them and I knew of empty flats in tower blocks and other places, where parents with kids don't want to live.

As I was already paying out on a mortgage for the house I used to live in I couldn't get a mortgage on a new place. I wanted to have a two-bedroomed flat so that I could have the two children to stay with me from time to time. In the end I was forced into renting a room in someone else's house and even this had to be done through friends rather than on the open market. Most people who leave their partners have a lot of difficulty finding anywhere decent to live partly because of the cost of rented accommodation.

The partner who stays also has difficulties because of the high level of mortgage repayments for a single person. Even though there is often more room than they need, building societies place restrictions on sharing it with someone unless you remarry.

Most families live at the limit of their joint incomes and after a house has been bought or rented, food and clothing paid for there is very little left for saving. When I split up I found that by the time I had paid towards the maintenance of the children and my increased costs caused by living and eating largely on my own I had little money left. I found it very difficult to do much cooking just for myself so I tended to eat out in cafes and canteens fairly regularly. I suppose I also went out much more than I had in the past since I could not face staying in my room and just working.

I was much better off than most men. My wife was working and the children were old enough to go to school so they did not have to rely on me totally. But the family is very much the basic economic unit in our society and if you break it up someone has to pay for the consequences. A lot of attention has been drawn to the difficulties that are faced by women trying to bring up their children on payments at or below subsistence levels. They also have all their money stopped if they either try to work (assuming they can find a nursery or creche nearby) or they start to live with someone.

What is often forgotten is that over 2,500 men are put into prison each year for failure

to pay maintenance and they stay on average between six and eight weeks. This is the largest category of non-criminal prisoners in detention and it seems unlikely that much money is finally extracted from this group of men.

If child benefits were at a more realistic level and divorced and separated women did not have to rely directly on the ex-husband's willingness or ability to pay some of these problems would be resolved. I certainly know that I would feel very reluctant to pay maintenance directly for my ex-wife although I am happy to pay for my children.

Of course the issue is seldom as simple as that. What is a reasonable amount to pay for the children? What happens if you are not able to see the children as often as you want? Or if the person with the children starts living with someone else (especially if they have more money than you)?

The last and most important problem related to divorce is the children. As I had nearly always been closely involved in the care of our children I found it very difficult to readjust to the lack of direct and constant contact with them. I missed and still miss being around in the morning when they get up, and at night when they are going to bed. I don't like being the Father Christmas figure that takes them out twice a week and does special things with them. But as I don't have a place where I can have them to stay I cannot do normal day-to-day things with them although occasionally I make sure that they see me doing some cooking and cleaning. I also try to let them see me at work and let them know that I am not some magic source of money. I hope that after a while I will have a proper place of my own so that they will be able to spend time with me in a more normal atmosphere.

Although I wanted to challenge my ex-wife on the question of custody, care and control, I was aware that in court it would not be enough for me to show that I could adequately look after the children. I would have to prove that it would be positively harmful for the children to remain with her. Admittedly the courts normally rubber stamp the agreements made between couples but I cannot believe that only as few as 10% of men want to have care and control of their children.

Nursery facilities, wages, hours of work and the like all have their effect but possibly the strongest factor pushing men to stay in the classic bread-winner role is the kind of attitude expressed by Mr. Justice Payne, a divorce court judge: "a man ought not to give up work and turn himself into a mother figure or a nanny and devote himself to bringing up a little girl at the expense of the State. His brain should be used in work, not in turning himself into a mother, which is not primarily his job."

Until this judgment it did seem that the law was seldom being used in such a crudely traditional form in divorce courts. But the idea of men as the major bread-winners with women as subsidiary workers in the home is still very strong. When combined with incest taboos and sharply separate sex roles it is not surprising that it will take some time before men feel that they can take up an equal share of the work involved in child care.

Questions of marriage and divorce might seem irrelevant to younger socialists who have not seriously thought about having children and finding some reasonably stable base from which to live and work. Many of us after having tried to live in more communal situations found it difficult to sustain the effort and slipped back into the more clearly stereotyped families. Divorce might be seen as a game by those who are rich, young and mobile but for most people it is not a simple liberating experience. It is something that hooks out the deepest personal, economic and social problems in our lives. It cannot be brushed aside with easy dogmatism.

# Divorce:

# ... breakout!

**A SOCIALIST MARRIAGE** between two politically-aware, active and sympathetic people. It should have worked, but it didn't. The great stumbling block was that old universal, sex. Carol talked to *The Leveller* about her divorce: we started by asking what had originally attracted her to her former husband...

His sense of commitment, his appearance of strength. He seemed a decisive person who was independent of the trappings of family. I had always been bound to my family in a negative way — I wanted to be free of them but couldn't. He appeared to have got over that hangup.

Looking back one of the interesting things about our relationship was I was very involved with my job. I worked till four, came back — he was writing for some socialist periodical or organising demonstrations, very immediate day-to-day political involvement in socialist issues. I came home, he would cook or I would cook (he cooked much better than I did). I would prepare for my next day at school or get involved in what was happening in a large group of political people. He was very much one of the leaders.

My world of work, which was very important to me, was totally separate from our world — and our world was his world. I justified my lack of political analysis on the grounds that I was using my political commitment in a practical situation with the kids I was working with.

I saw him at one stage in his life when he was very strong. I began to see him as less decisive, less committed when we were both removed from that environment and into a different environment and the nuclear family. We no longer had a base group. It was within this large group that we functioned very well together.

*Why did you decide to split?*

Because I went off him sexually and he couldn't accept it. He was continually making sexual demands on me and it got to the point where I couldn't stand it. When you live with someone who is constantly making you aware of their need for you physically you can't turn round and say "no" all the time because you live side-by-side.

You can say "Why didn't you leave", and I suppose the answer is I did not feel in a position to be able to do so. No job, young children. I didn't feel able to leave under those circumstances.

*While you were in a marriage in which a physical relationship was being imposed on you against your will, were you aware at that time of feminist attacks on the traditional view of male sexuality?*

We discussed it. And applied it directly to your case. The myth of overbearing male need...

No. We discussed the role of men and women in a relationship — the basic household things. I don't think we discussed sexuality in those terms. That's partly the problem.

He wasn't a traditional man in that he wanted me to take the initiative, which I found very difficult. He did want to experiment sexually.



He wanted me to feel free to express myself physically with him and I found it very difficult. *Had you ever taken the initiative and experimented and so on?*

The furthest I used to get was to suggest that we had sex. I was just so embarrassed about my body. He tried to help me not to feel ashamed of nakedness.

*Where did he go wrong? In the beginning it seems he was genuinely trying to help you liberate yourself and your body.*

Yes. The hangup was that I attempted to meet that liberation because I felt I ought to, not because I enjoyed it.

*Did you feel deep down that he should have known the difference?*

No. I don't think he should be held responsible for me not being able to articulate my hangups. I suppose I feel that because my body was so rigid he should have known I didn't want it.

*That's it. I mean underneath that's what women feel.*

I should have said that I didn't like cunnilingus. At times I did say I didn't like it. Why didn't I like it? Because I think of my mother when he's doing it. Isn't it awful? (Peals of laughter).

*Go on. At that time you felt it was your fault and you felt guilty. But there was a time later...*

When things became physically unpleasant. It was very obvious. I mean I shrieked with pain and I said, "No, it's not an orgasm, it fucking hurts". He was very concerned at that point and would come more quickly.

*God — is that quite literally what happened?*

Sometimes he would stop. Sometimes he would be more gentle, but come.

*The whole point being that for him coming was a very necessary thing?*

And in the end his coming was a very necessary thing for me because it meant he was off my back. Once he came he was gone. *It sounds amazing doesn't it? I mean even now it sounds amazing. How...?*

I don't understand how. Part of the reason why I was initially reluctant to talk about it all was because I feel I don't understand why I put up with it and perhaps the reasons were so base, material, you know. Where do I go? I don't think I articulated those things. There is no way out and therefore I must stay. But I think that's what I felt.

I have actually been labelled by my ex-husband and his erstwhile friends as frigid... two children, miscarriages, normal female reaction — you should see an analyst. *They've actually said that?*

Oh yes. It's my hangup — my problem.

*What do these people's girlfriends and wives say?*

I don't know (laughter). I suspect they change with monotonous regularity. *Have you ever talked to people who've had similar experiences?*

My sister. Except that she had never had an understanding of what physical relationships were all about, whereas I had enjoyed sex. *Was it amazing to discover you had similar experiences?*

Yes. But it made me very depressed because I don't want to hate men. Other women I've

talked to, they may not have had exactly similar experiences to me. But the violence is there, for many women in one way or another. *Neither of you hate men.*

No, but a number of women I've spoken to don't trust men. The next realisation I made was that although society has put pressure on men and women to expect certain things, you've got to allow yourself at some point to stop finding excuses and say: "OK, you had male pressures, I had female pressures, but this is how I feel, this is what I like."

The people I seem to be able to talk to directly are women. You do not need to explain to a woman what you're getting at, whereas you know that language is a tool of mystification between men and women. Long turgid conversations that lead nowhere. *Do you think you might some day find yourself in a nuclear family, getting married?*

NO NO NO — perhaps being able to commit myself to one human being.

*To share the responsibility of the kids with?*

No, not that. *Just a relationship, a deep, lasting relationship with someone else?*

That's the thing I have to get myself over — not to expect it or want it.

*Really? You've got to cure yourself of wanting that kind of relationship?*

I think so. I feel guilty for wanting it.

*But what do you think you ought to want?*

I'm very confused about what I want because I'm riddled with guilt about what I want.

For instance I was out last night and I really had to stop myself from looking at men and thinking: "would he be nice." I don't mean nice in bed, but looking for a nice face, looking for a kind face.

And then going away — on your own because you don't want to make mistakes — walking down the road, meeting a group of blokes: "Are you on your own dear, do you want some company darlin'?" And part of you is feeling at that moment very lonely anyway and you think "Fuck off, no way do I want that sort of fucking company." What I wanted was eye contact. Why does it have to be a man?

*So you feel guilty about wanting a man?*

Yes.

*What's positive in your situation at the moment?*

The first positive thing is being able to have a bath with the door open and not have somebody looking with lust in their eyes. To be able to be naked in my head and my body. To be myself. To look out of the window. To be able to walk along the street and smile at the leaves. To like the world.

I like my job. I love the kids. I really like my day-to-day existence. I don't think any of the pressures in my life at the moment are anything that people in a nuclear family don't feel. You don't have to — isn't it awful — you don't have to consult somebody. You can say, "I haven't paid this bill — wait for the Red Form or not wait for the Red Form. It's my decision. It's very very meaningful to me that I am on my own, that I did not divorce to be with another man.

Before I made the decision to split I was so negative about anybody that looked happy. I saw a couple on the tube holding hands and I'd think "Oh, you wait till he gets you up the spout". My reaction was one of vehement dislike. I did not enjoy seeing other people happy together and now I do.

I stopped short and thought, "Fucking hell, kid, what are you doing? What's happened to you? You don't like anybody. You don't like what you're seeing in the world because what you're seeing is not a reflection of your life. You'd better do something before you're a sour, hardened, dried-up old cow."

*Negatives? None?*

There are times when I get low. But the number of times when I get low because I'm not with another man is very limited.

*What about fear of sexual contact — fear of men?*

Society encourages you to think in terms of another man and I'm not immune to the pressures. I've said already that I'm guilty about it. But then I think, well, you've got to start talking to people and letting them touch you. The new people I meet are all women. *Nearly every woman I know, or I've met recently, of our age feels the same. They*

*enjoy women's company better than men's.*

I enjoy the platonic company of men and I enjoy being with other women's men because there's no way they're after you. *Or gay men?*

Yes. *I don't mind being with men who might be after me as long as I can keep them at arm's length. And the thing is, the way we're living we can. Isn't that good?*

We can. But I've not got to that stage yet. I'm too wary.



GETTING A DIVORCE can be relatively easy and using the Special Procedure the basic cost is only £20. The only problem is that for this to work you have to agree with your spouse on the grounds for the divorce, maintenance and custody of any children you might have. If there is any way that you can avoid using lawyers, do - unless you have a lot of money or property and are determined to defend it. Using solicitors will cost you at least £100 in the simplest cases, with no upper limit for more complex cases. The least traumatic way of going about it is to separate for two years but if you need to do it faster either for emotional or practical reasons the simplest way is for one person, the respondent, to write a confession admitting adultery (it is not even necessary to name the co-respondent, provided you give some details of when and where adultery took place). Trying to prove unreasonable behaviour usually leads to a lot of infighting. There are at least three relatively short and simple guides to getting divorce:

*Women's Rights* - Anna Coote and Tess Gill. Penguin.

While this is a good clear account it is not really detailed enough to act as a guide in practice. *On Getting Divorced* - Consumer Association. A useable handbook - simple enough to follow but detailed enough to use especially in an undefended divorce.

*Undefended Divorce* - Divorce Registry, Somerset House, The Strand, London WC2. The official explanation of how to do it. Available free from the above address. It is also worth remembering that the clerks at any of the divorce courts, where you have to file your petition, are very helpful about how to fill in the forms. This guide finishes with the happy words: "The marriage is now finally dissolved, both partners are free to remarry."

Custody of children and access for the parent who does not get custody is often very difficult to agree about but it is very important to try and sort it out personally rather than taking it to court. The judge in custody cases usually rubber stamps arrangements that are already sorted out but he/she might decide to impose totally prejudiced and moralistic settlements (eg in the case of a gay parent or a man who wants custody). The following organisations might be able to help and provide support: *Gingerbread*: 2nd Floor, 35 Wellington Street, London WC2 *One-Parent Families*, 225 Kentish Town Road, London NW5 *Families need Fathers*: c/o Sheila Burns, 97c Shakespeare Walk, N16





Modern sport is big business with increasing political importance. Paul Tickell looks at a new book on the subject. Pictures: Eamon McCabe

*Sport — A Prison of Measured Time: Jean-Marie Brohm (Ink Links paperback £2.95)*

MODERN SPORT was born with the 1896 Olympics in Athens. Not that it was the focal point of the event which had been organised to coincide with a vast trades exhibition, Olympic Sport — pitching its camp wherever there was something resembling a World Trade Fair — remained a secondary spectacle, until the capitalist leisure and tourist industry had grown large enough to merit a showcase of their own. This section of the economy could never have reached such a status without the boom periods and imperialist gains, which permitted the working-class to become leisure consumers.

Sport now is big business and the star names of the sporting calendar, from James Hunt to Muhammad Ali, advertise its products. It's not just a case of a particular commodity bathing in the glory that reflects from a sportsman's name. Kevin Keegan, for example, represents a certain sort of consumer ideal — the clean-

cut family man who can still relate to the 'lads'.

The market for sports goods hasn't excluded other industries from having a financial interest in sport: Benson & Hedges and Gillette sponsor cricket competitions and Watneys football. Events on the scale of the World Cup and the Olympics provided great impetus for the construction industries and for regional economic development. Thus, the large expenditure on the '72 Olympics in Munich was a sure way of increasing big local, as well as multi-national, business interests. It seems to matter little that these interests clash with what is most beneficial for the mass of people in a given area. At the moment a debate already rages about the Tory GLC's plans for the '88 Olympics in London. Is that proposed motorway through South London really necessary?

Sport's financial importance is allied to its political and ideological function. Big sporting occasions — complete with militaristic displays, institutionalised violence in the sports themselves, not to mention the pomp surrounding the visits of

political dignitaries — are all part of both the apeing and legitimisation of state power. Such occasions are also exercises in diplomacy: if they go off smoothly, then all must be well with the host country. The success of the '78 World Cup capped a great piece of mass-media PR work by Argentina's fascist junta. The model for all such exercises was the '36 Olympics in Nazi Germany, documented in that cinematic hymn to the body beautiful, *Triumph Of The Will*.

Riefenstahl's lingering camera in the film is unwitting illustration of the main ideological function of sport — the fetishistic yet reductive way in which the body is regarded. Freud observed how sport diverted the attention of children and adolescents from the sexual nature of their bodies; there's nothing like physical exertion and a cold shower for channelling the libido — or so thought the Victorians. Their thinking lives on: school children and students have to prove their competitive worth on the sports field. It's the bodily equivalent of academic achievement and an essential part of that conservative personality — the good all-rounder. Sport really comes into its own at the amateur (amateurism is a quaint myth) and professional levels. Here the body is even more reified and 'reduced' than it is by educational institutions. It becomes like a machine, only understandable

in technical terms. This is most evident in the arduous training sessions which are the ground work for competing at the top levels.

The tyranny of the stop watch and the repetitiousness of various exercises take on the monotonous and fatiguing quality of work on a factory assembly line; the difference is that the sporting life is much more lucrative than the factory one and hence is looked on as a means of escape by certain individuals from the working-class.

Athletics and swimming are the spheres which most obviously resemble the assembly line. The body, like the workforce, exists for nothing but the progressive maximisation of output although the aim is the improved production of records and statistics rather than commodities. Like a piece of advanced machine technology the body in training is quantified, its every movement and reflex measured.

This obsession with the measurability of the physical parallels those behaviouristic notions about sexuality which relegate the sex act to no more than a higher form of muscular activity and stress technical competence rather than the emotions. Although technique does have its place in sex, this sort of behaviourism has reactionary implications in the wider social context: people are expected to behave (themselves!) according to

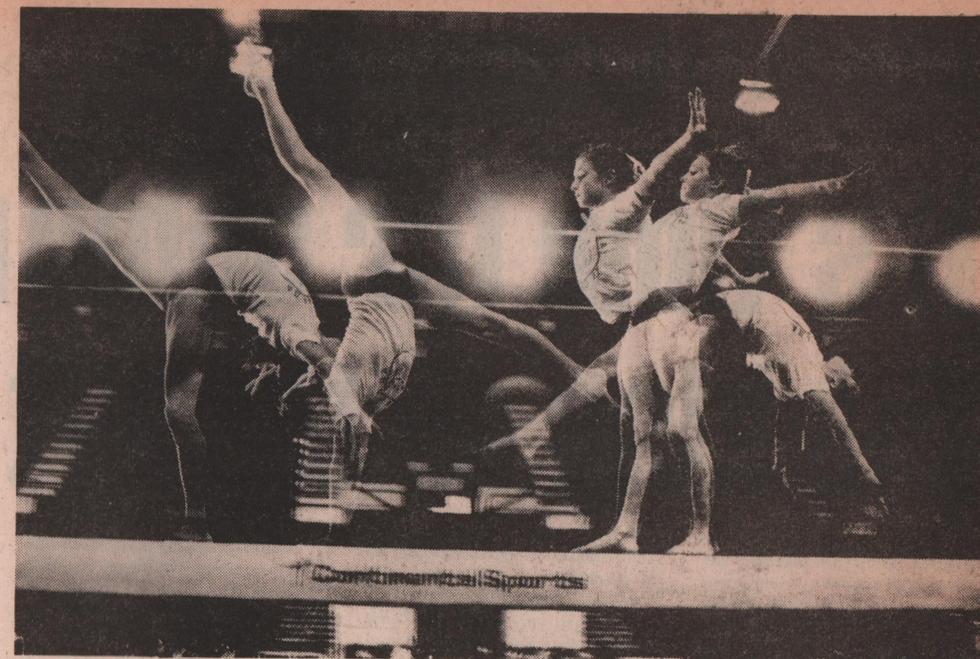
gender and play out the male and female stereotypes. Thus, in sport some activities — like tennis or gymnastics — are considered appropriate for women.

Even though women are participating more in 'masculine' sports, the segregation is strict, and women are set one standard, men another. Ironically, the taking of hormone and other tablets to increase performance, especially in athletics, has meant biochemical interference with the traditional scientific definitions of gender. Consequently, women have been subjected to the farce of sex tests, and men — well, steroids have sometimes caused testicles to explode.

Because sport is saturated to its competitive core by ideologies, like sexism, which help capitalism along its way, it's naive of those on the Left who think that sport is an essentially innocent pursuit somehow tainted by big business and authoritarian administrators. Think of *Socialist Worker's* sports page which comes out with things like: 'If only the English football team was a bit more democratically selected and Clough was manager instead of Greenwood... The jingoism of this aside, sport will have to undergo a more radical process than a change of leaders and administrators before it is in any way socialist. Sport in the 'socialist' bloc proves that; its more egalitarian centralised organisation and the absence of the multinationals don't mean that it's less of the alienating pursuit it is in the West.'

With a few of my own examples thrown in, the above is a rough summary of Brohm's book. His arguments are weakened by their essay format; this makes for theoretical 'bons mots', but also means a lack of historical background to his discussion, say, of the first Olympics or the development of sport in East Germany. He also skimps on history by turning Marxism into fanciful Left Bank Structuralism; a phrase like the "political economy of the body" is a nice metaphor — and that's about all.

Brohm might have made more distinctions between specific sports. Perhaps it's true that tennis 'reduces' the body in the way football does, but Wimbledon and

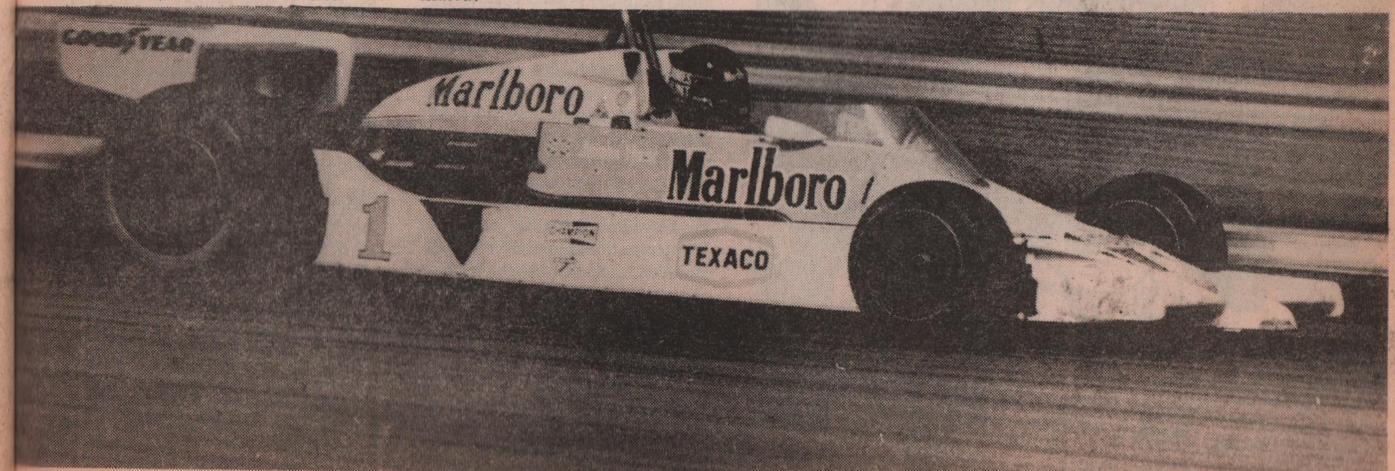


Wembley differ greatly in their ideological impact upon the working-class.

In fact, the book says little about the way mass ideologies operate. Brohm aligns himself with the German theoretician Theodor Adorno in seeing the mass culture of sport, TV, Hollywood cinema etc as a mindless opiate, dispensed by Big Brother and consumed by a totally manipulated working-class. He has no sense of the contradictions in a mass culture which doesn't always do a good job of churning out neat ideological constructs. If it did so there'd never be a controversial TV programme or a dissatisfied sports fan.

There's another contradiction Brohm ignores. It's possible to accept all he says about the alienation and 'reduction' of the body, and yet derive pleasure from watching gymnastics, for example, or some other sport. Brohm seems blind to both the 'aesthetic' nature of this pleasure and how it's been historically determined.

But the book is still worth reading: it may not fully explain the aesthetic buzz of a George Best dribble, but it does explain why ex-Everton goalkeeper Gordon West used to vomit before every match.



# Mrs Thatcher's Budget

## It's time for some new thinking on the left....

Two lines of attack have dominated the left's initial reactions to the new Conservative Government's first Budget. It has been denounced first for its studied anti-egalitarianism, and second as an exercise in monetarist madness. David Purdy examines the budget and looks at the implications for left politics.

The Budget's regressive redistributions need no further elaboration here. As for monetarism, the only detectable wobble in the Conservative's stance is that, like the late Labour Government, they remain pragmatic enough to want to wait and see how things go before committing themselves to forward targets for monetary growth beyond the present financial year. This was a minor concession to the "old-fashioned" idea that the economy should be actively managed, which they claim to have repudiated. Meanwhile public spending cuts totalling £2.5 billion and a severe credit squeeze have been inflicted on an economy which in the company of its international partners/rivals is set firmly on course for deep recession.

The prospective fall in output and rise in unemployment (prudently suppressed from the Treasury's official forecasts) will be exacerbated as union wage demands rise to the provocation of a government-induced acceleration in inflation. Employers face a triple squeeze: from rising labour, energy and materials costs; from high interest rates and tight credit; and from an uncompetitively high exchange rate sustained, despite the Budget's relaxation of controls in outward capital movements, by the relief which near self-sufficiency in oil brings to an ailing balance of payments. Profitability, still poor by international and past British standards, is bound to suffer in the short run. Hence the reaction of the Stock Exchange. Firms will respond by curtailing investment and employment.

The Government's ultimate aim is to squeeze inflation out of the system by bringing pay negotiations and pricing decisions up

against the hard edge of market discipline. In the meantime, however, the expected rate of inflation has been jacked up five or six percentage notches, and it is anyone's guess what heights of inflation and depths of unemployment will be reached before the monetarist cure takes effect.

No one seriously believes that the new economic policy's invitation to the rich (and would-be rich) to enrich themselves even more, will produce an upsurge of economic growth. The notorious "dash for growth" presided over by the last Conservative government in conditions of international boom ended in abject failure.

It is superficial to jibe that the Conservatives have looked after their own under a screen of rhetoric about financial rectitude and Adam Smith. And it is too easy to assume that the exigencies of politics will sooner or later drive them to embrace an incomes policy and the familiar panoply of corporatist industrial interventions. A U-turn cannot be ruled out since the Tory leadership's political nerve has not yet been tested. But this common prognosis does not probe deeply enough into either Conservative strategy or the forces at work in contemporary Britain.

In the first place the Government is strong because the opposition is weak. The labour movement is in the throes of a long inquest on what went wrong — not just last winter but over the whole of the past fifteen years during eleven of which Labour was in power. It must be doubtful whether, despite the union leader's anguished threats, the next pay round will see a really challenging industrial confrontation. The private sector is to be left to

find its own level. Skilled workers in short supply, amongst whom the Conservatives made major electoral inroads in May, and other groups like workers in the energy sector who have "market forces" working in their favour, should have little difficulty in keeping abreast of inflation.

Bitter conflicts over both pay and jobs are in store for Civil Service and local authority employees. But the record of the past three years suggests that disputes in these sectors are unlikely to become the focus for more broadly based resistance. The labour movement has not devised a political and ideological rationale for public sector activities which is capable of mobilizing a mass popular movement.

Public services are not there just to provide jobs or reflate the economy. They should be viewed as vantage points for overriding the claims of entrenched privilege, for abating the inequalities of the free market and, above all, for promoting the community's involvement, participation and competence in running its own affairs. Our state apparatuses, from the police force to the cleansing department, tend to be exclusive, authoritarian-paternalist and run by professionals along strict lines of hierarchical control. They serve "consumers" who are passive and fragmented, but simultaneously discontented and distrustful of "the state". They are staffed by employees many of whom learn to confine their horizons to their own sectional-defensive interests, and lose, or fail to acquire, allegiance to any ideal of serving the people.

Second, underlying the whole industrial scene is the risk which Mrs Thatcher will exploit to the extent of calling a snap election, if necessary, that any frontal attack on Government policy will be represented as an assault on Parliamentary democracy. The Budget contained nothing which was not foreshadowed in the election campaign. True, the role of the popular press in this campaign was thoroughly disreputable. But that is nothing new, and does not detract from the fact that unlike most post-war elections this one was taken very seriously by most of the electorate, who were conscious of making a crucial political choice, however unpalatable their verdict. If they have any sense the Tories will continue to fight the last election for as long as possible. In these conditions it would be fatal to end up on the wrong side of a conflict over democratic credentials.

Third, the Chancellor's declaration that his Budget was only the first instalment of a long term programme, should be taken seriously. Further cuts in basic tax rates can be financed over the next couple of years even without matching reductions in public spending. The Exchequer's losses in tax revenue and social security outgoings due to higher

unemployment will be offset by the tax gains of higher inflation. And the drive for economy has only just begun (except, of course, in the defence and law enforcement budgets). At the Industry Department, for example, Sir Keith Joseph is quietly sounding out union and employer views before finally discriminating between those projects which are defensible and those which are dispensable. And so far only a small dent has been made in the activities of the Manpower Services Commission.

The strength of the Conservatives' commitment to this programme owes as much to their dominant political philosophy as to any economic calculations. They desire to curb state activity in order to defend liberal values and individual freedoms which they see as dependent on a vigorous free enterprise system, including free collective bargaining provided it is "responsible". They are saying that unless a firm stand is made now, all sections of society — big capitalists, small proprietors, workers, professionals and welfare recipients — will end up trammelled and controlled by an immensely powerful state machine. They recognise that restoring a "proper" relationship between state and market will cause transitional hardship and insecurity, and that tangible economic results can only be expected over the long run as their new socio-political statute beds itself in and gains acceptance.

The Conservatives' determination to persist in this course should not be underestimated. They are conscious that this is probably their last chance to halt the march of state collectivism, and to demonstrate that their ideology is not an anachronistic survival from a bygone era. The price of failure for them will be very high. Hence it cannot be automatically assumed that they will sacrifice principles to pragmatism as the hardship and insecurity materialize.

The left faces an uphill struggle in organizing opposition to this strategy. Most of its favoured alternative economic policies would require a large scale expansion of the apparatus of state control. But this presents an unedifying image of socialism whose traditional social basis within the core of the industrial working class is being eroded — a process clearly visible both in changes in social class composition and in electoral trends. In any case, it is hard to see how a measure such as, say, import controls to protect the manufacturing industry, would in itself alter the British economy's dynamic, or rather lack of it, however impeccable the case for import controls may be at an abstract-rational level. There are no technical levers of state planning which, if grasped with sufficient firmness, will resolve Britain's problems independently of the process of fighting for changes in social mores and political consciousness.

Without the growth of popular

democratic organs, built up step by step from small beginnings, which can demonstrate their capacity to run social affairs effectively here and now, and not in the mists of the future, an alternative economic strategy would be an alternative economic failure. The left's belief in the efficacy of purely technical controls directly parallels the right's faith in the market mechanism. Indeed it is less soundly based since as things stand neither state officials nor the trade unions have either the outlook or the training and experience required for the direction of industry.

The left must rethink and overhaul its strategic dispositions and political practices. There is an alternative both to the ideology of latter day liberalism and to the ideology of dirigiste statism. This is the vision of a society based on democratic self-management in which the diverse privileges and oppressions of class, race, sex and the rest, which destabilize and disfigure our present social system, are progressively eliminated, and

a harmonious balance established between collective responsibility and personal freedom.

The tasks of the next decade are threefold. First to translate this vision into concrete policies and priorities in every sphere of economic and social life from law and order to the control of the money supply. Second, to mobilize and unite around these policies a broad alliance embracing the trade unions, the women's movement, ethnic and national minorities, community bodies, environmentalists and groups in the professions concerned with issues of social responsibility. Third, and most mind-cracking of all, somehow to forge out of Britain's motley collection of left wing political parties, including the Labour Party and sections of the Liberals, a national political instrument in which the broad alliance finds its focus and reflection, and which is capable of mounting an electoral challenge for government. These are daunting tasks. We'd better buckle down to them.



DON'T WORRY THE TORIES HAVE PROMISED TO RESTORE THE CUTS IN DEFENCE SPENDING.

# Love: the new evangelist



Tweedie with wart hog husband... An exemplary couple?

JILL TWEEDIE'S exposition on what love is about presents a picture of true love based on independence, separateness, equality, honesty and the acceptance that 'one person cannot provide everything for another.' It sounds a fair idea, if not of mindblowing originality.

So what, you might be saying. Why take up space in a radical magazine like *The Leveller* to discuss a harmless if rather platitudinous piece of journalism?

Because Tweedie herself has become something of a moral spokesperson on all kinds of issues and in doing so has aligned herself with the feminist cause; because her book is getting a fair amount of coverage by the straight press and is designed to make an impact on liberal *Guardian* readers and those like me who read her weekly ramblings with a mixture of curiosity and contempt; and because most of us would accept some of those ramblings as 'progressive' whilst uneasily disassociating ourselves from the 'liberal' approach to sexism and other 'moral' issues without ever really defining why.

It's easy enough to snipe at some of what she says. Husband Alan Brien is quoted as being rather exemplary of the 'new' love; unfortunate, because her description of what he does for her sounds like the traditional scene dressed up in modern manners. Brien seems to be her moral compass: "He looks at me carefully with the world's eyes as well as the eyes of love, I know him to be right in his assessment and so I know where I am. He shows me to myself."

He reminds her of "an old wart hog... intent on only one thing. The truth, such as it is." A new kind of hero, bringing to her life not romance, but the truth; he may have no god, but does she? "He helps me to love myself... he leaves place in me for others

because he himself has place for others... luckily for me..." It sounds like he's the one who's setting the pace, the modern man perfect in an imperfect kind of way.

But sniping doesn't get very far and the book does make seductive and tempting reading. Tweedie reckons that the human species has been on an inward journey of self-discovery which has led to "despair and anguished self-consciousness"; that we must make "a return journey to a new sort of tribalism" and that the success of the journey will depend on "real" love, the new survival mechanism. It sounds like a spiritual rather than a political journey that we're all going to have to make.

I went to hear Tweedie promoting her book at the ICA. The new love must be based on economic equality between men and women; it shouldn't be exclusive and jealous; it should be conditional - if you love someone who abuses you, it's not love, but a neurosis. Romance is and has been plastering the cracks, passion has nothing to do with love but is an effort to intensify life.

The sentiments are sound enough, give one or two pieces of confused thinking. Need is a more complicated area than she supposes and goes deeper than economic need. We need other people, we need love, so how can we not need our lovers? She also says that love has never existed before because we've not had the prerequisites of equality and wealth;

or that it's been very rare: some people in history have overcome their material circumstances and "come near to love."

This makes love into metaphysics. Love as defined and rooted in material circumstances has existed by the very fact that it's been defined in language. There may be a new kind of love based on new conditions but you can't say that love itself is nonexistent - unless you think it descends from the sky.

But these points don't touch the main flaw of the whole exercise. It seems that the experts once preached fusion and sacrifice (at least for the woman) for the perfect love; now a new expert is preaching separateness and independence to achieve success in love. Once it was two hearts becoming one - this was what we were all trained to yearn for - but now we must strive for two self-confident identities. The essence is the same - someone is telling us how our affairs should be conducted, but with scant reference to a political reality, and ideas without reference to reality become platitudes.

Without a firmer base in reality, Tweedie is an evangelist coasting on the waves of ideas which have only come about through other people's political struggles. New pieties crop up: "It isn't easy... you've got to put in so much..." she sounds increasingly like a progressive middle class agony auntie. How to solve your problems in one fell swoop - chuck out the old ideas and wheel in the new.

We all dream of a new world where we can be self-loving, self-confident and therefore generous in our love of others; we can even try to strive for these qualities. Meanwhile we have to live with today's realities. And unless we've dropped out or are very lucky, our lives are for the most part atomised from other lives, alienated and insecure, and often lonely. Women today are living and struggling with economic and cultural ideas which have been around for a few thousand years or more. Some of us may now be financially independent (though not many) but we still live with the culture inside our heads and that won't be changed by a few well-chosen words from Tweedie. Most of my friends, while being aware of what it might be like and trying to achieve something better, are either lonely or vaguely dissatisfied by the form of their personal relationships.

While expressing one of the ideas central to feminism - being your own person - Tweedie has no strategy for getting there. She dilutes the political challenge of feminism, she weakens its revolutionary potential. Her kind of feminism manages to be inoffensive, the ideas fitting snugly into *Cosmopolitan*, that pillar of marketplace feminism with radical roots removed.

Doubts are confirmed by her only reference to a wider political framework - she says that democratic systems (presumably of the Western bourgeois variety) won't survive without this new kind of loving. I thought perhaps new ways of living, new perceptions of how things could be better, might actually be subversive.

I'm glad that 'progressive' ideas are becoming popularised and things are filtering through, that the *Guardian* Women's page is discussing sexism and porn and so on; but I can't take the kind of 'event' that this book has become, based as it is on a self-appointed moralism. She'd probably deny it, but Tweedie is a moralist and an amateur philosopher and now she has become an evangelist. We need morality but not the kind divorced from politics.

Cherrill Hicks

## Back Pages

### Changing Childhood: A forum for a diversity of views

ONE DIRECT RESULT of the International Year of the Child is a rather catholic collection of essays, poems and snippets of information called "Changing Childhood" (Writers and Readers Publishing Collective, £6.50 hardback, £3.25 paperback). The book starts on a promising note with the title page proclaiming that though the UK Association for the Year of the Child welcomes the book "The views expressed are... not necessarily those of the Association." The IYC having absolved itself of any responsibility, the book can get down to business.

Unfortunately the introduction is badly constructed and littered with left jargon which is likely to deter anyone who isn't immediately sympathetic to the cause. And many of the essays follow suit. But in

amongst the straight academic/propagandist expositions are some real gems which make the book well worth reading.

In an illustrated essay on children in art, Peter Fuller bravely challenges Shulamith Firestone's contention that until the advent of Capitalism and the Industrial Revolution, children were, like anyone else, fully fledged and responsible members of society and everything in the garden was rosy - until along came the bourgeoisie. He looks at portrayals of childhood in art, placing art in its historical context and attacking interpretations which seem to take paintings and photographs out of their class and social context. As too many socialists seem to forget, until the 17th century 75% of all children christened were dead

before they reached the age of five. If we assume as a fundamental right the right to survive, we can hardly view pre-capitalist society as some sort of golden age.

Several of the other contributors show an unfortunate degree of superficiality in their nostalgia for the "good old days". A couple even point to the Children's Crusades - when many thousands of starving children marched to their deaths in a pointless trek across Europe - as proof of the infinitely fulfilling and responsible role of childhood in feudal society!

In contrast to some of the more jargon-ridden and backward looking essays is a charming story by Trotsky (who, unlike some of his mates, wrote beautifully) called "All Beans Should be Scrambled", and a parable for children by

Bertholt Brecht, "If sharks were Men". Lee Comer writing on "The Ideology of Child-care" looks constructively at trends past and present and shows an understanding of ideologies which few of the other items ever approach.

I assume this book was an attempt to make ideas current in left and academic circles more accessible to a wider audience, by providing a forum in which a diversity of views could be expressed. But this proves to be its weakness. The unevenness of both the ideas and the standard of writing leaves you with the feeling that, though it is a valuable contribution, the book would have benefited from some ruthless editing.

Julia Bard

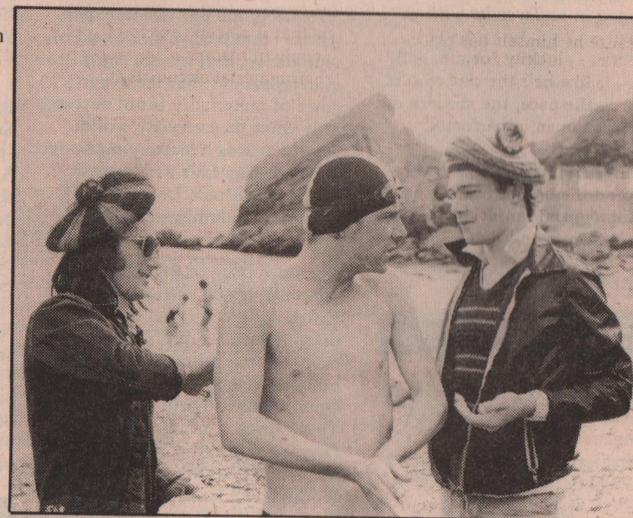
### That Summer: Winning the Torquay marathon

The name plus the lousy adverts give you a real crooked impression of *That Summer*. I arrived at the cinema thinking why the fuck does *The Leveller* want me to go and see this. I was further wondering because I got there too early and sat through the last ten minutes of the previous showing of the film, which seemed like real trash. Then I had to sit through a degenerate, sexist, posey American imitation of James Bond called *Billion Dollar Treat* which nearly made me puke. But then *That Summer* came on. It was good.

The film has various stories - one for each of the four main characters - but it revolves around a bloke just out of borstal who is a very good swimmer and wants to prove himself by winning a marathon swim in Torquay. The story line is a bit thin and far-fetched, but this is far outweighed by the film's good points.

The treatment of young people is relatively good, if a bit patronising in parts. None of this portrayal of mobs hooliganising old people, terrorising and all the other crap we often get about young people. The "social comment" I reckon was pretty astute. And it's full of good quotes like this one about sex: "The first time is always bloody awful, but don't let it bother you." Well it's not brilliant, but it's the only one I could remember.

On the whole the film's attitude to sex was descriptive



Greasing up! John Morrison, as Tam, preparing for the Swimming marathon in *That Summer*. His young friends are Andrew Byatt, as Georgie, and Ewan Stewart as Stu. *That Summer* is released by Columbia-EMI-Warner. Certificate AA.

without being pornographic - unlike so many films. Why should sex scenes be necessary if not to tantalise men in the audiences. I can't see why the censors gave it a double-A-certificate. It was very responsible in that it showed blokes buying Durex without portraying the happy-go-lucky attitude to sex peddled by the media in general. I mean how many non-sex education films can you think of showing the use of contraceptives?

My only other reservation

about *That Summer* is the complete lack of any black people. But, apart from this, in general it shows the way things are for young people and shows some of the problems young people face in a very effective way. I wish the British film industry could make more films like this - and never mind the bollocks like James Bond. Mind you, my little brother likes James Bond.

Adam Thompson

### Abortion Bill

John Corrie's Bill to change the 1967 abortion act will restrict the grounds for abortion, reduce the upper time limit to 20 weeks, smash the abortion charities and widen the "conscience clause".

The National Abortion Campaign is calling for a broad-based campaign to build a mass demonstration against the Corrie Bill and to defend the 1967 Act.

You can help this campaign by:

- \* Getting a resolution against the Bill through your trade union, Labour Party, student union branch or trades council.
- \* Getting your women's group to support the campaign.
- \* Writing to your MP.
- \* Leafletting for NAC, organising petitioning, street and public meetings.
- \* Joining NAC.
- \* Giving money to fight Corrie.

Write to NAC, enclosing a donation and asking for information, at 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1, telephone 01-278 0153.

# Back Pages

## PAMPHLETS

A welcome and long-awaited publication from the Socialist Workers Party is **The Word is Gay**, a pamphlet about socialists and the fight against gay oppression. Sadly, it doesn't tell us much that we didn't know already and offers no distinctive SWP approach to the struggle against oppression. It is also hard to tell at whom the pamphlet is aimed.

Most interesting is Tony Cliff's introduction where he writes: "In class infested society there is oppressor and oppressed in all walks of life. Employer oppresses employee; man oppresses woman; white oppresses black; old oppresses young; heterosexual oppresses homosexual." It might make a nice inscription inside SWP membership cards.

**The Word is Gay** is published by the Socialist Workers Party and distributed by Socialists Unlimited, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4, price 28p (including postage).

Release have brought out a new pamphlet on **Hallucinogenic Mushrooms**. Concerned that many people are totally ignorant of the dangers involved, Release have designed the pamphlet to prevent people from making a mistake that could result in illness or death. The pamphlet covers the legal situation of mushrooms, how to identify them, mushroom poisoning and the different species that have been tried. **Hallucinogenic Mushrooms**, from Release, 1 Elgin Avenue, London W.9.

Recent issues of **The Leveller** have taken up the tricky question of economic strategy. Now, in one short pamphlet, Geoff Hodgson takes us through all the questions of reformism, socialism or corporatism, the alternative economic strategy, planning, the NEB, import controls, incomes policy and the problems of multinationals. All the questions, in fact, that preoccupy the left wing of the Labour Party. Eschewing both the standard Tribune interpretation of the alternative economic strategy and the 'maximalist demands' of the Trotskyite left, Geoff proposes a kind of middle way that recognises both the reality of the structure of power under capitalism and the need for an energetic mass movement for socialism. **Socialist Economic Strategy**, Labour Party Discussion Series, 40p.

New technology is having an immediate and dramatic impact in the office. Word processors, the electronic replacements for the typewriter, are being introduced at a rapid rate and already 11,000 are in use. **Women's Voice** have published a pamphlet on word processors called **Job Massacre at the Office**. It explains the possible effects of the introduction of word processors and how to fight against job loss, health risks and increased work loads. The pamphlet is from **Women's Voice**, PO Box 82, London E2 9DS, price 40p each, or four for £1, including postage.

A new report from **Shelter** calls on the government to think again about selling-off council houses.

\*The ultimate cost to the taxpayer, ratepayer and council tenant could reach £3,000 million if the government's sales target is achieved.

\*The best council houses in predominantly owner-occupied areas will be sold. The chances of young families or the disabled being transferred will be reduced.

\*Sales will primarily benefit long-standing better-off tenants. Poor tenants will run the risk of severe financial difficulties.

\*Households on council waiting lists will have to wait longer for a decent home.

**Facts on Council House Sales** is available from **Shelter**, 157 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UU, price 65p

## GROUPS

The **Agricapital Women's Group** has been set up by a group of feminists involved in the **Agri-capital Group** - a socialist group involved in working around issues of food, food production, agriculture etc. - who felt that the issues that particularly concerned women were being neglected by the group as a whole. The group wants to develop socialist-feminist perspectives around these issues and is currently working on a pamphlet on slimming. Any women who would like to become involved in the group should contact Kim, 161 Myrtle Rd, Sheffield 2 or phone Carol, 01 272 4182.

## BACK PAGES

Help us to compile Back Pages by sending news about forthcoming events, theatre, music and anything else that grabs your fancy.

## MAGS & PAPERS

The first issue of the **Children's Book Bulletin** has just been published. It contains articles on racism in children's books, women and society - books for teenagers, classroom kits on sexism and racism, Errol Lloyd - a black illustrator for children, plus 15 pages of reviews. Issue 2 will include a roundup of young people's writing in print, the announcement of the 1979 Other Award winners, and a look at how children's books treat homosexuality.

**Children's Book Bulletin** is from 4 Aldebert Terrace, London W8. Subscriptions: 1 issue 50p, 3 issues £1.20 (including postage). People who take a year's subscription (3 issues) will also receive the **Spare Rib** list of non-sexist children's books.

Disco-dancer Richard Dyer gets on down in the summer issue of **Gay Left**: "Disco's combination of romanticism and materialism effectively tell us - let us experience - that we live in a world of materiality, that we can enjoy materiality but that the experience of materiality is not necessarily what the everyday world assures us it is." Shake your body, Richard. **Gay Left 8** is from 38 Chalcoot Road, London NW1, price 65p including postage.

The third issue of **Black Phoenix** concentrates on cultural politics. Instead of an editorial, the editors offer "Seven Years On" - an essay by the brilliant Uruguayan Eduardo Galeano, who wrote **Open Veins of Latin America**. This journal continues to offer a range of interesting ideas about the arts and artists of the Third World, and a useful critique of Western cultural conventions. **Black Phoenix** is from BCM Black-phoenix, London WC1V 6XX, price 60p.

## BOOKS

Publishing event of the year for all of us pondering the problems of 'the way forward' must be **Beyond the Fragments**, by Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright. "The movement for socialism must accept an autonomous feminist movement. And it must itself be changed by the demands and insights of that movement", say the authors. Well, every once in a while someone sits down and draws together all the things

that we've all been thinking about and puts them down in one book, which then becomes *our* book. So it is with **Beyond the Fragments**. It's absolutely essential reading for any socialist, whether Leninist or Libertarian (and, for *Leveller* readers, it really describes what the *Leveller* is, or should be, all about.) **Beyond the Fragments**, Newcastle Socialist Centre and Islington Community Press, £1.00.

of the problems thrown up by the unfolding outcome of the revolution in Iran none is so difficult as the question of women's liberation in a democratic revolution. Patricia Jeffery in her new book, **Frogs in a Well**, investigates the role of women in Islam through a case study of women at one of India's most sacred Moslem shrines near Delhi. In doing so she argues that 'Islamic ideology' is only a part of the explanation for the oppression of moslem women and cannot cover up the monopoly of economic power enjoyed by men. **Frogs in a Well**, is published by Zed Press, price £2.95

**Black Macho & The Myth of the Superwoman** by Michele Wallace (pbk £2.50 Calder) checks out Afro-American male/female relationships as they've developed in North American history. The two essays are, on the whole, pungent and well-argued. They put, on the one hand, black male chauvinism (e.g. Richard Wright's **Native Son**) towards both black and white females, into context. They demolish, on the other hand, the myth of the strong black woman which was and is often trotted out to excuse a host of evils.



**MOVIES: Kinuyo Tanaka as Eiko in My Love Has Been Burning, now showing at the Gate Cinema, London.**

## POETRY

Two very talented teenagers, Savitri Hensman and Sarah Moriarty, have got together an illustrated booklet of poems called **Flood at the Door**. One of the poems is called "Estate Kids": *Children of concrete  
Playing in the shadow of the  
Over-looking  
Looming blocks,  
Destined for the firm grip of  
The machine-tool machine,  
Like young plants through a  
crumbling stone path  
Which twist and struggle upwards  
Fighting for health and life  
And yet, in the end,  
Blooming.*

The booklet is published by Centreprise, although both girls played a big part in its design and layout. It's available by post, price 50p (including postage) from Centreprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, London E8.

## CAMPAIGNS

Momentum is growing nicely for the next big Irish demonstration in London - planned for August 10th, to coincide with the 10th anniversary of James Callaghan's decision to send in the British troops to Northern Ireland. An impressively wide range of people are supporting this "withdrawal" demo. Would-be participants should contact Steven Dawe of the Youth Office in the National Liberal Club at 1 Whitehall Place, London SW1. The demonstration will of course be forbidden use of Trafalgar Square.

## MUSIC

**Rock Against Sexism** are holding their next London concert on Saturday 28th July at the Electric Ballroom, 184 Camden High St., NW1. Doors open at 7.00pm. Featuring **Delta Five**, **Gang of Four** and **Spiltsports**. Admission £2.00 (£1.50)

Rock Against Sexism aims: (1) To fight sexism in rock music and to use rock music to fight sexism in the world at large; (2) To challenge stereotyped images of women and men and promote a more positive image of women in rock; (3) To attack the exploitation of women in advertisements, the press and on stage; (4) To encourage women musicians by giving them more opportunities to play; (5) To assert the right of everyone to determine their own sexuality.

Membership of Rock Against

# Back Pages



**THEATRE: The latest hot gossip from the world of feminist theatre is that Laurel Marks (third from left) is leaving Beryl and the Perils (pictured) to join Hormone Imbalance. So Beryl is looking for a new Peril to start with the company in the Autumn.**

Laurel will still be with Beryl and the Perils for a forthcoming European tour.

Sexism costs £1. RAS will send you a year's subscription to their bulletin **Drastic Measures** plus details of meetings, other supporters in your area etc. Write to Rock Against Sexism, at 121 Grandison Road, London SW11.

A catalogue of recorded songs with a message has been compiled by Roger Lewis. Called **Political Songs on Record**, it lists everything from Barbara Dane's **I Hate The Capitalist System to X-Ray Spex's Oh Bondage - Up Yours**. Roger has had to dig pretty deep to come up with some gems like **Death to British Imperialism** by the Progressive Cultural Association. The songs are from all types of music from Britain and the States. Copies are available from **Roger Lewis**, 4 Taunton Drive, Farnworth, Bolton, Lancs. B14 ONG. Roger would also appreciate any additions or suggestions.

## MOVIES

Cinegate film distributors (the people who brought you the dreadful **Nighthawks** - see **Leveller 25**) have just released a print of the 1949 Japanese movie **My Love Has Been Burning** (Waga Koi Wa Moenu), directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. It's based on the autobiography of Kageyama Hideko, a late 19th century feminist pioneer, and through the central character Eiko Hirayama explores the situation of women as Japanese feudalism neared its end. Now showing at the Gate Cinema in London.

The Collegiate turned them down, the Little Bit Ritzy cinema was even more blunt, and the ICA were uneasy too, but finally the United Troops Out Movement got the flash Royal Court Theatre last month to launch a new 90 minute film on Northern Ireland called **The Patriot Game**.

Directed by American Arthur Mac Caig, and apparently put together in France, the film claims to portray Ireland from 1968 - 1978. In fact, the whole ghastly Masonec era is left untouched, the film stopping shortly after the collapse of the "power-sharing" executive, when the whole Northern Ireland thing started to get just a little complex and less clearcut for the left in Britain to really come to terms with it. So if the seasoned observer of the Irish battle might not find too much that's new in this film, it must be said **The Patriot Game** does show many heart-stirring little cameos.

**The Patriot Game** is available at £20 to UTOM branches, £24 for other non-funded bodies, and £35 for funded bodies.

## THEATRE

**Counteract Theatre Group** has three new shows on offer. **Little Helpers** is a play about women in the NHS - both as workers and patients. Why are so many women on tranquilisers? Why are women hospital workers so badly paid? These and other questions are dealt with in the show. **Doledrums**, a new show for youth clubs and schools, look at unemployment and

the job market. **Bureaucosis** takes a look "at a disease, more common than a cold, something that alcohol, holidays in the Bahamas, or money cannot cure." a reminder too that **The Cuts Show LP** is still available at £2.16 inc. p&p. Details of performance times and bookings from **Counteract**, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1R 0AT.

**Half Moon Theatre** have a double bill coming shortly: **Woyzeck**, by George Buchner, and **Mahagonny**, by Brecht and Weill. Written in 1824, **Woyzeck** is the first play to deal with a working class protagonist who is the victim not only of nature but also of an exploitative society. Written in 1927 **Mahagonny** is the story, told in music and words, of a city where the staple commodity is pleasure. Though written as a parallel of the rise and fall of the Weimar Republic, it has clear relevance to Thatcherite England. It runs from 16th August to 29th September (not Sundays). **Woyzeck** 8pm, **Mahagonny** 9.30 pm.

Closed in August, for a deserved summer Break, **Liberty Hall** have the following events lined up for the remainder of July and the first couple of weeks of September:

July 22 - **Due Process in Law**, by Ron Rose, performed by Stuart Richmond. This deals with the question of the power of the police and the state of the law relating to enforcement.

July 29 - **Men and Groups**, a group of men who have been meeting in Liverpool for some time to try and understand their experiences and socialisation as men in a sexist society present a sketch to be followed by discussion.

August 5 - **Grand Blackpool Beano**. A day out and picnic in the North's leading holiday spot!

September 9 - **Word is Out**. A Liberty Hall Film Society presentation of the Mariposa Fol. Group's portrait of the gay community in the USA.

September 16 - **Controlled Attack**. An hour and a half of sketches, poems and irrelevance that takes on racism, anti-racism, folk clubs, the Schools Careers Advisory Service and colourful cockneys! From the East End of London.

**Liberty Hall** is an alternative club. Membership details and admission prices from **Liberty Hall**, c/o Top Flat, 7 Grove Park, Liverpool 8. The club is at **Everyman Bistro**, Hope St., every Sunday at 8 pm.

