

workers' ACTION

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STATE BANS WON'T STOP THE FASCISTS

FOR YEARS, leftists have been calling for a ban on the National Front. Fascists have set on pickets with razor blades [at the Intex strike in Manchester], attacked Asians

in the streets, and violently broken up left-wing meetings — but the press still calmly defended their "rights". Up to last weekend, the press supported the decision of the police to allow the National Front to insult, provoke, and incite to violence against the black population of Lewisham.

Now, since last Saturday's battle in Lewisham, every newspaper editor seems to have become convinced that the police should have banned the NF march. Not because of a new fascist atrocity — but because the left and local black youths effectively "banned" the NF through direct action, and they are frightened of that direct action.

It was the same with the Public Order Act in 1936 — introduced to "suppress" the fascists after the labour movement had defeated them at Cable Street, and then used against left wing demonstrations, most recently an Irish Republican march in 1974.

The same in France. A 1936 law to ban the fascist leagues was passed by the Popular Front government as part of an effort to demobilise the working class — and has since been used, in 1973, to ban a revolutionary socialist organisation, the Ligue Communiste.

In Ireland, too, laws passed in the mid-'30s to control the semi-fascist blueshirt movement were used by the Irish Free State government to hit at the Republican movement, one of the main oppositions to the blueshirts.

If the fascists had marched freely on Saturday, insulting and rousing violence against the black population of Lewisham, the press would still defend their right to march. Now they want a ban so that there will be no further anti-fascist mobilisations!

In fact a ban on the NF or on some of its activities would at best be irrelevant to the struggle against fascism. There is already legislation on the statute books prohibiting racist propaganda. Yet the march which the police protected on August 13th was an undisguised racist provocation, whose participants carried racist slogans and placards. Not one fascist was arrested for this. On

Continued on page 2

Victory at Lewisham!

4,000 POLICEMEN equipped with horses, batons, motor vehicles, and helicopters only just managed to keep the fascist National Front from being lynched in Lewisham last Saturday, August 13th.

Thousands of leftists and black people occupied Clifton Rise and Lewisham High Street, through which the fascists had said they would march. We said: "They shall not pass"; and they did not pass.

The members of the master race were forced to skulk through the backstreets. They cut short their march to hold a quick open-air meeting before dispersing under heavy police protection.

Stones, bottles, tin cans and smoke bombs rained down on the NF and the police in clashes that were reminiscent of Northern Ireland. The police charged again and again in pitched battles with demonstrators occupying Lewisham High Street.

Richard Edmonds, the NF organiser in the area, had said: "This march is deliberately provocative". What they provoked was such a fierce counter-attack from the left and black youths that they suffered their most decisive defeat yet.

This was no token anti-fascist demonstration, but an attempt in deadly earnest to stamp hard on the racist thugs of the NF. And it received massive support from local people who responded to the fascist provocation by acting to stop it — exactly as the workers of East London, Jews and others, acted against Mosley in Cable St in 1936.

FASCISTS ARE DRIVEN BACK



TO THEIR HOLES

All the bitterness of the black youth of Lewisham against racism and against the police boiled over as the police struggled to protect the fascists.

The bosses' papers make out that innocent policemen were caught between left and right 'extremists'. But the harassment by police of the local black community is notorious. For the black youth of Lewisham, they mean daily victimisation, beatings, arrests, frame-ups. Recently the police picked

up 21 local black youths in a dawn swoop and charged them under the catch-all 'conspiracy' laws.

The police treated Saturday's anti-fascist demonstration as another episode in the running battle with the local black community. Although Britain is not a fascist state, and the police of this state are not fascist, in areas of high black population the police are, and blacks can see they are, an organised force inflicting racist violence. Black youth

are learning to fight back against both police racism and fascist racism.

The NF were humiliated. But they were not decisively crushed. They say they will march again in the autumn, though they have not yet said where. When they do, they must be stopped.

The battle of Lewisham must mark the beginning of a new spirit of determination by the labour movement and the black community to seek out and root out the National Front.

Don't let them show their faces again!

Imperialists seek ways to forestall Zimbabwe victory

Behind all the jet-plane diplomacy and talks at Heathrow Airport, there are two very stark issues at stake in Rhodesia: power and property.

Smith knows he has to give some reforms: but he wants to keep power in the hands of the white army. The Zimbabwe nationalists want military control during the 'transition period' to be in the hands of a force based on the black majority, that is, the guerilla armies.



BY TANGRED ZAMMIT

the plan. Bishop Abel Muzorewa and Joshua Nkomo, both leaders of rival nationalist factions, have dissociated themselves from it.

But all the basic lines of force in the situation run in favour of an imperialist-sponsored solution — unless the militant black nationalist struggle topples Smith first. None of the leading political figures involved, on any side, have any fundamental objection to such a solution.

Muzorewa recently said that "one man, one vote" was not a precondition for a solution. Robert Mugabe, reputed to be a more militant leader, said of Young that "his utterances are very good".



While the governments and the nationalist leaders parley, however, the racist brutality of the white-supremacist regimes continues. Since April 1975, around 100 people have been executed under the "Law and Order (Maintenance)" Act.

They have been sentenced to death for such offences as 'encouraging' people to go for guerilla training, in courts with no juries, under a procedure where they are guilty until proved innocent, where the defendants must state their case before hearing the prosecution, and where they often do not get legal defence.

The press does not know exactly how many executions there have been, because the government does not publish names of those executed. Asked why not, Rhodesian minister Van der Byl replied: "It is academic because they are normally dead after it".

Ian Smith is asking for a mandate to "redraw the constitution" in the General Election coming up on August 31st. But it will also be a mandate to continue these judicial murders.

among the already combative black working class of South Africa. Following the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in Angola and Mozambique, all South Africa's efforts have been bent towards ensuring that the inevitable fall of white supremacy in Rhodesia takes place under the strict control of imperialism.

Smith, in the last analysis, knows that the South African

government's estimate of the situation is accurate. But he has to fight to maintain as much as possible of the economic privileges of the whites in Rhodesia.

Here too the US-Britain plans are forced to find a 'solution': some variant of the 'Zimbabwe Development Fund', which will allow massive compensation for the white businessmen and landowners.

The cost for British and American imperialism is worth it. Andrew Young, US ambassador to the United Nations, explained why in a recent interview. "Africa has got to sell its resources to the West. It's got to turn to the West for capital to develop those resources, which means that governments that emerge in southern Africa are going to be, essentially, mixed economies with strong ties to the West regardless of what their ties to the Communist bloc are."



The US-British plan for Rhodesia, worked out in the recent talks in London but still secret, is to be put to the politicians in Rhodesia in a special mission around August 26th. Whatever new variant Owen and Vance have come up with, the immediate chances for it do not look too good.

South African foreign minister Pik Botha and Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere have conspicuously failed to commit themselves to

Both the USA and Britain are wary of sending their armies in, because of possible domestic reactions. But every attempt at a 'solution' has to include an external 'peacekeeping force' to police the dismantlement of the white supremacist regime.

Behind the question of military control lies the question of property. The white population of Rhodesia, 4% of the total, own almost all the businesses, and about 100 times as much land per head as the black majority. Beyond Rhodesia's borders, even greater stacks of white-owned property are at stake in South Africa.

A radical, militant black overthrow of the Smith regime could light an unquenchable flame of revolt

Your machine could be killing you

"The brain cells shrink. Vision narrows, insomnia and fainting recur and loss of consciousness follows any slight change in temperature". Those, according to Dr Masanori Goto quoted in the magazine *Newsweek*, are the symptoms of acute "vibration disease".

Sometimes it causes sudden death: "The brain dies".

4,100 Japanese lumberjacks are officially registered victims of this disease. Among those who have been working with a chainsaw for nine years or more, 80% suffer from it, in milder or more severe forms.

For the advanced cases there is no cure. "There are organic changes in the brain and heart. There's no perfect treatment, only temporary relief."

The disease can be caused

by work with other violently vibrating machines apart from chainsaws. "The forest worker situation will be pretty much improved within ten years because of the newly designed saws", says Dr Goto. "But in other areas — construction work, factories where vibrating tools are being used more and more — the disease will increase sharply in the future unless new control measures are taken".

Not just with chainsaws — and not only in Japan, too. While the rich can have every real or imagined twinge or ache seen to in Harley Street, industrial diseases get less attention from medical specialists. "Vibration disease" could be affecting thousands of workers in British industry.

LADYWOOD

POLICE TAKE OUT THE BATONS— AND LOSE

IN THE WAKE of the Lewisham events, the black community of Handsworth, Birmingham, took to the streets against the racist police force after an anti-National Front demonstration on Monday August 5th. For a period Soho Road was completely out of control of the police.

Some hundreds of socialists had turned up to demonstrate against a National Front meeting at Boulton Road school, held as part of the fascists' campaign for the Ladywood by-election. Most of the small fascist audience apparently crept in by a side way.

The anti-fascists then set off marching round the school. The police blocked their way with riot shields and batons. After a moment of uncertainty, the demonstrators made for Thornhill Road police station, notorious in the area for racist harassment of black youth.

The police made no attempt to stop the demonstration entering Thornhill Road. By this time the demonstrators' ranks had been joined by many local black youth. As the march approached the police station, the police charged, with batons, riot shields, and dogs.

The demonstrators retreated into Soho Road, and then all-out street fighting broke loose, with many more young blacks from the area joining in. Only after repeated baton charges could the police restore their control.

Fascists lash out on the way home

The Coventry bus returning from the anti-NF demonstration in Lewisham on August 13th was attacked by NF thugs at the Scratchwood service station.

After the bus had stopped in the car park, the NFers were recognised, and we decided that no-one should leave the bus: The NFers came forward shouting abuse and threatening us. They threw a brick through the bus window, showering us all with glass.

The NF left and then the police arrived on the scene. They followed the NF bus down the motorway and stopped it — but since no-one on the Coventry bus could identify the actual stone-thrower, no charge was made — even though four men at the services, including a security guard, had said they could identify the thrower.

Once again, the police looked with a charitable eye on the fascist thugs. It was a continuation of their day's work in Lewisham, trying to break up the left's ranks and make paths for the NF march.

Black youth and left batter NF and their police protectors

GIVING BACK BETTER THAN WE GOT

LEWISHAM,
SATURDAY
AUGUST 13

by Bob Sugden

11.00: Assembly of the rally called by the All-Lewisham Campaign Against Racism and Fascism.

12.00: ALCARAF march moves off. It includes contingents from labour movement bodies, churches, the All-London coordinating committee of anti-fascist groups, some Liberals, and representatives of the left groups. The Communist Party put out a leaflet which hardly mentioned the National Front, but was almost entirely devoted to vilifying the forces which intended to confront the fascists.

12.45: As predicted, the police refuse to allow the ALCARAF march to proceed along their proposed route, which would have brought them to the area in New Cross where the fascists intended assembling at 2.30pm. The ALCARAF march disperses, but many anti-fascists make their way by diverse routes to Clifton Rise, where the Socialist Workers' Party and others are holding the NF assembly point.

1.00-3.00: The police attempt, and fail, to disperse the anti-fascists. The NF assemble in a heavily-policed backstreet.

3.00: The NF march starts. It is almost over before it has begun: anti-fascists succeed in splitting the march, and many Fronters slink off.

4.00: The fascists are stopped before they get into Lewisham, hold their meeting, and go home, making victims of some of their opponents on the trains to London. The police rampage begins, and continues for about 45 minutes



LAST SATURDAY, August 13th, the National Front, shepherded and protected by one quarter of the entire Metropolitan Police strength, suffered such a beating at the hands of 3,000 anti-fascists, socialists, and black youngsters, that they had to stop their march halfway. For the first time since the 1930s, the objective of driving the fascists off the streets has been realised in a full-scale confrontation.

After they and the National Front had suffered this humiliation, the police responded by staging a riot of their own, giving indiscriminate use to their truncheons, horses, and, for the first time in mainland Britain, plastic riot shields of the type used in the North of Ireland.

According to the Front's Führer Martin Webster, speaking at a press conference during the run-up to the events, their 'march against black muggers' would parade publicly through Deptford and Lewisham, taking in areas densely populated with immigrants. Further, he said, they intended to meet violence with violence, if necessary.

In fact, the NF marchers — only six or seven hundred in number — had to be hidden in a back street so that they could assemble. They had to be diverted by indirect routes. And they were prevented from getting as far as the strategic Lewisham Clock Tower.

When a police bus at the head of the fascists drove up to the massed anti-fascist demonstrators in front of the

Clock Tower, it promptly received a smashed wind-screen from a missile, and drove off. Immediately after this, the NF were diverted up another side street, where they held their very brief meeting on waste ground. Lewisham High Street, undoubtedly the major prize for the Front, was thus denied to them.

But the anti-fascist forces had no way of knowing about their success, and the police used this as a pretext for what they did next, which was to go out for revenge. Out came the spurs, and the riot shields, and the streets were swept with unparalleled ferocity.

Yet even this orgy backfired on the police. It was predominantly the local black youth who hit back. Their hatred of the avowedly racist Lewisham police has been fanned recently by the arrest of the 'Lewisham 21', by the police intransigence in forcing the go-ahead for the Nazi march, and by their handling of the march and counter-march.

While the police had their weapons, the demonstrators found that their own weapons were at hand, and a rain of bricks, bottles and other missiles evened up the odds. Police vehicles were immobilised and smashed: Ladywell police station was besieged for half an hour.

But it must be understood that the most violent scenes of August 13th, scenes which an eye-witness compared with occasions in Derry, were directly provoked by the police.

POLICE WON'T STOP THE FASCISTS

Continued
from page 1

August 13th it was the occupation of the streets of Lewisham by thousands of anti-fascists which stifled the racist obscurities of the National Front, not the Race Relations Act or the police who have the job of interpreting it.

To appeal to the bosses' state to deal with the fascists is to teach the labour movement to rely not on itself but on its enemies. Any powers which the state acquires to control fascists will

be used at least as much against the left and the labour movement.

In the appeals which the Communist Party and the Tribune left make to the Government and the state, to deal with the fascists, there is a fundamental misunderstanding about what fascism is and what its role in the class struggle between capitalists and workers is.

Fascism is a movement which mobilises masses of petty bourgeois, backward workers, and others, around a mish-mash programme of

nationalism and/or racism, and sometimes a seemingly radical criticism of capitalism. This politically incoherent movement, full of impotent hatred directed at scapegoats like blacks and Jews, becomes a tool for the bosses to use to break up and destroy the organised labour movement.

The bosses don't like fascism because through it they buy the destruction of the labour movement at the cost of surrendering the direct exercise of power to a dictatorship such as Hitler's.

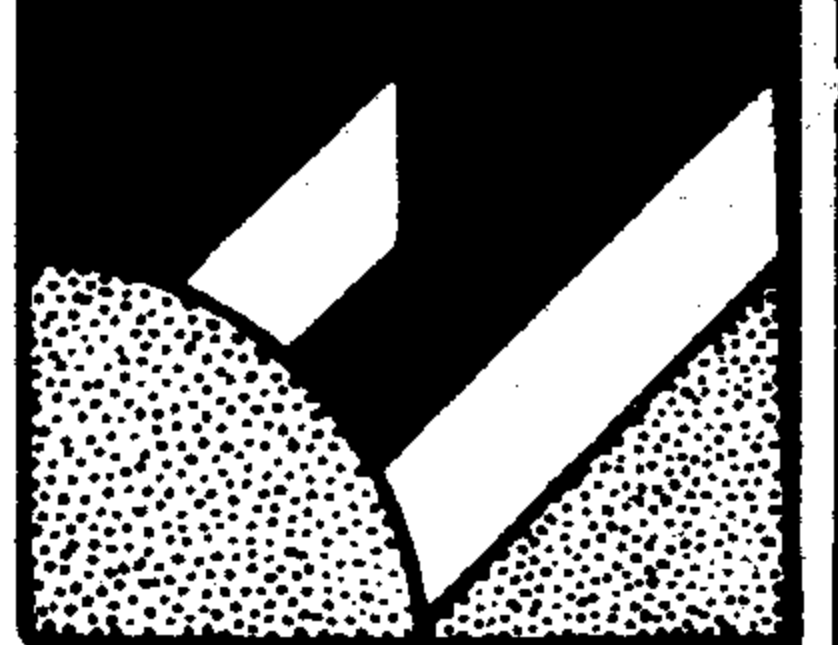
Consequently they do not resort to fascism unless they feel it to be a matter of life or death for them to destroy the labour movement and beat down the working class.

If sizable sections of the capitalist class were backing a "fascist option", it would be sheer criminal lunacy to rely on the police and the army which make up the bosses' state machine, against the new weapon, fascism, which the bosses felt they needed to use. Then, either we would defeat fascism in many larger and

fiercer battles than August 13th — or the fate which befell the German labour movement in 1933 would befall us.

Today the fascists are weak. But still the police protect them and many policemen probably harbour sympathy for them. **Between the fascists and their intended victims — us — only cowards or fools can try to resolve the problem by increased powers for the police.**

Editorial



"THEY SEEM to be postponing for ever, recognising the simple fact that with 113 million inhabitants, dozens of universities, heavy industry and many other such things, Brazil cannot go on being run as if it were a big military school".

That was the comment of the Brazilian newspaper *Folha de Sao Paulo* on the government repression of student demonstration in May and June last. The demonstrations, calling for restoration of democratic rights and a general amnesty for political prisoners, marked the first major challenge to the dictatorship for nine years.

Coup

The increasing Press criticism indicates that the big businessmen who supported the coup of 1964 are becoming disenchanted with the military 'saviours'.

Brazil — the fifth largest country in the world, and the largest in Latin America — is, as a *Gardian* headline put it, "still a favourite among overseas investors". American companies control eight of the ten largest enterprises in Brazil. Yet the situation there looks more and more explosive.

What are the origins of the military dictatorship, imposed by a coup in 1964?

The dominant figure in

Brazilian politics until 1954 was Getulio Vargas. At various times a 'constitutionalist', a 'corporatist', and a 'Labourist', he gave Brazil a democratic constitution in 1934, tore it up in 1937 to establish a dictatorship modelled on the lines of fascist Portugal, and then wound up this 'estado novo' in 1945 and put himself up for election as President. Although the Army refused to let him stand then, he was the successful presidential candidate in 1950.

Vargas had evolved a policy of industrialising Brazil in order to create a strong national economy. This involved heavy state expenditure in developing the transport, oil and electricity industries, and attracting foreign capital to finance the

By Bas Hardy

project.

Paradoxically, Brazilian industrialists were in the main opposed to Vargas' policy. In the early stages of industrialisation, Brazilian enterprises were dependent on the coffee planters for their market, and this was a social class Vargas wrested political power from in 1930. As industrialisation progressed, the growing Brazilian bourgeois class became

increasingly tied to foreign capital, which wanted to see the removal of state restrictions on foreign investors, particularly with respect to the repatriation of profits.

The 'National Democratic Union' (UDN), the party representing the interests of the Brazilian industrialists and the multinational corporations, opposed Vargas and his heir Joao Goulart, and lent their support to the 1964 coup.

The UDN was founded in 1945 when Vargas was forced to permit a 'redemocratisation of Brazilian society'. In the same year two further parties were established, the Social Democratic Party (PSD), representing the interests of the latifundistas, and the Brazilian Labour Party (PTB), whose leadership was composed of the government-appointed trade union officials. With his customary style, Vargas accepted the presidency of both these parties, and became the PSD-PTB presidential candidate.

Pressures on Vargas to scrap his nationalistic economic programme in favour of one dictated by the US corporations and the IMF increased during his second presidency, as American investments in Brazilian industry rose from 35% in 1945 to 50% in 1954. Vargas responded to these pressures and their expression within the military with a characteristically dramatic act. He committed suicide in 1954, leaving behind a testament denouncing those who wanted to loot Brazil.

Base

The suicide provoked a mass mobilisation of the working class, which prevented a military coup at that stage. The unions had been the main social base for nationalist governments since 1945. Although originally the unions were set up by the state to pre-empt Communist Party influence in the working class, the Ministry of Labour allowed greater leeway for the unions throughout the 1950s.

The Brazilian CP, al-

BRAZIL'S
SQUADS
INVESTORS
PARADISE



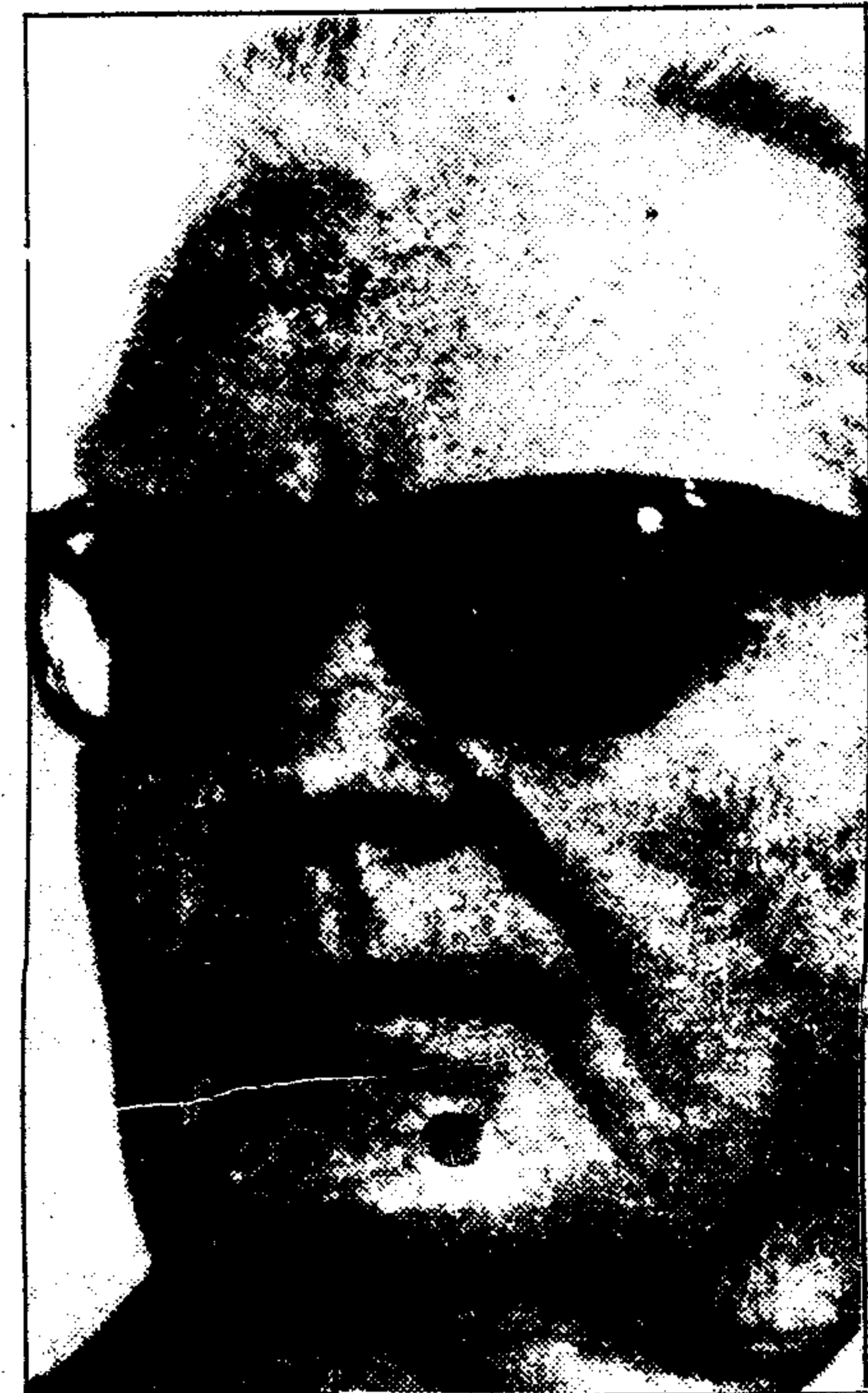
though at first opposed to Vargas, became one of his main supporters after World War II. Luis Carlos Prestes, the CP General Secretary, was released from prison by Vargas, the man who put him there nine years earlier, to campaign for the Vargas candidate in the 1946 elect-

ion. The line of the Brazilian CP was and still is that the revolution in Brazil will be 'nationalist' and 'democratic', and not socialist.

They placed their reliance on Goulart and Vargas to carry out this revolution, claiming that they represented the national bourgeoisie, a class which would lead the Brazilian people in its struggle against the landlords and imperialists.

However, the industrialists' discontent with the nationalist regime increased rapidly after 1964. The increase in foreign control over the economy, the massive foreign debt incurred by the state as a result of its industrialisation policy, and the high rate of inflation were major factors in this. Yet more importantly the bourgeoisie was frightened by the spectacle of Goulart (President from 1961 to 1964) signing land reform and nationalisation decrees at union rallies to the applause of the hundreds of thousands of workers assembled there.

The land reform proposals also set the latifundista PSD against Goulart. The PSD deputies felt that his govern-



Geisel

Queen for two days

THE BRITISH queen's two-day visit to the Six Counties is over, and she has returned in one piece — and, according to the press, in triumph — to her yacht.

Over 32,000 armed soldiers and policemen had managed to make "Northern Ireland" safe for its crowned queen for two whole days! Throughout the visit the Catholic areas were sealed off and subjected to intensive police state-type control.

Even so it was deemed safe to allow the queen to set foot only on a few acres of Irish soil, in the Protestant town of Coleraine and in Hillsborough. The area had been rigorously checked and controlled for weeks by the Army, but still two IRA bombs exploded inside the grounds of the 'New University' in Coleraine.

The 2500 people granted the privilege of attending the garden party for their sovereign at Hillsborough were not only heavily screened before being selected, but were frisked for weapons before being herded into buses to be ferried to the royal presence of their uneasy queen. The music which every self-respecting monarch expects on ceremonial occasions was provided, symbolically,

by a Royal Ulster Constabulary Band!

The Catholic community, 40% of the population, resented the visit of 'Elizabrit' queen of the Orangemen and titular head of the British Army in Northern Ireland, so much that the SDLP which depends on Catholic votes, boycotted the junketings. Inevitably the visit underlined the differences between the Catholic and Protestant communities.

Fighting broke out in Belfast as the Army attacked a Republican protest march. But the "queen of Northern Ireland" kept well away from Belfast.

Her visit was a token — which has shown both the limits of British control in the Six Counties, and the brutally repressive methods used against the Catholic population.

To the press which says that the queen managed to survive two days in 'Northern Ireland' shows a decisive decline in the strength of the IRA, the Republicans whose imminent demise has been regularly predicted for the last seven years might well reply by borrowing Mark Twain's response on hearing of a report that he was dead: "It is slightly premature".

THE GUARDIAN



class, chiefly cattle ranchers like Goulart himself.

The CP and nationalist left, both of whom had taught the masses to rely on Goulart, the government, and the 'democratic and nationalist tradition in the armed forces', were left leaderless and without a policy when Goulart deserted.

The disorientation and demoralisation of the masses ensured a speedy success for the coup.

The military suspended the constitution, purged the Congress, armed forces, and administration, introduced a wages freeze, and abolished the social welfare legislation and labour laws. They arrested many leftist leaders. They also cut off government credits to Brazilian firms who failed to show an adequate level of production. This method of 'positive solvency' caused nearly 4,000 bankruptcies in 1967 alone.

All these measures turned Brazil into an 'investors' paradise' for foreign capital in alliance with native businessmen able and willing to provide Brazilian capital for the investment projects of the multinationals. The progressive domination of foreign capital in the economy was also accompanied by the government subordinating public corporations to the interests of the multinationals.

Supreme

An indication of the government's friendly attitude to imperialism was clearly shown in the investment guarantee agreement of 1965 between Brazil and the USA. Under its terms the US firms could solicit from the Brazilian government guarantees against almost anything from breach of contract to civil disturbance. This guarantee being granted, Brazil lost all rights to assess claims for damage, the ultimate assessor being the US government.

At the political level, the regime evolved towards establishing a military technocracy with a 'democratic' facade. The original claim made for the coup was that it would 'safeguard the Constitution of 1946', and 'liberalisation' was planned in 1967.

But the revival of the mass movement and the beginning of urban guerilla warfare led the General to scrap

the 1946 Constitution. In its place, they formulated a Constitution which legitimised what had already taken place — the suppression of civil and political liberties, the emasculation of Congress, the elevation of the President to supreme political power. All existing parties were banned and two new ones were created, ARENA (Alliance for National Renovation), the pro-government party, and the MDB (Brazilian Democratic Movement), the 'official opposition' party. Brazilians have called these the 'yes' party and the 'yes, sir' party respectively.

The 1968 student demonstrations, the first real challenge to the regime, were put down by a combination of official and unofficial violence, with fascist organisations working in close collaboration with the police. In September 1968, the student occupation of the Philosophy Faculty was smashed when the fascist Communist Pursuit Command invaded building, killing one student and wounding several others.

Despite its timidity, the Congress was purged yet again when MDB deputy Marcio Moreira Alves 'in-

sulted' the armed forces by urging the wives of army officers not to sleep with their husbands until they stopped torturing people.

All these events demonstrated that the *linha dura* (hard line) in the armed forces had won out against those favouring a velvet glove approach. The elevation of Garrastaza Medici to the

Presidency marked a further escalation of repression. Under this former boss of the 'National Information Service' (SNI), the secret police, 'counter-insurgency' operations were launched with maximum ruthlessness and minimum discrimination.

This stage marked the

Continued on page 6



THE "WORKERS' REVOLUTIONARY PARTY" is an organisation which often appeals to Trotskyist principles in the most dogmatic way. These principles have, however less and less to do with their bizarre practice: their slander campaign against Joseph Hansen and their campaign to force the Labour Government to resign [to be replaced by another Labour government, "pledged to socialist policies"] dominate their political activity.

Now, in the wake of the war between Egypt and Libya, they have started a new campaign to "defend the Libyan revolution" — by which they mean Col. Gaddafi's military dictatorship.

In the past the WRP has proclaimed the slogan "defend the Arab Revolution" without defining what exactly it is.

Now they let the cat out of the bag in a joint statement with Gaddafi's "Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya" printed in the *Newsline* of 10th August under the heading "Anti-Imperialist Alliance", along with a "comment" from the *Newsline* and a large picture of one of the WRP's marches superimposed on a Libyan demonstration.

The *Newsline* tried to justify this by reference to the united front: "it allows both parties to unite to strike a united blow against imperialism while marching separately and preserving their ideological differences. This is entirely in the spirit and tradition of Bolshevism".

Leaving aside the question of whether the united front involves the leaders of bonapartist governments, whether Bolshevism's relation to such leaders is just one of "ideological differences", and where the alleged "blow against imperialism" is, the "differences" are nowhere to be seen, either in the joint statement or in the *Newsline's* uncritical comment on it.

We learn that "Colonel Gaddafi is not a communist" — a slight understatement for someone who talks about rooting out Marxism because it's opposed to the principles of the

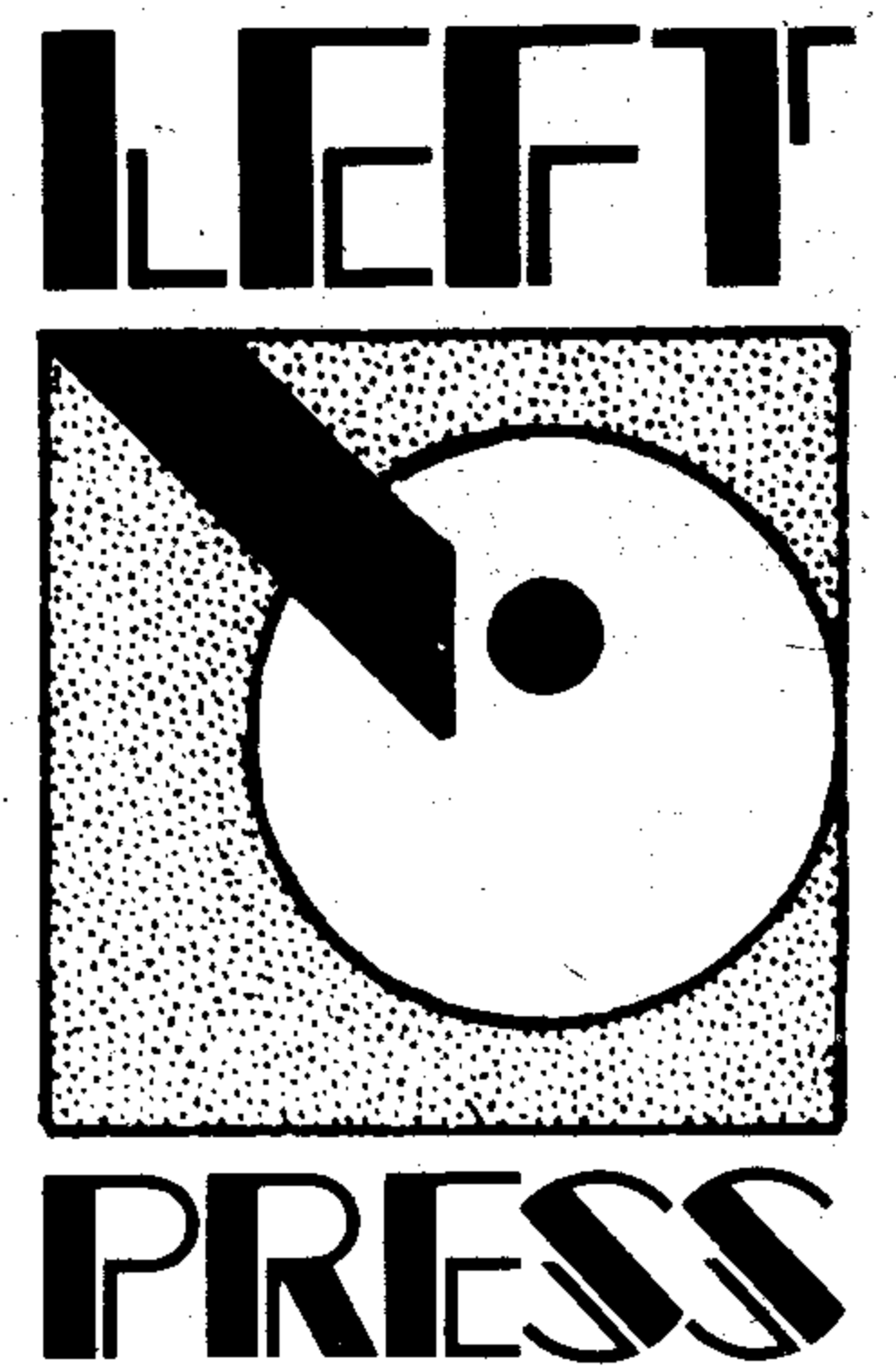
Pipers for Libya's tune

Islamic religion (*Newsline* doesn't mention this). Nor does this description well fit a man who captured the leaders of the Communist Party of Sudan as they fled after an uprising attempt and handed them over to the Sudan government which hanged them.

After conceding that Gaddafi is less than a model communist, *Newsline* declares "The WRP steadfastly defends the conquests of the Libyan revolution and its leader Col Gaddafi..." Readers are not told what these conquests are except that Libya has "used its oil revenues to develop the economy" and that "unlike Sadat, the Colonel enjoys universal (sic!) support among the Libyan workers and peasants".

This 'criticism' sounds very much like that which the "Friends of the Soviet Union" made of Stalin in the 1930s. If this is criticism, who needs praise?

It becomes clear just what the WRP means by the 'defence of the Arab revolution' — nothing more than the defence of the pan-Arabist nationalism combined with state capitalist nationalisations represented by Nasserism. "The Libyan Jamahiriya... today represents the continuation of the 1952 revolution [in which Egyptian army officers including Nasser overthrew the monarchy], the incar-



nation of the hopes of unity and liberation cynically trampled on by Sadat." And the *Newsline's* "Comment" glowingly describes the Libyan programme as "not only democratic but imbued with a spirit of revolt against world imperialism and with the vision of a united Arab nation", never mentioning that Gaddafi is, above all, trying to create a religious Islamic state.

Indeed, the very name Jamahiriya expresses the idea of an Islamic Arab family or tribe and aims to deny both the idea that classes exist and that a state exists as an instrument of the oppression of certain classes by the Libyan ruling class.

The WRP also takes the anti-Zionist rhetoric at face value, ignoring the fact that many Arab states have used such rhetoric while betraying the Palestinians and their allies.

The WRP has made shameful opportunist moves in the past, such as their support for Mao in the Chinese "Cultural Revolution".

Their support for Gaddafi goes far beyond this to the points where there are formal links between the WRP and the Libyan regime, and where these formal links clearly require public adulation of the "Libyan Revolution".

Is it a case of "he who pays the piper calls the tune"? We can't say, but we can say that it is another giant step of this sect on its road to irrelevance and to the abandonment of every vestige of those Trotskyist principles it has so dogmatically parroted for so long.

WAR AND CORPSES - LAST HOPE OF THE RICH



A WORLD WAR ONE army padre preaches a sermon. Out of his mouth comes a stream of bombs and bullets.

The drawing, entitled "Holy Words", is by George Grosz, and is included in a London exhibition mainly about the photo-montages of Grosz's friend and collaborator John Heartfield.

What Grosz put into that drawing, Heartfield was to 'photograph', having freed the camera to combine different ideas like a drawing can: a vast cathedral made up of bombs, topped with dollar and pound signs with a swastika for crosses; a snarling wolf stalking a body-strewn battlefield, round its neck a war medal, on its head a shiny top hat; Hitler as a puppet manipulated by the German industrialist Thyssen; a family sitting down to a dinner of nuts and bolts and iron rods, after Goering had declared that "Iron and steel make Germany strong, but butter makes the people fat."

The technique of making up a composite picture was in fact pioneered by Grosz and Heartfield together in Berlin in 1916.

As Grosz later recalled, "On a piece of cardboard we pasted a mishmash of advertisements ... and photographs from picture papers, cut up at will in such a way as to say, in pictures, what would have been banned by the censors if we had said it in words. In this way we made postcards supposed to have been sent home from the Front."

Later, "Heartfield was moved to develop what started as an inflammatory political



joke into a conscious artistic technique."

Their circle in war-time Berlin was fiercely in favour of a German defeat. "Only a bad harvest can save us" was one of their slogans. They made a point of speaking English in public, and it was then that the young man born Helmut Herzfeld changed his name to John Heartfield.

When the War ended, the Berlin grouping of artists and writers enrolled into the international "anti-art" Dada-ist movement, which had started in Zurich in 1915, mainly in response to the war.

Dadaism claimed that it

had "ceased to take an aesthetic attitude to life", and set out to outrage and scandalise those who they thought were treating art as Holy Writ: Marcel Duchamp, for instance, drew a moustache on a reproduction of Mona Lisa and captioned it with an obscene slogan.

Though Dadaism hated the bloated capitalist establishment and was uncompromising in its opposition to the war, most of the movement wasn't very clear what it was for. Once the war was over, only a few felt positively inspired by the anti-capitalist revolutions and movements of the time. Most of these "committed" Dada-

ists were in Berlin, where the 1919 uprising was brutally suppressed under their very eyes.

Elsewhere Dadaism was, under a veneer of irreverence, just as "aesthetic" as the High Art it despised. The leading Dadaist painters — Hans Arp, Max Ernst, Kurt Schwitters and even Duchamp have joined the ranks of this century's "greats" whether they wished it or not.

Nihilistic and irrational though it was, the movement generated a prodigious energy. In Heartfield its hell-raising irreverence and gallows humour was turned into a mighty political weapon, at its sharpest in the thirties against the newly victorious Nazis.

The technique of photo-montage itself was also largely a Dada product, born of the explosive energy and the urge to dislocate and disarrange the usual order of words and images. "We called this process photo-montage because it embodied our refusal to play the part of the artist. We regarded ourselves as engineers, and our work as construct-

ion: we assembled our work, like a fitter."

To emphasise the transience of their work, Dadaists at one exhibition in Cologne provided a chopper for the spectators to use to smash the exhibits (and it was used!). Heartfield had no need for such blunt instruments. Because it addressed itself to the most urgent and brutal questions of his time, his work had its greatest impact there and then, on the millions who saw it and understood its message because it was fashioned from their own experience.



Ron Vandy reviews the exhibition of John Heartfield's photo-montages

at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, Nash House, The Mall, from noon to 8pm every day.



"A thousand years of in-breeding have purified my race".

FROM CENTRE PAGE

entrance of the notorious 'Death Squadron' onto the political scene. This was a clandestine assassination squad whose members were drawn usually from the police and army. These animals, who had previously 'solved' Rio de Janeiro's beggar 'problem' by drowning as many beggars as they could find in Guanabara Bay, now searched for new victims, shooting trade union activists, journalists, radical priests, and anyone else opposed to 'God, Family, Nation'. For its part, the government published a new law on 'subversion' threat-

THE REIGN OF TERROR IN BRAZIL

ening death not only to armed insurgents but also to editors, publishers, and distributors of anything 'hostile' to the regime.

The repression of 1968-70 devastated the armed organisations of the left. Many revolutionary militants, such as Carlos Marighela, a former member of the CP, lost their lives. It has to be said that the decision to mount an all-out armed struggle was folly in the aftermath of a decline in the mass movement. Some of the best elements of the Brazilian revolutionary vanguard were destroyed in this period.

Since 1973 the Brazilian 'economic miracle' has turn-

ed sour, and this threatens the future of the dictatorship. The oil crisis has created a situation where about three quarters of export income now goes towards servicing the foreign debt and paying for oil imports, although despite this the economy still managed to expand by 9.6% in 1974. The continued rise in the cost of living has hit the working class, which has had its wages held back since the coup. The recent strikes of miners and bus drivers are an indication of the coming wages explosion in Brazil.

President Geisel has tried to prevent a strike wave by allowing wage increases,

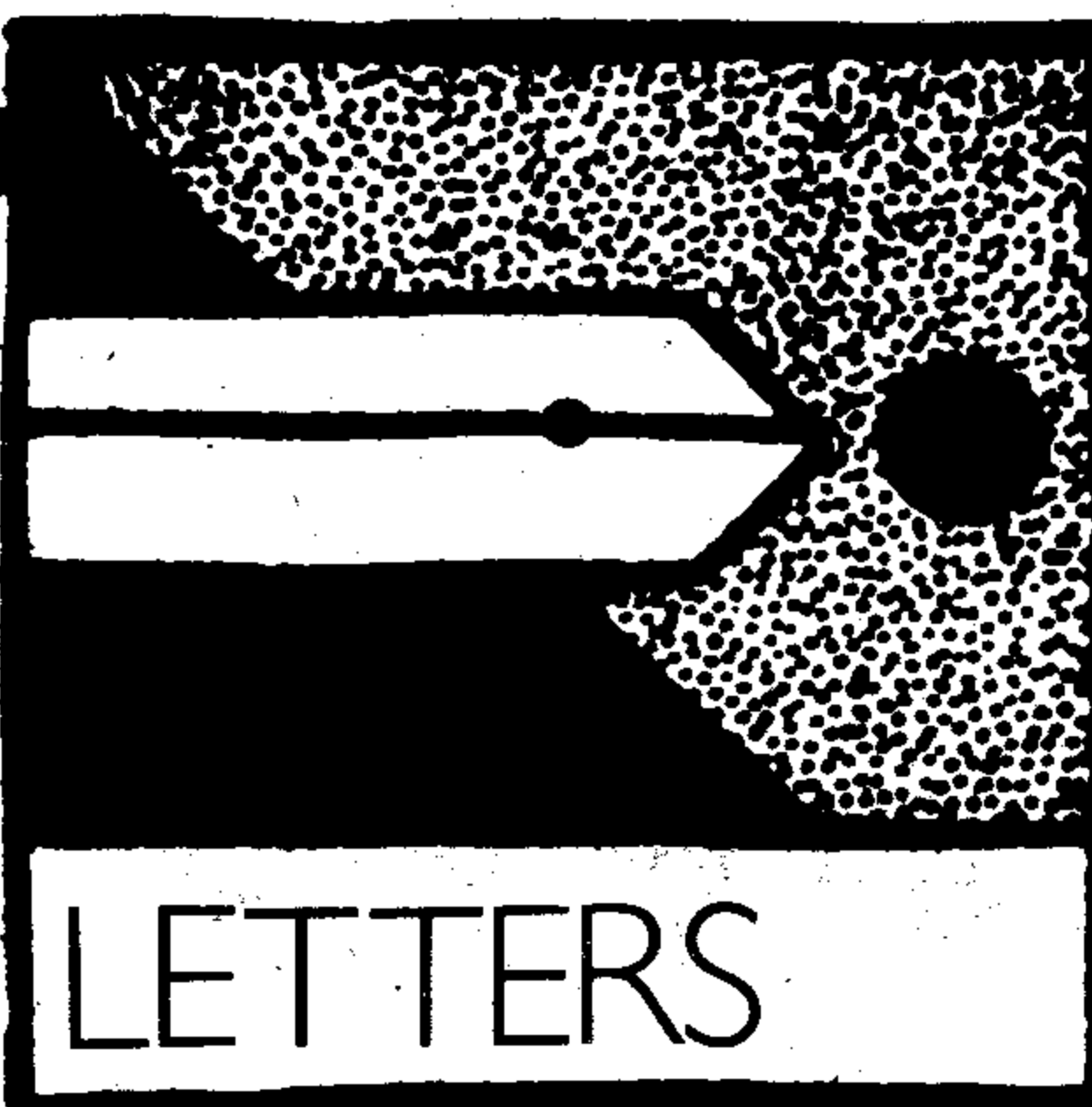
but he has been blocked by the army high command. In justifying their rebuff of the President, one General commented, "Geisel believed he had been made President by the Brazilian people. In fact, we made him President".

Geisel like others before him has fallen foul of the hardliners over 'liberalisation'. The fact that the next Brazilian President will be General Joao Batista Figueiredo, presently boss of SNI, rules out the possibility of any other response to dissent than repression. Yet the bourgeoisie is worried about the crudeness of this policy.

The regime can jail 800 students in Belo Horizonte, but Brazil's jails are not big enough for the entire working class. The resentment against the regime is growing, and the bourgeoisie hope that re-democratisation on Spanish lines can be achieved in Brazil as the most effective method of countering dissent.

Whether this can be done without sparking mass radicalisation is the problem for them, especially since the CP and the nationalists are discredited in the eyes of the masses and Brazil's workers are open to revolutionary ideas.

Why was
unity right
in 1968
but
wrong
now?



Dear comrades,

I am writing to express a certain confusion over the article *The Long Quest for Far Left Unity*, in *Workers' Action* 65. The article was attempting to contrast the IS unity call in 1968 with the call now being put out by *Socialist Challenge*. However it was not made clear how the first was a great opportunity that should not have been, but was in fact, missed, and the second is an unprincipled exercise based on blurring political distinctions.

Where is the difference? Is it just in the number of unaligned, newly radicalised workers and youth around in 1968? But *Socialist Challenge* argues that there are thousands of people who could be drawn into revolutionary politics now.

If it is just a question of differing political estimates (whether these people exist or not) then that hardly justifies accusations of 'unprincipled blocs' etc. Or is it that *Socialist Challenge's* 'unity' represents a fundamentally different conception of how a revolutionary party is built, not understanding that 'clear programmatic agree-

ment' is necessary if it is not to become a loose social democratic federation or a rotten bloc? But if this is the case, where was the clear programmatic basis of the IS 1968 Unity call? The four points, against racism, imperialism, wage controls, for workers' control, though they might form the basis for united front activity, are less adequate programmatically than *Socialist Challenge's* 'Our Policies', and certainly could not form the basis for the construction of a Leninist party.

You point out that the IMG in 1968 opposed the unity call because it would 'blur the political distinctions', and then go on to argue, "Perhaps it would have done. But it would probably also have massively enlarged the entire revolutionary left. And within that the IMG could have fought for its specific politics".

But that is almost identical with what the IMG argue now!

If it is wrong now, it was wrong then. If not blurring the political differences is important in 1977, so is it in 1968 or at any other time. And any position that says it's OK to create political confusion, so long as larger rather than smaller numbers of people are won to revolutionary politics, is dangerously short-sighted opportunism. How can we say what is 'revolutionary' politics in this confused situation?

MARK BYRNE



ATTACK ON DIRECT WORKS THREATENS MORE LUMP AND MORE DOLE

"ONCE upon a time a painter tried to get a job at a council direct works department but was rejected because he hadn't been apprentice trained. Lo and behold, this 'unfortunate' man set himself up in business and a few months later won a contract to paint 900 council houses, thus receiving many pots of gold from the same council. He bought himself a jewel-encrusted ermine paintbrush and lived happily ever after".

Since the Labour government promised its Liberal chums that it would do nothing to extend direct works, and the Tories won a landslide victory in the local council elections, direct works have looked decidedly unhealthy. The Tories have made it clear that they will do their best to put money the way of their friends in the building trade, and the three main construction employers' federations have launched their campaign attacking local authority employees under slogans like "Building a better Britain".



The resistance to this offensive was shown by the support for the half-day strike called by the Yorkshire region of UCATT. Over 1000 building workers marched through Sheffield to the City Hall, where they heard councillor Jack Senior of Sheffield Direct Works department and members of the local and national UCATT speak on the need to extend direct labour and pay a wage in parity with the private sector.

A speaker from Birmingham UCATT made the point that the dismantling of direct works by the Tories opened the way for the lump. The direct works schemes are part of UCATT's campaign to decasualise an industry

where one in ten workers are still casual and to establish a closed shop.

Pay is a key issue. Low pay is driving workers out of local authority employment. Many workers take home only around £30. Local authority cuts threaten to increase the 250,000 unemployed builders to almost half a million, while three million people lack a house and millions more live in substandard accommodation. As one speaker said, building workers want to build houses, hospitals and schools, not office blocks.

After the meeting UCATT regional secretary George Brumwell said that more than £6 was necessary for parity with private industry, and that they would fight for parity with any new increase

in the private sector. Local authorities are offering 3% plus 3% differential in November while attacking overtime rates and bonuses.

Vacancies are not being filled, and Tory councils are calling on the Direct Works departments to "put their houses in order" before any more work goes to them. Meanwhile maintenance is not being done, or is being botched by "cowboy" private contractors.

Obviously councils are not going to give the increase willingly, and November will see a sharp struggle. Meanwhile Labour Parties should mandate their councillors to over-budget and pay the increase to workers employed by Labour-controlled councils.

MICK WOODS

REPLY:

What's wrong is not
unity but false pretences

IF THE I.M.G. had joined in the IS-Workers' Fight unity in 1968, the united organisation would have been something much more than the sum of its parts. It would have been the pole of attraction for almost all serious revolutionaries in this country. Revolutionary Marxists would be inside it, fighting patiently but intransigently for complete clarity of ideas (a fight which might have led to splits).

IS made the call for unity in an opportunist way. The "4 points" platform was politically empty; the idea of the "urgent threat of fascism" with which the unity was motivated was completely demagogic.

Nevertheless, in IS's position, revolutionary Marxists would have been duty-bound in 1968 to make a call for unity — and not just a call for unity which said "Join us, on the basis of our programme".

Is there just a difference of estimates between such a unity call and the IMG's current efforts? Formally, yes. In reality, no.

The sort of diplomatic consortium which *Socialist Challenge* represents — and the sort of omnibus 'class struggle left wing' which it 'projects' as a mirage on the horizon — are different in kind, not just in degree, from real revolutionary unity.

Marxists fight against all

sorts of political confusion. But the political confusion which represents the immaturity and inexperience of a genuine new revolutionary vanguard is quite a different thing from the confusion which represents the manoeuvres of experienced politicians. *Socialist Challenge* represents the second sort of confusion — and tries to pass itself off as the first.

The common characteristic of the groups which have supported *Socialist Challenge* — Big Flame, Workers' League, etc — is that they lack definite ideas or principles, or a clear purpose in life. It is not a particularly progressive activity for the IMG to prop up these dismal sects. But the fundamental problem with *Socialist Challenge* does not lie there.

The problem is passing off bad coin for good — passing off the shop-front 'unity' (i.e. agreeing to differ) of a few small groups as revolutionary unity, passing off a vague platform of four points as the basis for a revolutionary party, passing off empty organisational rules from the Second International as Bolshevism, passing off speculations about a future broad left-reformist mish-mash (the 'class struggle left wing') as the united front in action.

But we should not throw out the good coin of revolutionary unity with the bad.

workers' ACTION

supporters' groups

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Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Newtown,
Northampton, Nottingham,
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Write for details of meetings & activities to:
WASG, 49 Carnac Street, London SE27

WORKERS IN ACTION

Toolrooms 'go it alone' again

ON MONDAY 8th August, 2,000 Leyland toolmakers, meeting at Birmingham Town Hall, voted to support Roy Fraser's proposal to withdraw from the "working party" where British Leyland management and unions are negotiating on wages and conditions.

The toolmakers are demanding separate negotiating rights, restoration of craft differentials, and parity between toolmakers in different plants.

Over the last two years, the toolmakers have refused to elect representatives to the union negotiating committees in Leyland factories. In March this year, their resentment reached the point of taking strike action. They returned to work with a promise that the "working party" would look into the problem of their differentials.

The March strike was a challenge to Phase 2 and one of a series of blows that were to prove deadly to the Government's plans for a Phase 3. The present toolmakers' "go-it-alone" move is not the same thing at all.

If the toolmakers strike again,

then of course they must be fully supported. But there is a grave risk that their present action could lead to a disastrous fragmentation of trade union solidarity in the ranks of Leyland workers.

In Longbridge, for instance, electricians, millwrights, the transport section, and the sheet metal workers are all talking of following the toolmakers' example. Fragmentation already exists

in the ranks of the toolmakers, with the Triumph Canley and Rover toolrooms going their own way, separate from Roy Fraser's committee.

The real responsibility for the present splits, and the

threat of future splits, lies at the door of the trade union leadership in Leyland: the British Leyland Trade Union Committee, led by Longbridge convenor Derek Robinson and other members of the Communist Party.

In March, the convenors and senior stewards in the BL Trade Union Committee not only failed to support the toolroom strikers, they openly attacked them. At present they are putting forward no demand for an adequate wage increase for Leyland workers. Instead, they look like accepting — sooner or later — the "corporate bargaining" system which will take bargaining power away from the shop floor and weaken the wages fight even more.

Only a wage demand which restores and defends the living standards of Leyland workers can lay the basis for unity. That means an increase of about £30 before tax, plus a clause guaranteeing that wages rise monthly in line with the cost of living. And parity between the different Leyland factories must be fought for and won — without strings — on top of that.

Lucas strike threatens lay-offs

1,000 TOOLMAKERS in the Lucas combine have been on strike since 4th July in a dispute over bonus payments.

14,000 workers have been laid off in Lucas, and — at the time of writing — 2,000 in Leyland, at Abingdon and Cowley. 3,750 workers on the Marina line at Cowley were, however, recalled to work on 15th August after Leyland found alternative supplies.

Although the Lucas toolmakers' dispute has been made official by the AUEW, the union has put out no call for the blacking of alternative supplies. Lucas toolmakers have had a

separate agreement since the late 1960s, while the production workers still negotiate factory by factory. Bonus payments, linked to productivity and negotiated as part of the toolroom agreement, have mounted up since the 1960s to £7.85 per week.

The toolmakers are demanding £5 increase in the bonus. The management's latest offer is 49p increase plus £1 to "buy out" the bonus agreement. On 12th August the toolmakers voted to reject this offer and continue their strike.

Lucas production workers have demonstrated against the fact that they have been laid

off without pay, but their demonstrations have been directed against the bosses. Though the production workers have not yet put in their own claims, they realise that a defeat for the toolmakers will also be a defeat for them.

And that, it seems, is what the Lucas bosses realise, too. If they defeat the toolmakers on the bonus issue they can hope to torpedo the chances of either toolmakers or production workers winning big increases on the annual claim.

Messages of support and donations to: R. Morris, 649 Church Road, Yardley, Birmingham 33.

EVENTS

FRIDAY 19 AUGUST. Grunwicks Strike Committee benefit social. From 7pm at Alexandra Palace, Palm Court Room. Tickets £1.

TUESDAY 23 AUGUST. Trade Union Conference on Grunwicks, called by South-East region TUC and region no.1 T&GWU. 3 delegates each from major trade union bodies; credentials from J. Dromey, 13 Plympton Rd, London NW6 7EH.

SUNDAY 4 SEPTEMBER. International-Communist League public meeting on "The Transitional Programme and Trotskyism Today". Speaker: Ian Macaulay. 8pm at the 'Roebuck', 108a Tottenham Court Rd (Warren St underground).

MONDAY 5 SEPTEMBER. Lobby of the TUC Congress, called by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions. 11am, Winter Gardens, Blackpool.

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Financial Times picks a fight

PEARSON LONGMAN, the parent company of the Westminster Press, who are engaged in a battle with the NUJ over the issue of the closed shop in Darlington, are now involved in another dispute, at the Financial Times. This one, too, could be long and bitter.

The dispute began when the management said that they would deduct money from the pay of the printers (members of the NGA) if they did not turn up for the whole of their shift.

During 1975, when the economy was slack and the Financial Times thin, the printers fixed up a rota so that they went home if there was no work to do. A verbal agreement between the head printer (now

dead) and management okayed the situation.

Two years later, with the system still in operation, management claimed that they did not recognise the agreement or even know of its existence. The dispute escalated and 46 printers were sacked, with management claiming that they dismissed themselves by not turning up for work.

The matter was taken to arbitration. The arbitrators offered to hold the disputed money if the printers would go back to work while the matter was sorted out. The printers voted against this idea and decided to stay out, knowing that there was no guarantee that they would see the money again.

The union are claiming that the

printers' time off is theirs by right of "custom and practice". They will go back to work only on the "status quo", defined as the situation that has been in existence since 1975.

The management will not accept this.

It is clear that this is going to be a long dispute. There is more at stake than just docked pay. For a long time the FT has been trying to introduce "new technology", which will mean redundancies for many of the printers. This dispute looks like a way of provoking a showdown with the NGA in the hope of weakening the union and enabling the management to carry out the rationalisations they want.

CLARE RUSSELL

Batchelors hide behind social contract

1350 T&GWU members at Batchelors in Sheffield and Worksop have now been out for four weeks to get the remainder of the £6 rise promised them in 1975.

In December 1975 workers at Batchelors received a 10% rise and amounts ranging from £1.25 to £3.26 were deducted from the £6 then permissible under the Social Contract. The union is now demanding that the company honour its promise and pay the outstanding sums.

The company has claimed that the rise would defeat the purpose of the social contract and would injure the new pay policy; but in any case the union has replied that it wants the rise "as and when permissible".

The company has made an offer of £2.00 to everyone from August 1st, conditional on the loss of 40 jobs by natural wastage and de-manning on 'G' and 'H' lines and 'Concorde' from August 1st. It also offers 12 months job security and profit sharing of 50/50 on money saved by de-manning, excluding costs.

Obviously no-one is daft enough to accept a productivity deal of this type, and the strikers are clear that the company is manoeuvring to cut jobs. As the union recognises, "One man's unemployment is another man's wage rise". Dirty tricks are being tried such as sending letters to employees containing less than honest details of the company's offer.

Meanwhile the strike is solid and morale on the picket line is high. AUEW members in Sheffield have put on a weekly levy of 50p, and are blacking anything which crosses the picket line.

A few ASTMS members are scabbing on the strike and bringing stationery through the picket line, but this is a minor factor. Batchelors are losing millions of pounds from lost production, and they can divert

only a small percentage of the harvest to Ashford in Kent, where GMWU members are still working.

The Social Security have received information from Batchelors about employees' deposits in the company savings bank, and have told some strikers to live on their savings.

Send money and messages of support to: Vin Knight, 42 Grimsell Crescent, Sheffield S6 1AJ. MICK WOODS

Unity wins at Co-Op

A STRIKE lasting five days at the Co-Operative Wholesale Society Packing factory, Pollard St, Manchester, ended in victory for the workers due to the active support of other CVS depots.

The strike started on Thursday 4th August when ten women were sent home. Management had put them on new flour packing machines that had been blacked until negotiations for increased bonus had been completed.

All production areas of the factory stopped work in support, and occupied the canteen, but still management insisted: "Work — or go home".

The next day, the strike started in earnest. A strike committee was formed and picket

lines were set up.

On Friday morning a non-union lorry driver burst through the picket line, injuring two women.

This other face of your 'caring, sharing Co-Op' brought about a full stoppage at CVS depots at Briscoe Lane and Urmston, and the Co-Op overlords soon capitulated to the Pollard St packers' demands.

The lessons learnt from this strike are that united action in support of other workers wins.

But this support has to be organised. A meeting of all Co-Op workers who are prepared to organise to carry on the fight is to be held in Manchester on for details contact Mike Reppon, 122 Stamford St, Trafford, Manchester 16. JOHN DOUGLAS

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