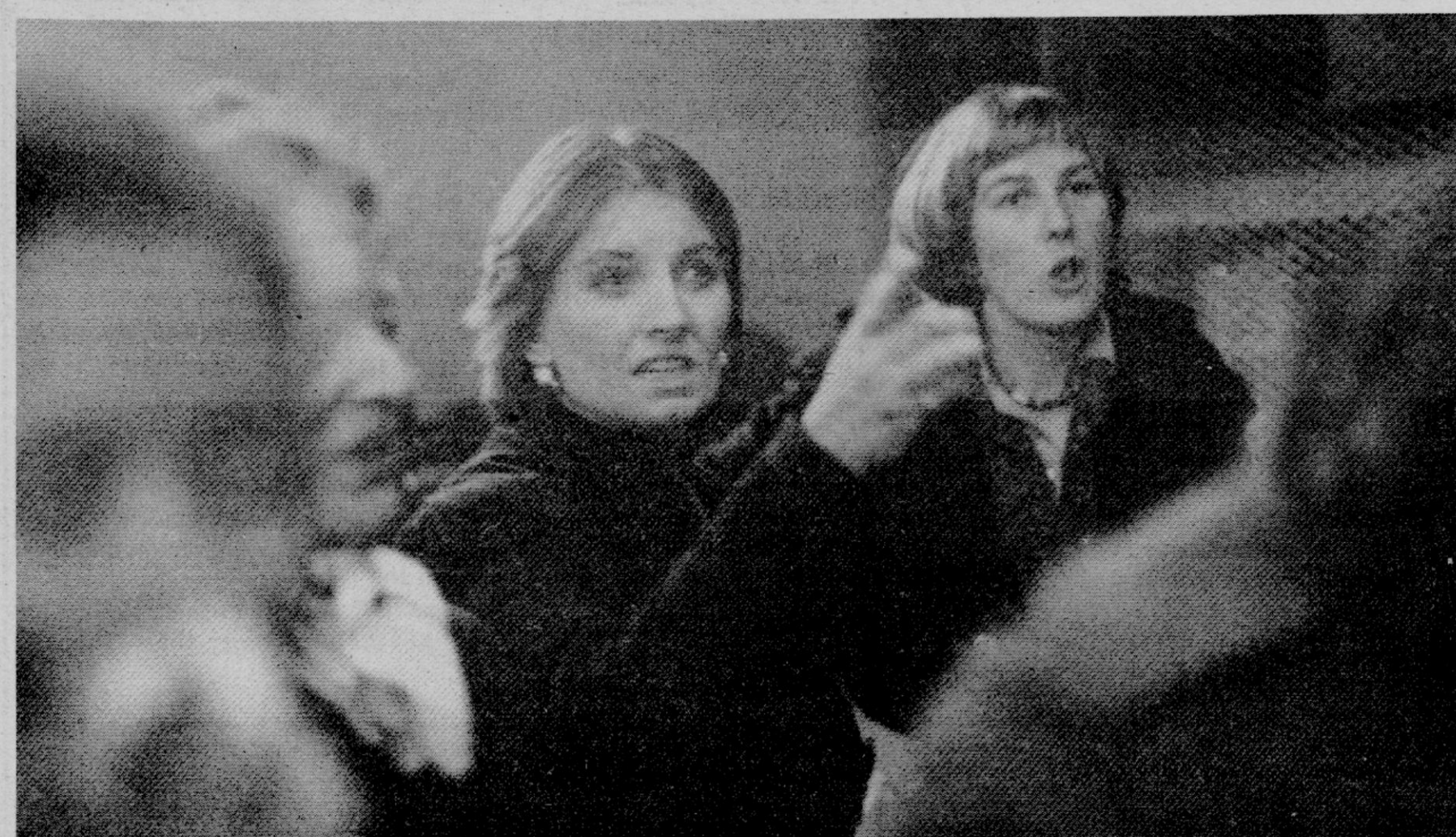




ANGRY tenants and a perplexed housing manager at Benledi Street housing office, Liverpool. The tenants occupied the office to protest at conditions in Haigh Heights, where five people died in a fire. The occupation began in the morning and tenants demanded to see housing chairman Trevor Jones. Officials said he couldn't be found. Tenants said they would stay all night. Miraculously, as teatime drew near, Councillor Jones was found. Councillor Jones promised the tenants families from the flats would be rehoused in January, and electrical wiring checked. In return, the tenants have promised Councillor Jones dramatic action "every couple of days" if he doesn't keep his word.

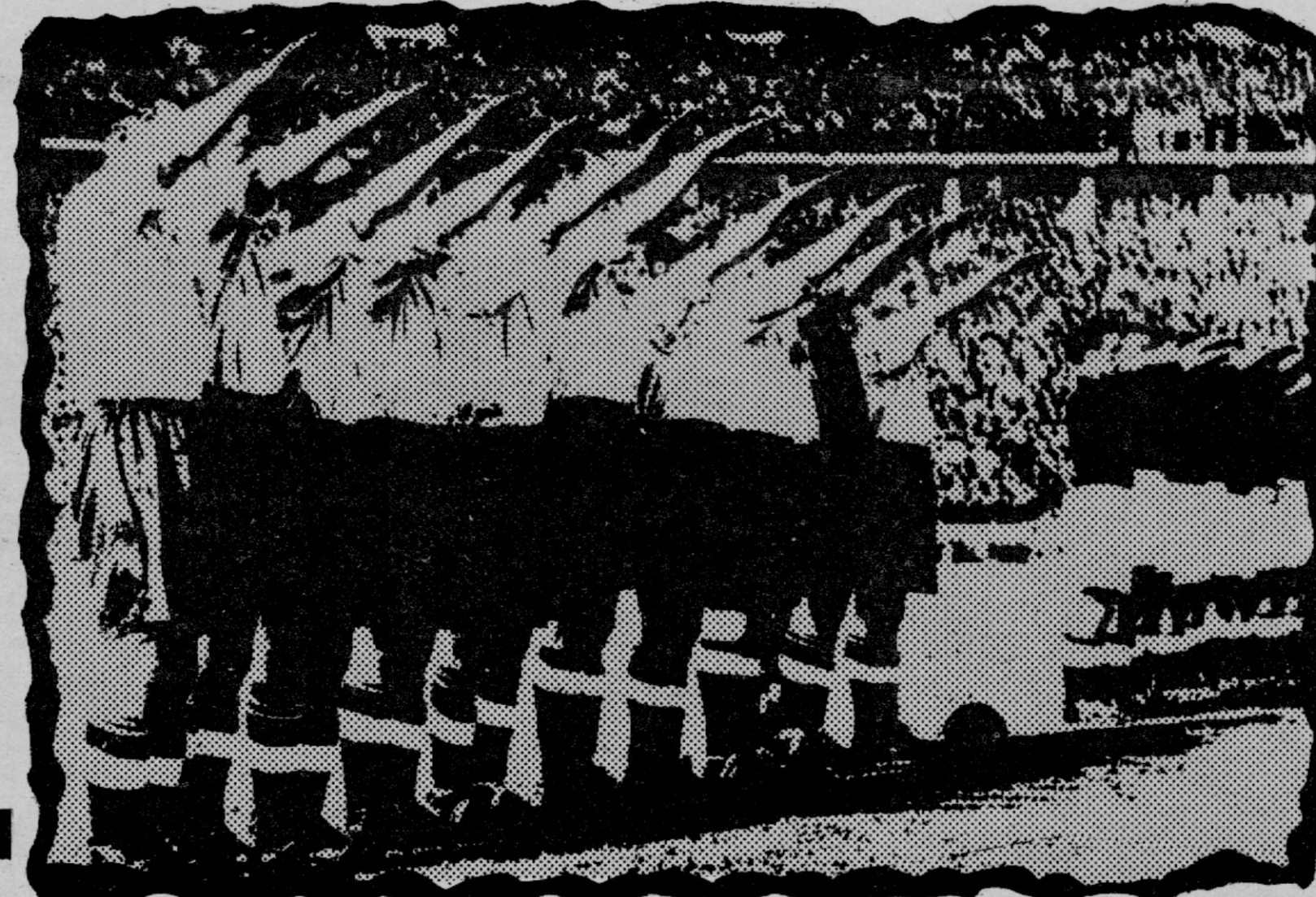


Chemical ship: why the dispute

THE 55,000-ton container ship, Mary Elizabeth, is being converted into a floating chemical plant to manufacture tetrafluorides. The contractors, International Process Industries (UK) Ltd, claim the project is unique. They say it will be the first such plant in the world and, if successful, more orders will follow. The scheme originated in South Africa, although IPI's public relations men were told to keep that quiet. The company had, in fact, overestimated trade union concern over issues like apartheid. And news of the South African connection hardly raised a murmur. From IPI's point of view, things got off to a bad start. Their offer of a two-day trip to Frankfurt to see a model of the plant and, no doubt, to have a good time as well, was accepted by officials from eight unions - but turned down by the boilermakers. These other unions eventually accepted unusual working arrangements aboard the Mary Elizabeth on a "one-off" basis. And at a meeting with the company on February 24, 1974, attended by boilermakers' officials, it was agreed that the contract should be dealt with in three stages: ship repair, site-construction (quayside), and plant erection aboard ship. The dispute, which has led to the occupation of the ship by the boiler-

makers and the sacking of the other 150 men on the site, is basically over how much of the plant erection on the ship is exclusively the work of the boilermakers - and how much should be done by other workers who normally erect chemical plants on dry land. Barry Williams, district union official for the boilermakers puts his case clearly. "The role of the trade unions is to protect wages and conditions and not to sell jobs for new practices and techniques." As far as he is concerned, the work aboard the Mary Elizabeth is "modification of a ship." It is no different from, say, work on a whale factory ship. And members of his union should do all the work they normally do in shipyards. "This ship wasn't brought here to put shipbuilders out of work," he said. But the other workers say the boilermakers are demanding even more work on the Mary Elizabeth than they would do normally. They point out that the boilermakers had 106 men on the project against only 150 from all eight other unions. Site convenor Ronnie Round, of the AUEW (Construction Section): "The boilermakers are saying that once plant goes over the ship's side it's their work. We are the people who are skilled to erect these plants - this is our normal work. "You can't call the erection of an ammonia plant on a ship, ship

ALL IN THE GAME...



Right: Nazi salutes from the England team at an international with Germany in the 1930s.

National contests versus back street friendlies

I HAVE already described in the two previous articles how the modern game of football, played at a professional level, has developed into something much more than a game. The involvement of businessmen, local politicians and the Government, via links with the FA Council, have produced a situation where football has now developed at an international level, along with many other sports, into an offshoot of political diplomacy and as a means of channelling aggressive nationalism into peaceful and controllable directions.

By Andy Wiggins

George Orwell once wrote that "at an international level sport is like mimic warfare. But the significant thing is not the behaviour of the players but the attitude of the spectators who work themselves into a fury over these contests and seriously believe that running, jumping and kicking a ball are tests of national virtue... There cannot be much doubt that the whole thing is bound up with the rise of nationalism... that is with the modern habit of identifying oneself with large power units and seeing everything in terms of competitive prestige." If you don't agree with this, the next time that you find yourself watching a replay of the 1966 World Cup Final between England and West Germany, ask yourself why you were

"This is the first time the TUC has interfered in football. I hope it will be the last." - FA President

in 1930 by FIFA as football's equivalent to the Olympic Games marks the beginning of the growth of the nationalism which now dominates international football. The Italian side which won the World Cup in 1934 by playing a most brutal, aggressive style of football, reflected the political atmosphere of fascist Italy which demanded success at any price. When in the following year a German side visited England, the Jewish community, supported by the TUC, demanded that the game be cancelled. True to form, the then president of the FA, Sir Charles Clegg, commented: "We as English sportsmen desire to express our regret at the

annoyance to which our visitors have been subjected. This is the first time the TUC has interfered in football. I hope it will be the last." As a gesture of political goodwill the German side fought bravely but lost 3-0. The England team's gesture on their visit to Germany (see photo above) was a far more visible one. On a more general level it wasn't until after the Second World War that the British, along with other major imperial powers, began to actively encourage spectator sports in the colonies. They had been held back by fear of the political trouble which might arise if a large crowd got "out of hand."

This attitude was in many respects similar to that of the nobility in pre-industrial society, who feared large crowds because a mobile state controlled policing force did not exist to quash any large-scale disturbances. Orwell's comments were limited to the international sporting scene. From the footballing point of view a more interesting point to examine would be whether the characteristics of nationalism which creep into the game at an international level can also be found at a local and national level. A further related issue is whether the energy invested into shouting for one's team on a Saturday afternoon acts as a safety valve for those who feel frustrated and oppressed in our society to channel their aggression into socially controllable directions.

NO RAPTUROUS APPLAUSE

The tens of thousands who play football every weekend on park pitches throughout the country do so not to earn the rapturous applause of thousands of fans or millions of viewers, but merely for the peculiar pleasure they get from kicking a ball. Every one of these players has to pay subs to buy kit and to pay referees and ground fees. At this level there are usually more arguments in the dressing room as to whose turn it is to put up the nets than about an individual's performance.

In back streets too the game of football exhibits few of the characteristics which are associated with it at the professional level. An important part of the game here is the common agreement as to what the rules are to be - e.g. play until 5 p.m. no off-side, the height of the line which needs to be drawn as a cross-bar. These rules also have to bend to allow for passing cars, the quality of street-lighting etc. If, as sometimes happens, one side is better than the other, then, after sufficient protests the players often gather together to work out fairer sides to make a better game of it. Can you imagine Liverpool leading Everton 8-1 at half-time and the players getting together in the dressing rooms to reshuffle the sides to make a better game!



A SENSE OF IDENTITY

Attendance at a big First Division match, or better still a local Merseyside derby, would, I feel, provide a lot of evidence to support the view that football at this level offers an opportunity for one's sense of identity with a team to be expressed in an aggressively vocal and, sometimes, violent way. The word 'fan' itself is short for fanatic, who may be defined as "someone who redoubles his effort once he has forgotten his aim." My own personal feeling is - and I would welcome comment on this - that whilst a football match may enable rival fans to reinforce their sense of identification with their team by, at times, totally refusing to acknowledge the other side's existence as individuals... The players

are the collective opposition, so that to an Arsenal fan a cockney playing for Liverpool would be a "Scouse bastard" whilst to an Everton fan a Liverpudlian playing for Newcastle would become a "Geordie bastard." The game of football is not intrinsically connected with these attitudes - these must be located within the wider context of our society.

Then in the 1880s local businessmen and politicians became directors of the first professional clubs.

It was a way of gaining political and commercial prestige - as well as making lots of money.

Increasingly, governments too came to realise the value of football as a means of recruiting troops, boosting morale at home and national prestige abroad.

But few players and fans can learn the history of the game - and its side-effects - in the popular press. This is the third in a series of articles designed to plug the gap.



For Burnham-on-Crouch sea scouts it's the game that counts. In two seasons they conceded more than a thousand goals (they take it in turns to be goalie). In the match above they lost 42-0.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- 1. When and where did a Nazi swastika fly at an English football ground?
2. Which famous British football team refuses to sign Catholic players?
3. What have Field Marshall Montgomery, Sir Stanley Rous, the Earl of Derby and Air Marshall Broom in common?
4. Who said: "Give the nation six million bodies with flawless athletic training, all glowing with fanatical love of their country and inculcated with the highest offensive spirit, and in less than two years the national state will have created an army"?
5. Which organisation directed its members in 1946 "to take steps to prevent clubs letting their grounds or otherwise creating opportunities for female players to participate in irregular football matches"?
6. When and where did fans set fire to a ground, tear up the pitch, beat up policemen and chop up and burn the hoses of firemen called to attend the blaze?
7. Which football match provided an opportunity for the rulers of the countries involved to declare war against each other?

ANSWERS

- 1. In 1935 at White Hart Lane when England played Germany.
2. Glasgow Rangers.
3. They are all honorary vice-presidents of the FA.
4. Adolf Hitler in Mein Kampf.
5. The FA Council.
6. In 1929 at Hampden Park, Glasgow at a cup final between Celtic and Rangers.
7. A World Cup qualifying match between Honduras and El Salvador in 1969.