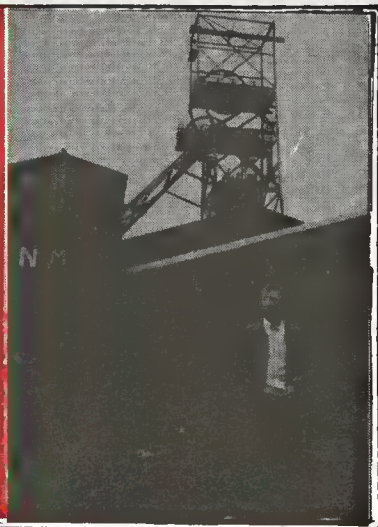


# Direct Action

Which  
Way  
Forward  
For The  
Miners? -  
interview  
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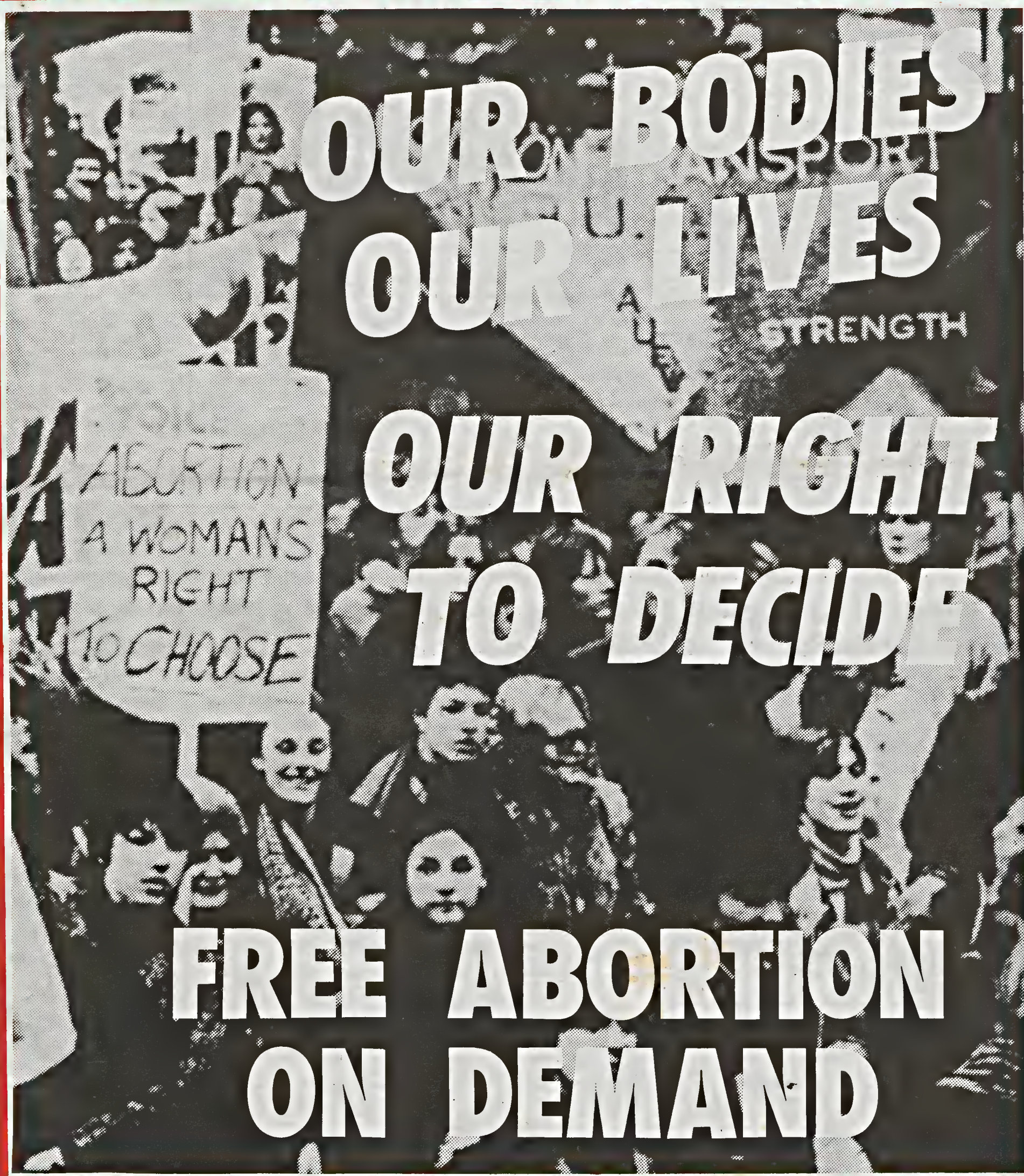


The Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism

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Paper of the Direct Action Movement - International Workers Association



# N.H.S: The Fight is On!

The recent strike by nurses at North Manchester general hospital and action taken since or threatened by other healthworkers are an inspiration. The 38 nurses on night duty struck for 24 hours over the government's proposed cut in special payments. This money would then supposedly fund the new pay rates for qualified nurses. Student nurses earn about £4,500 a year; fully qualified nurses £7,000-£8,600 - the Tories' answer to these appalling wages is to cut them further.

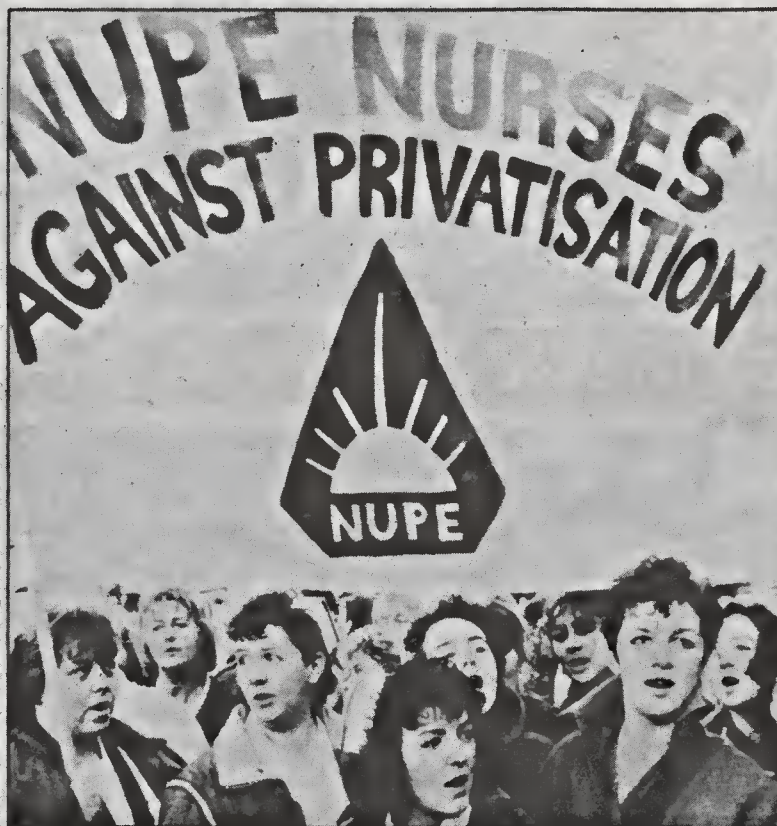
The government has since backed down over the cuts in special payments, saying it is not practical to make the cuts after all! Obviously they backed down because of the opposition and the threat of more industrial action. The recent actions have highlighted the state of the NHS; the conditions of those working in it; low pay; job cuts/closures; privatisation; long hours; and so on. It is now that healthworkers must take the offensive and fight for better pay, against all redundancies, closures and privatisation and for increased spending on healthcare.

The government quite obviously does not intend to increase NHS spending. They've talked of introducing "insurance schemes" to pay for the cost of treatment while in hospital, charging for hospital meals, even a "lottery" scheme! But clearly the NHS is being run down - Thatcher herself has stated that if the Tories win the next general election they intend to introduce a charge of £25 a night to stay in hospital and £10 to see a GP. These measures will obviously force people who can afford it to take out "insurance schemes" but tough luck for those who can't! Attacks on the NHS are

part of the generalised assault on working class living and working conditions - they go along with cuts in services, state benefits, education, mass unemployment, cuts in pay and the poll tax.

It is not consultants and professional bodies "speaking out", or the press with their latest sad story of a child dying or about to die, that will force the state to provide a better health service but healthworkers, united and willing to fight. Healthworkers do not need "public sympathy" but industrial solidarity from other workers. An attack on the NHS is an attack on the working class. Any attack on healthworkers is an attack on all workers.

The strikes in the health service are proof of growing anger among healthworkers. In mid-January blood donor assistants in Leeds, Edinburgh, Glasgow and elsewhere took industrial action over meal payments. In Coventry in November, healthworkers protesting over cuts were supported by miners, factory and office workers who all took a half day strike. Nurses at the Royal Edinburgh psychiatric hospital recently won a fight for increased staffing levels. Two selective strikes



were called, forcing NUPE and COHSE officials to call for indefinite strike action with support from electrical, ancillary and engineers. The health authority backed down and offered 60 extra nurses. The Royal College of Nursing, who condemned the strike, had previously been offered 35. Strike action was also taken by healthworkers in Scotland against privatisation.

## ONE-DAY STRIKES

Now 16,000 Scottish nurses are to take industrial action including a 1-day strike, a work to rule and an overtime ban while nurses at 3 hospit-

als in London have voted for a 1-day strike on February 3rd. Fellow workers at other hospitals up and down the country are to vote on whether or not to come out also. The fight for better conditions and a proper health service is well on its way. There must be an end to all the divisions within the health service. Nurses, porters, domestic staff, electrical workers have a common interest - more jobs, more pay, better service. It is rank and file action which will win these demands not clever talk from union bureaucrats. As Manchester, Scotland and Coventry show us the fight is well on its way.

## No Time For Talking

UNOFFICIAL STRIKES have hit nearly all of Fords' plants in Britain over the past few months in an effort to improve pay and conditions. Since October 30th Ford workers' section, and mass meetings at every site, have rejected further talks on Ford's pay offer of 5.5% with strings. Yet still top union officials such as Mick Murphy (Transport and General Workers' Union) and Jimmy Airle (Amalgamated Engineers Union) repeatedly go back and forth to Ford bosses groveling for a better deal.

The time for talking is over. Mass industrial action is the only language Ford will listen to. Only an all-out strike can win the union claim for a 10% increase, shorter working week, doubled productivity allowance, extra holidays, paternity leave and improved pensions. On January 20th Ford workers were balloted for industrial action. The result should be out soon after this edition of "Direct Action" goes to press but early reports suggest a large majority in favour. The past year was Ford's most successful year ever worldwide - profits in Britain alone were up 50%. Now is the perfect time for an all-out national strike to win decent pay and conditions.

A rank and file group of Ford workers can be contacted via: Ford Workers' Group ("The Combine"), c/o 634 Green Lane, Ilford, Essex.



# BELLOS WIELDS THE AXE

In Camden, a Labour council is re-patriating Irish families. In Labour-controlled Inner London Education Authority teachers were threatened with the sack for refusing to cover for absent colleagues and comply with Bakers' bill. Now Lambeth council the last bastion against rate-capping, has raised the axe against working class people. On 7th December the Labour group agreed to the latest budget prompting the resignation of eight councillors from leading positions on various committees as well as a 1-day strike by Lambeth NALGO on January 18th. The cuts are intended to reduce staff from 11,500 to 9,400 by March '89. Lambeth is in fact 1,100 understaffed at the moment as the previous budget included a 75% freeze on recruitment. This will cause massive reductions in services.

In housing, 12 neighbourhood and 5 district offices will close losing 450 jobs and meaning more misery for Lambeth's thousands of homeless and its beleaguered tenants. In social services 670 jobs will go, along with 18 beds in children's homes, 3 day nurseries, 3 old people's homes, 21 luncheon clubs, 4 meals on wheels staff, 30 home helps, 21 social workers and 9 community workers among others. In amenity services

411 jobs will be cut together with 6 one o'clock clubs and 4 adventure playgrounds besides a reduced library service and reduced opening hours in swimming pools and recreation centres. Linda Bellos who voted for the cuts has always been vocal on "equal opportunities" but these proposals mean further attacks on women in Lambeth who will bear the brunt of the childcare and welfare responsibility the council is shedding.



Lambeth during rate-capping days

The double-edged sword of this latest and most serious cuts budget attacks the council's own workers. The loss of 1100 jobs, they say, won't involve "compulsory redundancy" but "compulsory re-deployment". Staff will be offered 2 alternatives and 4 weeks in each job to reject the offer. If they refuse both jobs there is 20 minutes right of appeal. If this is lost then "appropriate action" will be taken which "may entail redundancy", to quote the council report. Linda Bellos has refused to

explain what "appropriate action" means but it doesn't take a vivid imagination!

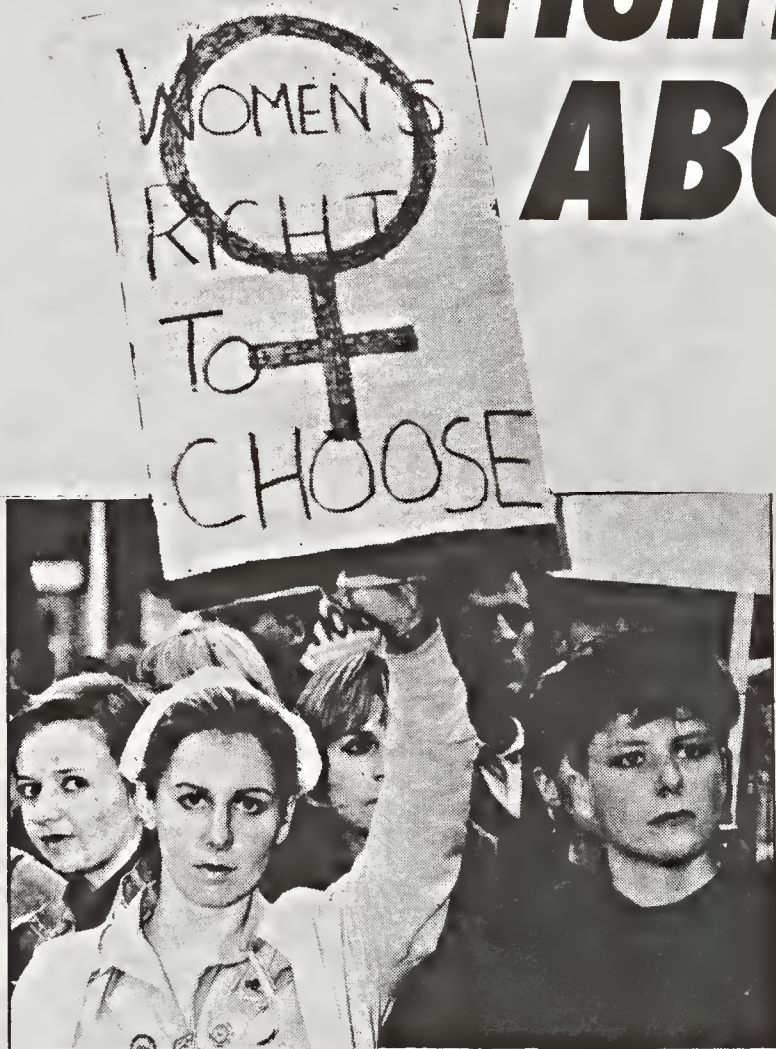
Opposition to the cuts has centred around the "Lambeth Fightback" group. This broad alliance includes councillors against the cuts, some "sur-charged" ex-councillors like Ted Knight, trade union officials and a number of Trot groups. The 1-day strike by Lambeth NALGO reflects the policy of the now disintegrated "hard left" from the days when councillors worked

hand in glove with union bureaucrats. Union leaders saw councillors as their allies and industrial action as a token gesture. When the council agreed cuts in September 1987 the unions only saw the need to lobby the council meeting.

Workers in Lambeth must realise that lobbying your class enemy pays no dividends. Council workers' anger and willingness to fight has been diverted into countless token days of action and many workers are demoralised. Now the cosy relationship between unions and councillors has ended council workers must be prepared for more than token action to defend jobs and services. All-out indefinite strike action cutting across union divisions can halt the present attacks. To do this rank and file activists must get their union shops, sections and branches committed to strike action over anyone made redundant through refusing re-deployment. Many workers are angry over re-deployment so it is up to activists to make sure this is converted into decisive action.



# FIGHT ALTON-FIGHT FOR ABORTION RIGHTS



As we go to press David Alton's Abortion Bill to reduce the upper time limit for abortions from 28 to 18 weeks has passed its 2nd reading. Demonstrations have been held throughout the country to oppose Alton, yet there is a growing consensus which favours some reduction in the time limit. Leading medical bodies like the British Medical Association and Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists have lined up with Margaret Thatcher and David Steele in advocating a reduction to 24 weeks. Here we look at the arguments on late abortion and present the case for a working class response to Alton's attack.

Women's role in society is determined by the lack of control they have over reproduction. Because they're burdened with the primary responsibility for raising children such control is a basic need. For working class women an unwanted pregnancy means up to 15 years of childcare, part time work and reliance on state benefits or a partner's income. The lack of decent state childcare and family planning provision; free pregnancy testing and easily available NHS abortions on demand mean women play a 2nd class role in society. The 1967 Act only provided abortion rights if 2 doctors believed a woman's, or her existing children's, mental or physical health was in danger. We say a woman should have access to abortion without a doctor's permission. Only then can she begin to enjoy the right to choose.

## ABORTION RIGHTS

Arguments around Alton's Bill have centred on when a foetus becomes "viable" and the issue of late abortion. Anti-abortionists see late abortion as easier to win and thus a wedge in the door for further attacks. At 18 weeks a foetus resembles a baby. At 24 weeks its lungs can function. The 1929 Infant Life Preservation Act defines a 28 week foetus as "capable of being born alive" and indeed anti-abortionists are right about a foetus being capable of being born alive earlier. But "potentiality for life"

cannot give rights above the actual life of a woman. A woman must decide when a foetus is viable and when it should be aborted. If women want late abortions it's usually because they are desperate and don't consider the foetus as a baby. We uphold a woman's right to make vital decisions about her own body without legal, moral or economic restriction. The illegality of abortions has never stopped them - a woman who needs one will seek a dangerous backstreet abortion rather than continue an unwanted pregnancy. Up until the '60's hundreds of women died or were badly injured each year after backstreet abortions.

## 18 WEEKS

In 1986 5665 women had abortions after 18 weeks. In 1984 20% of women having abortions from 20 to 23 weeks were referred by doctors before the 13th week but were delayed by NHS cuts. Over half of those having late abortions are young women, too ignorant or frightened to seek contraception or abortion advice earlier underlining the need for much better sex education in schools. 2694 women from abroad, mainly Spain and Ireland, had abortions over 18 weeks in Britain in 1986. Others who need late abortions include older women who mistake a pregnancy for the menopause and those who take the amniocentesis test, the most widely-used ante-natal screening

method only done after 18 weeks, for foetal abnormality. All these women are directly under attack from Alton's bill. If it is passed the climate would favour further attacks.

Abortions after 24 weeks are quite rare. Private clinics have almost stopped doing them as they were threatened with loss of their licences in 1985. Many doctors are afraid to do them because anti-abortion groups, The Society For The Protection Of The Unborn Child (SPUC) and LIFE, always look to take them to court though they've never had a favourable prosecution. In 1986 only 29 abortions were performed after 24 weeks mostly on the NHS. If the bill is amended to 24 weeks we must argue against any reduction in the time limit regardless of how many women have very late abortions.

## CLASS ISSUE

This latest attack on women's rights is part of a ruling class offensive that hits working class women hardest. NHS and social service cuts, closure of council nurseries, erosion of maternity rights and benefits, attacks on sex education in schools are all linked. Bit by bit the provision of social welfare is being off-loaded on to working class families. Women in particular are further ghettoised in low-paid part-time and temporary work besides being forced to care for sick or elderly relatives. The state glorifies the family as it services and reproduces the workforce cheaply and takes the burden of the economic crisis. So it is vital that working class men see abortion as a class issue, just as thousands of male trade unionists marched against the Corrie Bill in 1979. Ruling class women have always obtained safe abortions in private clinics. But for working

class women, the choice will be between unwanted pregnancy or backstreet abortion.

## OPPOSITION

Those opposing the Alton Bill have come together in the Fight Alton's Bill (FAB) campaign, a broad coalition of pro-abortion and left wing groups. The parliamentary Labour Party takes no position on the Alton Bill allowing a free vote. Nationally FAB defends the 1967 Act and does not call for free abortion on demand and the SWP has argued in FAB groups that anyone who calls for it is a splitter and as bad as Alton. However, late abortion is the real issue and Even some Alton supporters have argued that abortion on request early in pregnancy would make late abortions unjustified.

FAB groups have sprung up across Britain much like miners support groups in 1984, which shows there is strong opposition to Alton. The problem within FAB groups is precisely its breadth, welcoming Liberals and Tories opposed to the bill. Much FAB local activity centres around



petitions to intended to show MP's the force of public opinion. While petitions can be used to engage people in discussion we should have no illusions in the power of public opinion to win. Tory MP's who voted for ruthless attacks on the working class such as the anti-union laws, Fowler Reviews and poll tax are obviously not afraid of lobbyists.

However despite mass unemployment and defeated strikes we can still frighten our rulers into withdrawing legislation like Alton's. The mobilisation of the working class is what they fear most. But the TUC, as per usual, has done no more than write to its affiliates asking them to support the FAB campaign. Token support like this is worse than useless. It is vital that rank and file activists should raise the issue, win the arguments at work, pass motions in union branches and mobilise their fellow workers to attend FAB demos with their branch banners. Most unions will have given lip service to equal opportunities so they must be exposed for failing to respond to this latest and most serious attack on women's rights. Some unions have no national position on Alton's bill or abortion - these are NUT, NAS/UWT, AUT, IRSF SCPS and CSU (now merged into NUCPS), NUR, ASLEF, COHSE, BETA, BIFU, EQUITY, UCATT and USDAW.

We must build now for the national demo on March 19th and make sure MP's understand they're not just up against a minority of activists but up against a significant number of working class people. It's here that the unity to win must be built, the unity of male and female workers not the "broad church" unity with Tories and Liberals. Only the working class can win lasting gains for women.

## Sacked for being Pregnant

IN SEPTEMBER Tricia Jennings, a worker at Burton's in Edinburgh became pregnant and a few days later was rushed to hospital with a threatened miscarriage. She immediately informed Burton's of her situation and, at the time, they seemed sympathetic and assured her that her job was safe. Tricia spent the next 6 weeks fighting to save her baby. However, when she returned to work on 9th November she discovered she'd been sacked in her absence. The callous way in which Burton's handled her dismissal - everybody else in the shop knew 2 weeks before Tricia herself did - made the experience all the more hurtful and humiliating.

No reason was given for her sacking - instead, her boss suggested he was doing her a favour by giving her more time to rest! He made no mention, of course, about the

wages and maternity grants she'd be losing. Since then Burton's have tried to tell Tricia she was sacked for "absenteeism", or because her work was "below standard". But Tricia was only absent when she had a doctor's note and there had been no previous complaints about her work - In fact, she had been kept on after her initial 6 month trial period. No, there is dismissal - she is pregnant.

Tricia was not willing to accept her unfair treatment by Burton's and has started a campaign to expose their sexual discrimination. As a result several similar cases involving Burton's have been discovered and it is suspected that there are many more. Tricia is calling on any women who have been discriminated against to join her campaign, for she is fighting

not only for her own full reinstatement and compensation, but also for the end to all discrimination against pregnant women and mothers in the workplace. A "Tricia Jennings Defence Committee" has been set up to gain publicity for her case through leafletting, talking to local newspapers and, at some point, holding a public meeting. A regular weekly picket of Burton's in Edinburgh (Thursdays 5-7pm has also been organised).

It's important that we all give as much support as we can to Tricia in her fight against Burton's sex discrimination. For more information contact: The Tricia Jennings Defence Committee, c/o Citizens Rights Office, 43 Broughton St, Edinburgh, Scotland.

SUPPORT TRICIA JENNINGS - BOYCOTT BURTON'S



# FIGHT CLAUSE 27

The Alton Bill, Anderton's ravings, AIDs hysteria, Clause 27 - all of these and much more make up the moral crusade against the so-called permissive society. Amongst the general atmosphere of "moral backlashes" and the "return to family values" we must not forget the nature of this onslaught - an attack on our bodies, our lives, our right to decide.

Clause 27 is part of the Local Government Bill introduced by Dame Jill Knight and bans councils from funding or promoting homosexuality. It will have devastating results for gay men and lesbians - almost all homosexual pubs and clubs will be forced to close leaving no meeting places and increasing the risk of arrest at the local "cottage" (public toilets) or being beaten up by queer bashers for attempting "street trade"; hundreds of our magazines and papers will collapse due to withdrawal of council funding; teachers at schools will be banned from giving basic advice and support to pupils trying to come to terms with their homosexuality - the consequences are endless.

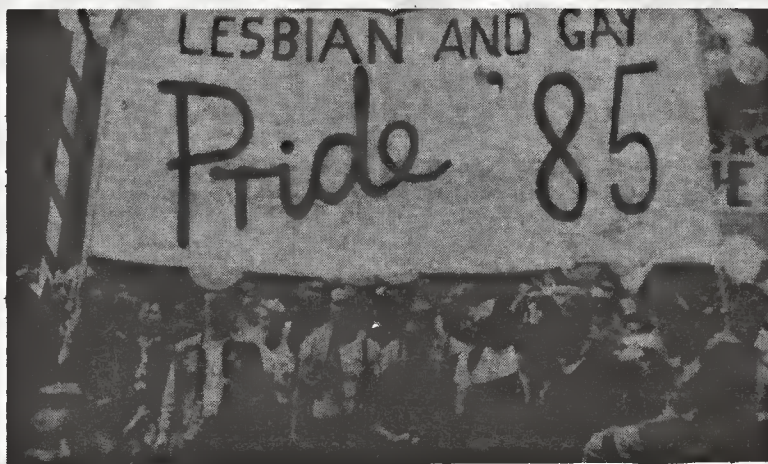
The denial of a social life and means of communication and organisation for gays and lesbians will allow space for even more prejudice and hatred to develop as they become isolated and defenceless. Many homosexuals will be pushed into the closet and ultimately the gay movement will be pushed underground.

Of course the government know this - in fact the real purpose of it without doubt its devastating results rather than to halt AIDS, protect children or control councils. They are acting to do this as consciously as forcing the working class into an ever tightening position and muting any resistance or social consciousness.

However, the gay movement has quick reflexes and immediately the Lesbian and Gay Youth Action Group was set up in response. The Organisation for Lesbian and Gay Action (OLGA) followed up by co-ordinating the "Stop Clause 27 Campaign" and on Saturday 9th January 12,000 lesbians and gays marched on parliament. That day the state learnt we do have reflexes and we do know what's going on around us. There were 38 arrests - 14 at Downing Street and 24 at Kennington.

## THE DEMONSTRATION

With coaches arriving from across the country, including 27 from Manchester alone, the



## Marching against the moralists.

demonstration was bigger than expected. Obviously the police were taken by surprise as their numbers were so small compared to ours. All was relatively calm until we reached Downing St. By then there was a clear feeling that a march and rally would not speak loud enough. A loud section of the demo decided to move into Downing St. Unfortunately the police were able to block the entrance. The stewards were clearly worried and tried their best to maintain order as violent scuffles broke out.

I couldn't help seeing the looks of surprise from the police. They were obviously worried that a riot might break out and had to drive vans into the crowd to break us up and force us back. The arrests made then were a provocation enough but when the

march finished at Kennington Park the anger really came out. After two lesbians were arrested for kissing, people got really fed up. There was a sudden disinterest in the politician's and TV personalities' speeches and hundreds of people flocked to where the arrests were made and swarmed around the police vans to prevent them leaving. The police pushed us back, overcame us and made more arrests. The crowd began chanting "Scum! Scum!" and screaming "Fascists!" into cops' faces. Placards, bottles and beer cans hurled through the air. I noticed 1 cop getting struck by a can and the look of sheer uncomprehending surprise and shock across his face. They really didn't expect this.

After a few minutes mounted riot police poured into

the area. Unfortunately the intimidating truncheons, riot shields and helmets dampened the anger and feeling of solidarity and strength. The crowd dwindled and backed off into the park where a speaker announced that a picket had been arranged outside Cannon St Police Station where those arrested were being detained. It would be wrong of me to give you the impression that everyone was united. One person, after lobbing a can, got a bollocking from 2 lesbians who obviously didn't agree with the idea that violence will be a necessary part of the struggle.

As we know there are lesbians and gays who are all out capitalists, exploit just as much as any other capitalist and support the state and class society we live in with open admiration. It is inevitable that those who become militant will develop a hatred of the state and join the struggle in solidarity. Those who prefer to stay on the other side uphold bourgeois influences like pacifism and defeatism will remain our enemies. That division will grow as the nation becomes more fascist. Some people claim we'll never be allowed to demonstrate together like this again. Whatever the outcome the police have learnt that homosexuals and those who care won't take this lying down; that we can and will create trouble and we're not going to sit passively while they take away our rights. It will be interesting to see how the police behave at the Gay Pride march in the summer. Don't miss it!

## Homes Not Hypermarkets

PEOPLE LIVING in Hyson Green, Nottingham are protesting angrily at plans to build a "hypermarket" on a site where badly-needed housing had been promised. They see the superstore, another in the ASDA chain, as having a massive impact on their community. ASDA expect an extra 10,000 cars a week on already badly-congested roads with an appalling record of traffic accidents and injuries. As 1 leaflet explains:

"If ASDA comes, all roads for half a mile around will be even more congested. This will cause greater risk to local people, including the elderly, disabled and children coming to and from school and playing in the streets. Even ASDA's own traffic consultants have said they couldn't have chosen a worse site."

A broad-based community action group has come together to fight ASDA's plans. With the slogan "Hyson Green for Homes not Hypermarkets" they've organised street demonstrations and angry lobbies of city council planning department meetings. The site ASDA want to build on is currently occupied by the Hyson Green Flats complex. Built after the last war - like many other inner city tower blocks - it was meant to help alleviate bad housing conditions and now needs to be demolished after costly attempts to patch it up fail-



## Homes not Supermarkets

ed time and again. Many families eagerly agreed to move out after council assurances that decent new housing would be built in its place.

But the demands of Hyson Green people for better housing have been ignored, as have the needs of the 8,000 people on the council's housing list. The Tory-led city council granted ASDA planning permission before Xmas, with 1 councillor admitting she had "financial interests in the ASDA group". With all legal means exhausted the way is open for a campaign of community direct action as building work on ASDA gets underway. It's clear that many residents won't passively watch the construction of a huge hypermarket on their doorstep. If ASDA think the battle is over they're in for a shock.

## UCW SELL OUT

A POTENTIAL national postal strike was very much in the news before Christmas. As you probably know the Union of Communication Workers' leaders arranged a deal with the Post Office to avert the strike. The deal is a reduction from 43 hours per week to 41.5 hours (though only 1 hour reduction for catering grades); future talks on a 5-day week and scrapping of the present bonus system for a fairer system.

This deal is financially beneficial to about a third of Britain's postal workers; little change for another third; but the other third, mainly those in the big London sorting offices, will be worse off eventually. Consequently some London postal workers lobbied UCW House

soon after the deal was announced to protest at their future cut in wages. Although it will please some postal workers and ends the divisive bonus scheme, there is widespread disgust that the union accepted a 41.5-hour week when we voted for 40 hours.

The most sinister feature of the campaign for a shorter working week was the UCW circular - SBC P37/87 - sent to all branches. It said the campaign must be centrally controlled and "there will be only one General". It stated and underlined that if any postman or woman is suspended there must be no sympathy walk-out, which is the normal practice and unequivocally ordered members to cross picket lines, handle scab work, do different duties or

attend different offices as required and co-operate with casual labour scabbing unless the UCW Executive Council "general" said otherwise. At first we were speechless after reading that but then filled with rage at the the union leaders' treachery.

However, it is encouraging that the fighting spirit remains alive and kicking among postal workers despite the antics of the UCW leaders. There have been strikes in Birmingham, Luton, Central London, East London, Romford and elsewhere since the deal was agreed. In any case a national strike may be necessary in 1988 to defeat the proposed disciplinary code, similar to the one the miners are now faced with.

## Build The Fightback!

Comrades,

We are taking the initiative in calling a conference of all workers in councils, local or education authorities interested in forming an industrial rank and file organisation. It will be at the Red Rose Club, Seven Sisters Road, London N4 on Sat, Feb 20th from 10.30am to 4.30pm. Though our aim is a national organisation we believe a practical step should be establishing a London group and a paper to be a voice for the rank & file and a source of information for militants on our industry and unions. Because that paper must help

build a national organisation we welcome contacts and participation of workers outside London who can send information and help distribute it.

We believe the situation for local authority workers necessitates strong independent workplace organisation uniting workers around common class interests, regardless of trade, grade (no managers), employer or union. Disunity due to sectionalism, paralysis by "professionals" and bureaucrats and reluctance to fight Labour authorities as hard as other bosses have all weakened the fight against cuts and for our

rights. We wish to build an organisation to overcome such difficulties and establish working class control over public services and working conditions. So we urge the fullest participation by genuine working class socialists regardless of political affiliation. We see the group as a vehicle for our interests as workers - it would be a failure if it was let become a political battle ground or a front for any group - all the more reason for as many genuine socialists as possible to come along.

In solidarity, DAM Council Workers.



# TOUGH TIMES AHEAD?

Interview with Dave Douglass, delegate and activist.

**DA:** A number of problems are facing the miners and the mining industry at the moment. Given that most of those still left in the industry are still "shell-shocked", how is the NUM facing up to these problems?

**DD:** As far as the National Executive (NEC) goes, it isn't, causing a struggle between areas wanting more action and areas wanting it to stop as it is or reduce it. At November's NEC meeting the question came to an impasse. A Power Group (electricians, etc) resolution to call off the overtime ban got 2 votes with 17 against. Then a resolution to stay as we are got 10 votes for and 11 against. So we could neither stay as we were nor change away from it - that's the way the NEC is structured.

The main thrust for change came from Durham Area and Durham Mechanics who appealed for a national 1-day conference on all the issues facing us. If it came to that, due to the spread of votes in the areas, people wanting to up the action would be a majority. Well, those wanting to stay as they are spotted that and the resolution got 10 votes and 12 against. So we are in a state of limbo where the Board keeps upping the ante. The latest provocation is: "You're not gonna have a wage rise until you call off this overtime ban. When you do call it off, the rise will be paid from then, not backdated to November" as before.

## CONTROVERSY

As for a 6-day week, there are 2 aspects - shift pattern changes and the Board's disregard of the union. Risking controversy, I'd say there are ordinary rank and filers who might benefit from a 6-day week. Whether that's right or wrong, the problem is that the NCB has never presented its plans for the NUM to view and take back to the members as that would give the NEC authority. Instead, they've gone to specific areas like Margam in Sth Wales and said: "Right, we've this huge prospect for coal work at Margam and if you're not favourable we'll either bring in the UDM or somebody else to develop the pit". Similarly at Thorne Colliery in S Yorks we've got a proposal for 60-70 years' coal but the Board won't develop it unless Yorks NUM agree 6-day working. At Ashfordby in Leicester Area, which is NUM, they've gone further, saying that unless there is 6-day working that part of Leicesters will be re-designated to Nottingham, which has a UDM majority. The UDM has already said they'll accept 6-day working. So it's difficult.

The NEC says it'll compile all proposals put forward - not those put to Area officials - and we expect the

Board will make an approach. In the end we could do worse than ballot the members if they think there's something in it. It's not really our job to say there's nothing in it because, let's face it, working down the pit isn't the nicest thing to do anyway. Like I've said, the main thing isn't so much the 6 days but how they're trying to undermine the national structure of the union.

The increase in hours in Durham is different entirely. They're asking men to work nine and a half hours 4 days a week. They'd have to stagger it and it would be coupled with 6-day working. Now that is unacceptable because when men are bussed to the coast from mines that have closed you're talking about a 13-hour day for many of them. They've told coastal pits: "Because of your travelling

seen from the sacking of 2 branch secretaries. At present we have a disputes procedure which aims to solve problems without men leaving the pit. It is advice branch officials give men, depending on circumstances of course. But what the Board now wants is to sack a man if he disregards the advice and strikes. We believe that's the final parting of the ways. There's no way we can accept that men can be disciplined if they withdraw their labour. We fought for this in the 19th century so I'm certain we can fight for it now.

## "YES MAN"

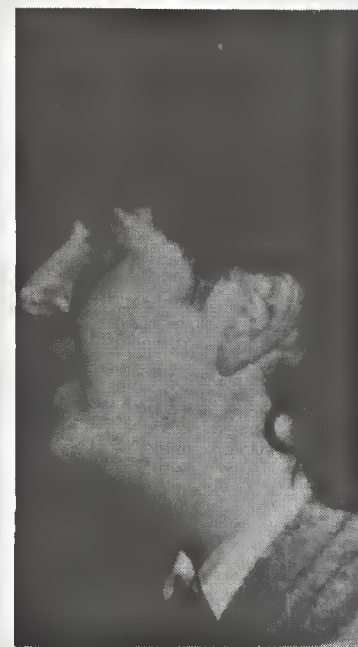
In this industry, working underground, with the arguments we have about control, deployment, geology and 1001 other things, you're bound to rag-up at 1 stage or other. You can't be a miner and just be a "yes man" - the whole nature of the job doesn't allow it. Basically the code is aimed at disciplining those who take industrial action no matter how mild. They're also trying to diminish the power of the union. For example, in Ted Scott's case (branch secretary at Stillingfleet - see

dictate the price of coal, like the CEBG does now. Last year the the Board wrote off £350 million that would have come from the CEBG - a £350 million rebate for buying our coal! That makes the CEBG a terrific profit and the Board a terrible loss so they can point at the decrepit Coal Board and the super CEBG. It's possible that BP, etc may do that, but also, at the end of 1988 British Coal must raise its own capital. Now, if those who own the CEBG put up the capital they don't need to privatise British Coal. They'll won't have the liabilities and problems, but can dictate how the industry goes. Also they can cut and run when they want and switch to the foreign fuel market. I think that's the way it's going to be played.

## MISSED OPPORTUNITY

The obvious answer is (and was some time ago) a strong alliance between power and coal industry workers. Missed opportunities were the proposals to expel the EETPU from the TUC. Many power workers were far-sighted enough to see that this would have left the way open for a power

**DD:** We've known this for some time. Nuclear power was heavily assisted by Labour governments as well as Conservative. When Labour was rushing ahead to develop the nuclear industry we had a mountain of cheap coal and no challengers



- there was no need to switch to nuclear energy except they needed it for nuclear bombs. Later on, a la Ridley plan, they developed nuclear energy to stop the NUM having a monopoly of power in alliance with power workers. Ridley said this openly and Thatcher has built a whole strategy of confronting the NUM on his proposals.

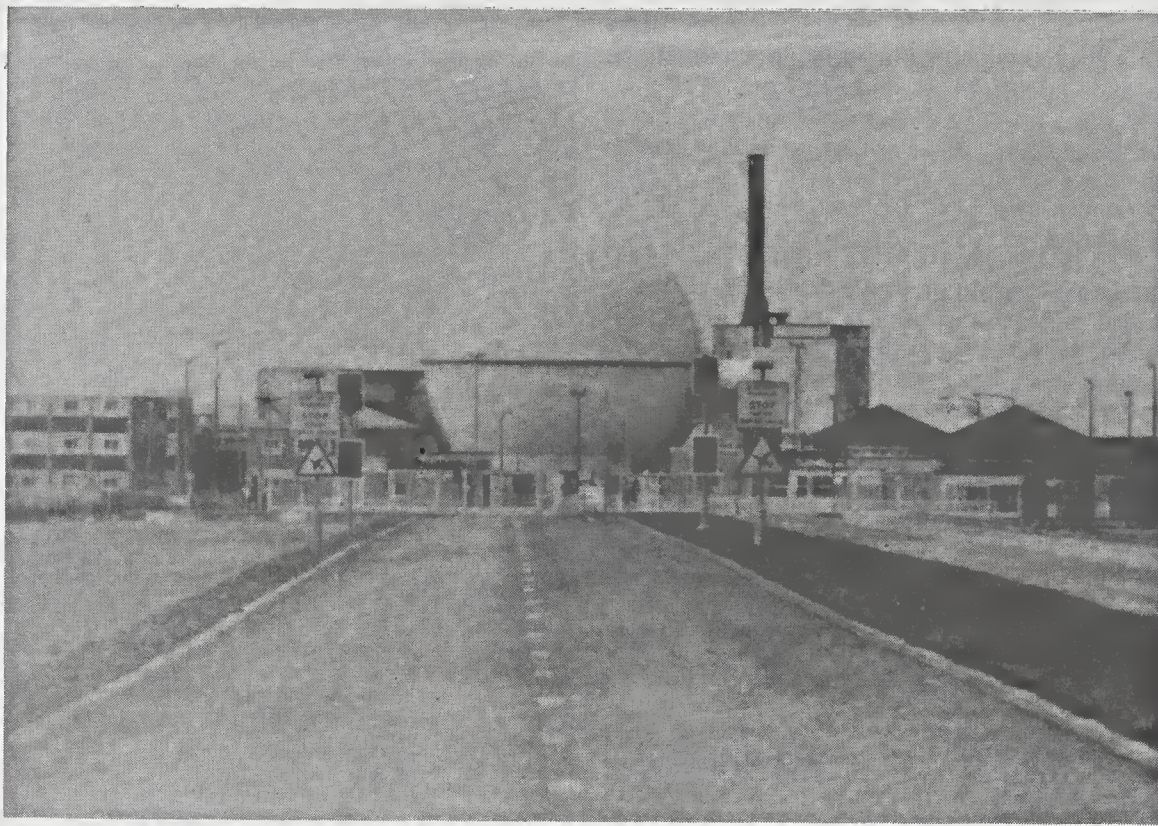
## IN-EFFICIENT POWER

There'll be no privatisation of nuclear plants - you can rest assured of that. No one in their right mind would buy one as the insurance is not just for workers but for hundreds of thousands of local residents. So the only non-efficient, uncultured, subsidised power plants will be nuclear and they're not for any public good but a block against the miners and for material for nuclear weapons. That in turn ensures maintenance of the link with South Africa and Namibia as they can only get uranium by exploiting miners there.

The added difficulty, referring to privatisation, is that if the options are a privatised coal industry with a strong NUM or no coal industry I think the government would have no coal industry. The object isn't simply to get rid of a nationalised industry - it's to get rid of the NUM. They don't care if it's Rio Tinto Zinc or BP - if the NUM is powerful they won't want RTZ or BP to have the coal industry. They would rather rely on imports - and that's certainly an option. So the whole name of the game is trying to shed the bulk of the coal industry itself.

to be continued

next issue



## Nuclear Power; for the state's benefit not ours.

time, etc, the 6-day week is not going to be a particular benefit to us because you still haven't got the amount of time on the faces that we want. We want nine and a half hour shifts". That's much more dangerous and anti-social than working another day in the week and having a week off some other time.

**DA:** You mentioned the disciplinary code. Could you give us more details about it and what it means?

**DD:** It's really an attempt to get rid of unofficial action and leadership - and official leadership as well, as we've

**DA 42)** one charge is that he was on the Board's property without permission. In other words he was down there on a Saturday, not simply talking to men as they came into the car park. But that now seems to be a punishable offence.

**DA:** Given the NUM's disarray how will it be able to confront privatisation?

**DD:** I don't think there will be privatisation during this parliament. What is on the cards is privatisation of the Central Electricity Generating Board which takes 75-80% of British Coal's fuel. If BP, say, comes in they can

workers' union loyal to the TUC which would have chipped at the whole balance of power on the industrial front. I think Hammond and Willis knew this and were determined the EETPU would stay. While they do you cannot form another Power Workers' Union - not one recognised by the TUC.

**DA:** Lord Marshall, the CEBG head, recently said it's only creative accountancy that has made nuclear power look profitable and that its real purpose is to provide raw material for nuclear weapons. Is the NUM using this and do you think it may affect any future government policy?



# FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO STRIKE!

THE LAST YEAR in Italy has seen a resurgence in class struggle with workers taking the fight into their own hands through workers' committees particularly in the schools and on the railways. The committees are organised, not just independently of the reformist unions but to a certain extent against them, as the reformist unions support the government's proposed anti-strike legislation. The only union that supports the class struggle and its expression, the rank and file committees, is the USI, Italian section of the International Workers Association.

The USI, which stands for revolutionary unionism and workers' control, was destroyed by fascism in the

1920's and was re-activated in 1979. This split the Italian anarcho-syndicalist movement, many of whom thought it premature and preferred to work in the reformist unions. 1979 also saw the ebbing away of the last resurgence in class struggle in Italy.

With the latest wave of struggle the USI has been in a strong position to take an active part and help keep the movement from the clutches of politicians and union bureaucrats. Besides this, the USI has seen a noticeable growth of its own. This was apparent at the recent meeting of the USI national delegate committee which saw delegates from Turin, Milan, Bergamo, Trieste, Bologna, Ancona and Rome. The following subjects



French rail strike: how soon will it be repeated in Italy?

were dealt with - new technology, social services, immigration from the 3rd World, anti-militarism and the war industry, revision of the IWA statutes. Delegates confirmed the general growth of the

USI, particularly in the sectors of struggle - teaching, chemicals, transport, local councils, banks, health, post and telecommunications and air traffic control. A press statement was released from

the meeting concerning the proposed anti-strike legislation which we re-print below:

"The Italian Syndicalist Union calls upon workers to fight in defence of the right to strike won through many years of struggle.

By passing a law regulating the right to strike they want to criminalise and repress the workers as happens in countries like Poland, Chile or South Africa.

The attempt by the political parties to bridle workers' will to fight takes place with the acquiescence of the reformist unions who, worried by growing rank and file dissent, move against every grass roots movement.

With this policy the government, bosses, political parties and official unions want to hit especially those workers who today are active in rank and file structures with a different line from that of reformist, institutional and corporate unionism.

Against this liberticidal attack the USI defends workers rights to dissent, struggle and organise themselves to win their aims without attempted interference by any political or social organisation.

The USI is ready to fight with the workers to defend their right to control their own struggles against the bosses and state techno-bureaucrats.

USI Delegate Committee.

## 40 Years of Brutality

THE RECENT and on-going civil uprisings in Israel's occupied territories by the displaced Palestinians and the Israeli state's response to them are a grave cause for concern.

The disturbance began on December 9th in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and have grown in intensity over the last 2 months. What started off as a riot has grown to several Arab general strikes and continuous confrontations with the Israeli Defence (sic) Force. The actions have been supported by over 80% of the Palestinians encompassing all age groups, classes and both sexes, causing severe disruption in Israel itself, which is dependent on the migrant Palestinian labour force for such delightful jobs as refuse collection, street cleaning and labouring work.

The Israeli state's response has been to send in more and more troops and police in an effort to quell the uprisings, resulting in over 35 Palestinians being killed, including a 10-year old boy, and hundreds injured. What the government doesn't seem to realise is that the use of military force is strengthening the Palestinian resolve to fight back. It's no coincidence that the Palestinians

chose this time to display their anger, in the run up to the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Israeli state in May. They're unlikely to halt activity until at least the military withdraw. For the first time these uprisings have been properly organised, with mass leaflettings in the refugee camps by various liberation groups and more and more Palestinians are taking up the struggle to free themselves from the yoke

of Israeli domination.

It therefore looks increasingly likely that Israel could soon have a full scale civil war on its hands. The only solution for the time being at least, is for Israel to withdraw its troops and hand back the occupied territories to the Palestinians. Then and only then can a peace settlement be negotiated over land rights and the right of the Palestinians to self-determination.



However, many Israelis are determined to see an end to troubles with the Palestinians from a different angle. Right wing minority parties in the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, call for increased Jewish settlement in the occupied territories, as they see this as the best way to crush the Palestinians. Gush Emunim, the right wing settler movement, even insist that Israeli Jews should actually occupy the centres of Arab towns and forcibly take what little land is left to Palestinians. Even worse, a reserve general, one Rehavam Ze'evi, has proposed a "population transfer" meaning expulsion of 1.5 million Arabs from Israel. The response to this in Israel was a relaxed academic debate on the feasibility of loading Palestinians on trucks to dump them over the Jordanian border!

### CRIMINALISED

This kind of knee-jerk reaction to the problem can only serve to further increase the level of civil disturbance by the Palestinians, who are tired of being fobbed off, brutalised and criminalised in their efforts to secure self-determination. We must support the Palestinians in their struggle for freedom and justice.

## — BATTLE FOR INDEPENDENCE —

WHAT DOES IT TAKE to keep a union independent and in a position to help its members defend themselves? For over 4 years the membership of Local 61 of the Industrial Union of Marine Shipbuilders of America (IUMSWA) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania have fought the companies where it is organised, over jobs and living standards. At the same time they and their allies have been in the front lines in Pittsburgh protests against bank disinvestment and de-industrialisation in the region as a whole. This activist group has used direct action tactics such as putting skunk oil and dead fish in safe

deposit boxes of the Mellon Bank in protest at the bank's lending policies to racist, union-busting corporations.

Local 61's independence and activism along with their criticism of the IUMSWA nationally for its passivity and bureaucratic rigidity in the face of a massive crisis in shipbuilding, provoked the national union to it and try to prohibit its autonomy. The national union sought to have the elected Local 61 president, Darrell Becker, kept off the ballot and ruled ineligible in elections for local officers in 1983 and '85. But overwhelming rank & file sup-

port gave him both elections by huge margins. Even the bosses' courts ruled that the national union's manoeuvres were illegal and invalid. But when Becker next challenged the national union leadership by declaring and campaigning around the country for the national presidency in 1986, the bureaucrats retaliated by putting Local 61 under their direct control, similar to the way the United Food and Commercial Workers did to P-9 at Hormel (see DA 42). At the National Convention of IUMSWA in October, Becker was kept off the ballot, but the Department of Labour has now ruled the election illeg-

al and another election has to be called.

### CRUCIAL BATTLE

With less members due to factory and shipyard closures and lay-offs, Local 61 have been sustaining a crucial battle for their autonomy and independence on a shoestring budget. This is a local union that does not bow to politicians, mobsters, company officials or union bureaucrats and acknowledges no authority but the will of its members. They urgently need your support. Send contributions to: Union Defence Fund, c/o Darrell Becker, 5087 Elmwood Dr, Pittsburgh, PA, 15227, USA.

## In Brief

IN DA 45 READERS would have seen the advert for the CIS pamphlet on Consolidated Goldfields - Partner in Apartheid". Monarch Resources, a new mining company hopes to mine gold in Venezuela. The chairperson, Lord Shackleton, is former deputy chairperson of Rio Tinto Zinc. The directors are confident that Venezuela offers great opportunities: "The democratic government of the country offers a better chance of political stability than South Africa, the world's leading source of the precious metal". An added attraction for capitalists is that local labour costs are less than half that in South Africa and little more than a tenth of that in Australia.

### MINDLESS THUGS?

CALIFORNIAN GROUP, Mindless Thugs Against Genetic Engineering, recently delayed for a 2nd time an attempt by Advanced Genetic Engineering to treat strawberry plants with a genetically engineered bacterium (*Pseudomonas Syringae*, developed to keeping frost off strawberry plants grown in field conditions). The group claimed they sprayed the plants with ammonia and herbicide. MTAGE appear to have insider information from the company and the scientific knowledge to mount a campaign against the dangers of releasing untested genetically engineered germs into the environment which may have catastrophic effects as yet unforeseen.



# ■■■■■■■■■■ "The Spirit of the Struggle" ■■■■■■■■■■

The following interview is taken from "Icaria", a CNT-AIT (Spanish anarcho-syndicalist union) magazine. As reported in DA 43 the militant struggle in Puerto Real in southern Spain against the AESA shipyard gained results for workers threatened with redundancies. "Icaria" spoke to the women who had organised independently of the men and played a big part in the struggle.

**Icaria:** How and why did the women of Puerto Real start to take part in the shipyards struggle?

**Spokeswomen:** It started when a woman saw that we were all worked up because on Tuesdays our menfolk were confronting the police and suffering from repression at the shipyards while the media called them all terrorists. This woman took the initiative, contacting neighbours and friends. In turn, they contacted many groups of women and they went out with a megaphone every Tuesday to demonstrate, meeting other women affected by the shipyards problem. At that time the men carried on the struggle inside the shipyards but the problem affected us as much as them. They were not so much demonstrations of support but our own because we depended on the men's wages.

**I:** Why did the struggle develop independently of the men?

**SW:** Because the men were not here - they were in the shipyards which the women weren't able to enter so our struggle was in the town. On Thursdays when the men brought the struggle into the town we went together to the demonstrations and in this way we could create quite a large group of autonomous and independent women.

**I:** What type of organisation did you have in the group?

**SW:** A co-ordinating committee of 6 women was elected but they didn't take decisions of any kind. Their function was only to co-ordinate. The decisions were made by the assembly on Wednesdays where proposals were made and voted on by a show of hands.

**I:** How many women were there in the group?

**SW:** The number varied - we started with 100 and grew to

500. However when the men adopted the "Jerez Agreements" and changed their strategy the group lost members.

The women took a dim view of the "Agreements" but respected the men's decision. We thought the men would have to re-consider their tactics because the yards were shut and they had no wages. Also they couldn't carry on a struggle of open war with the police as one isolated small town on its own. We decided we didn't need to change our own strategy for 2 reasons. One - they couldn't close the streets and two - they could not stop us getting to the "Cartabon".

**I:** What is the "Cartabon"?

**SW:** It's the crossroads where the motorway, National IV, ends. It was the symbol of our struggle and where we went to block the motorway.

**I:** Were there any women in the "Collective" who were not dependent on the wages of a shipyard worker?

**SW:** The majority of women are from shipyard workers' families. However there are women from other backgrounds in the collective.

## DIRECT ACTION

**I:** Was this the first experience of direct action the women had had in the streets?

**SW:** Yes, within the context of a women's collective.

**I:** What did they think of the violence reported in the media concerning Puerto Real?

**SW:** What did we think of the violence? The only violence here was that by the police and it was very heavy. It was heaviest around the motorway at the "Cartabon", which was our "Hill of Martyrs".

**I:** How did the people of the town react to your struggle?

**SW:** There were 2 stages - at first the support from the people was great - all the people united in the same struggle.

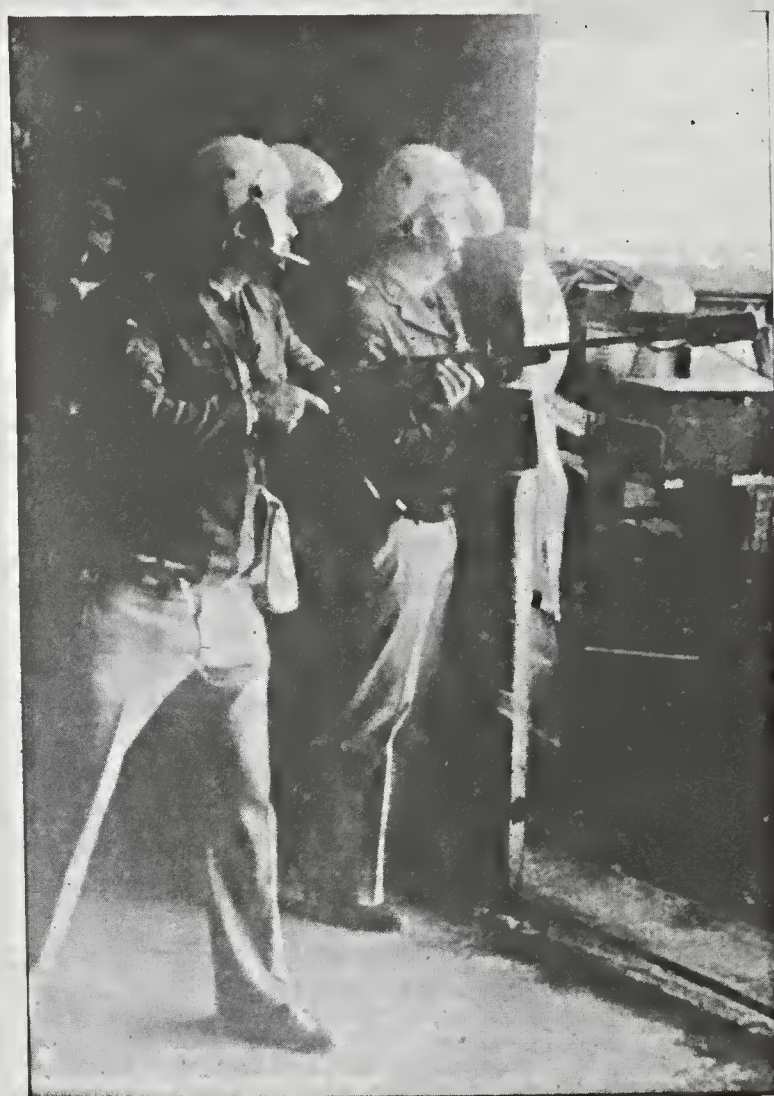
The "Jerez Agreements" put a stop to the men's action and this led to disunity. The women were affected directly as we live in a male-dominated society where men say: "You're not going because if I don't fight, I don't want you to fight". Some of the people held back for that reason. They didn't know if the "Agreements" would give results or not.

**I:** When the men decided to change their strategy did they take the women into consideration?

**A:** No, they held an assembly of shipyard workers and took the decision there.

We want to make it clear that we were a totally independent and autonomous collective. We want to say that we weren't treated gently by the forces of repression just because we were women. Our struggle was not only on Tuesdays but a daily struggle with the "forces of order". We tried to explain this to other women to get them to understand.

We have received support and telegrams from feminist organisations, associations of families of political prisoners and the Assembly of Women in Cordoba...



"Icaria" finishes by saying: "The interview was published in 'Icaria' because we wanted to encourage this group of sisters who over a fairly extended period have maintained

a constant struggle. They've maintained a spirit of struggle until now and they don't want to lose it. However, there still remains a lot to do."

The following communication was received by the North West Regional Federation of the DAM in December:

Dear comrades,

Thank you for the money you sent in solidarity with the Puerto Real struggle.

Regarding the 32 cases outstanding against some 16 shipyard workers, the following has happened. On September 16th the trial of these 16 took place in the "Palace of Justice". They were accused of public disorder offences based mainly on our road-blocking activities. Direct action was also employed at the trial by several hundred people invading the courtroom

while down at the shipyard a strike took place in solidarity with the accused. The fear of fresh conflict breaking out drove the state prosecutor into withdrawing the charges and the judge declaring our comrades innocent.

More recently, a member of the CNT syndicate or local union, Pepe Gomez, wasn't so fortunate. He was accused of public disorder, road-blocking and incitement to violence, for which he was placed under house arrest and put on bail of 1 million pesetas (£45,000).

The effectiveness of direct action has nonetheless been proved and the struggle has borne fruit - after 4

years without orders for the shipyard the workers have won 4 new ships in the space of as many months.

Meanwhile other comrades arrested have suffered brutal beatings by the cops before being released. They are now awaiting trial.

Greetings and anarchy,

J G Gonzales (Secretary of PuertoRealLocalFederation of the CNT-AIT).

Donations and messages of solidarity can be sent to: CNT-AIT, Apartado de Correos 47, Puerto Real, Cadiz, Spain.

## Moroccan Miners Occupy

AFTER 9 WEEKS on strike (see DA 45), some 100 Moroccan miners and CGT militants occupied colliery offices in Douai, France, on Monday 30th November. Six hundred employees work at the offices including the general director. Within 20 minutes it was impossible to enter or leave the colliery. At midday women workers are allowed to leave, the rest towards the end of the afternoon. By early evening Blanc (exploration director) and Sauvage (personnel manager) were still being held on the premises. General director of the area, Jack Verlaine who was in the south of France, was notified and

he returned to Douai by mid-afternoon.

At the main gate strikers remained calm but determined. Around 1000 Moroccan miners were inside. By 6 o'clock Blanc and Sauvage announce that Verlaine has returned, prepared for a meeting, on the condition that the offices are evacuated. The miners quickly answered - no evacuation without agreement on the demands. Verlaine gave in after pressure from above and 2 hours later union delegates told the strikers that 80% of their demands were agreed on - only 3 points remained to be agreed. After a general assembly on the premises dur-



ing which victory was claimed, the office was evacuated. At no point was the main de-

mand discussed - the withdrawal of the Pache plan, which seeks to axe 4000 min-

ing jobs and force immigrant workers to "return to the country of origin".



# ANARCHISM & THEORY

THE GREAT STRENGTH of today's anarchist movement is its practicality. When it comes to supporting strikes, fighting fascism or liberating animals, say, anarchists have a reputation for getting stuck in, unlike the left, more interested in numbers of papers sold or "interventions" made. This has earned comrades respect but also has its limitations as we shall see.

The anarchist movement of the '70's and early '80's was typified by the dominance of "Freedom" with its liberalism, hostility to class-based anarchism and, above all, by an impractical utopianism. It was significant that when the Direct Action Movement was formed in 1979 major concerns were to be organised; based on practical class struggle and "to get out of the anarchist ghetto". Also significant was that the more recent forming of the Class War Federation saw almost exactly the same concerns (despite obvious political differences with the DAM). What has also characterised both organisations and, increasingly, the non-aligned movement outside them, has been concentration on action, on practicality and a disdain for "theory" associated with "armchair anarchists" and trots.

As I said, this has had serious limitations. Instead of setting their own agenda for action anarchists have tended to get involved in the latest thing going whether supporting strikes, anti-nuclear activity, animal liberation, South African solidarity and so on, going where the action is, or seems to be. (This reflects, in part, the reactivity of the working class in the face of state attacks.) When class struggle anarchist ideas make perfect sense, compared to the bankruptcy of state socialism and liberalism, the development of our movement has been hampered by the lack of perspectives put forward. Anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism seem on the verge of genuinely breaking out of a minority ghetto and with that must come the realisation that what we say and do does matter, we are not irrelevant.

This realisation of our responsibilities to both anarchist aims and the rest of the working class necessarily involves developing a clear understanding of the ideas inherited from past generations of libertarian workers; of the world we live in and developing our ideas to put into practice in the late 20th century. So the appearance of "theoretical" journals from both the DAM and the CWF at the same crucial time is very much to be welcomed. "Catalyst" (DAM's theoretical quarterly) will be reviewed next month so I shall confine myself for now to "The Heavy Stuff" from the Class War Federation.

Some comrades have been wary of "Class War", particularly the seeming worship of violence and dodgy attitude to press publicity. As



Andy Murphy says in a useful article: "Regular readers of 'Class War' newspaper could be forgiven for thinking that the people who write it are nothing more than a bunch of hate-filled nutters without a serious political idea in their heads". Most of us weren't fooled and knew there was some political theory behind it. "The Heavy Stuff" is partly a case of "coming out" and Ian Bone's rejection of the "form of anarchism" but not the "whole substance of anarchist ideas"; his condemnation of anarcho-syndicalism as having "as much relevance as teetotalism"; his nod toward Rosa Luxemburg and libertarian marxism and, above all, the playing down of industrial struggle within the class struggle should be no surprise.

The rest of the magazine is concerned with the present situation and the importance for the CWF of "community" class struggle as opposed to industrial struggle is apparent. Without dealing with each article I'll just say "The Heavy Stuff" is pretty well written and deals with the situation we find ourselves in (particularly the articles "World Economics" and "Down With Capitalism") and suggests ways out for our class, particularly anarchist revolutionaries. All in all, despite our differences in strategy and emphasis, "The Heavy Stuff" should be a pleasant surprise to those unsure about the "Class War" project and hopefully further issues will be equally useful at this crucial time.

"The Heavy Stuff": 75p - (London CWF, PO Box 467, London E8 3QX).

## ANIMAL LIBERATION

ANOTHER RECENT publication, "Animal Liberation - A Case Of Moral Indignation" connects to the theme of anarchists' pure "activism" and lack of perspectives and the need to overcome this through being a conscious part of the class struggle and the "revolutionary project of overthrowing capitalism and the state".

Faced with the seeming hopelessness of life in '80's Britain for many young working class radicals; redundancy of "traditional methods of protest and reform...in the face of an intransigent state"; fracturing of working class response to capital's attacks in the last 10 years and, therefore, seemingly remote prospects of revolutionary class struggle, the immediacy of militant animal liberationism is of general appeal. That the ALF uses an anarchist symbol is of course no accident - the activism and immediacy of animal lib has been taken up by a section of an anarchist movement concerned with getting stuck in and doing something worthwhile. But the authors make the point that while not saying "saving animals and reducing their suffering is a complete waste of time...it cannot be considered a central task in the overthrow of this exploitative and oppressive system".

The pamphlet's merit is that whilst criticising the "liberal" basis of animal lib politics (making an interesting comparison with the different liberalism of CND) and putting forward the case for complete revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the state (explaining the nature of capitalist exploitation) it avoids being patronising by dealing with the movement as much as the politics. This contrasts with the SWP's recent treatment of the subject by seeking to explain the animal liberation movement rather than just criticising it as being irrelevant to the class struggle. Again, highly recommended. Here are the final 2 paragraphs:

"In the past, it could be said that given the low level of class struggle in this country (except for riots and miners' strikes of course), the animal liberation movement offered a chance to do something which wasn't "wishy washy", which was not afraid to take direct action. It was a movement that sidestepped the usual leftie nonsense and got down to the job in hand without intellectualising.

"But now these positive features are becoming a seri-

ous handicap. It is vital that those rebels involved in the animal liberation movement become intelligent class conscious revolutionaries. It would be a tragedy if they failed to contribute their enthusiasm and experience to the upsurge in the class struggle whose beginnings may already be detected emerging throughout Europe in the last year or so. The first step must be to clear the mind of the debilitating ideology of the animal liberation movement. Hopefully we have contributed by demonstrating how animal liberation is basically a liberal side issue that has emerged out of a given historical period".

"Animal Liberation - A Case Of Moral Indignation": 25p - (B&B, c/o The Unemployed Centre, Prior House, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton).

## ATTACK

THIS PAPER is a "one-off" publication, has 24 pages and 10,000 copies are in circulation. It is professionally produced and contains clever fake adverts. Although we may agree with some of its analysis of our society, sexual politics and criticism of the left, it fails to present any realistic programme of action to change society. Similarly to "Class War", it is insurrectionist, glorifying throwing bricks and Molotovs and rioting as if violence is somehow revolutionary in itself. The use of bomb-with-fuse graphics and articles like "Top Ten Tips for Killing Kops" only serve to reinforce the negative stereotype of anarchism as being about bomb-throwing and destruction rather than its creative ideas. Their mentality results from their belief that most people are actively opposed to capitalism and power relationships and all it needs is lots of aggro all around the world and we will all be free. The reality is not so simple - most people support the system, at least passively, and many actively. "Attack" fails to come to terms with this.

The attitude of the authors towards unions is summed up by a photo caption: "Build

barricades - not unions". We are well aware of the non-revolutionary nature of trade unionism but surely it is better to be in one than not. No one claims trade unions fight to abolish capitalism - only that they offer some protection to their members under capitalism. The article "Join the union..." fails to put forward any realistic alternative to trade unionism apart from vague notions like "self-activity" and "self-organisation". As anarcho-syndicalists we understand trade unionism's limitations and we are firmly opposed to union bureaucracies because they are more interested in their careers than our struggles. We propose an alternative - revolutionary unionism that transcends trade/occupation barriers and includes the community, based on participatory democracy with recallable delegates, not representatives; it will be a "school" for revolutionary education and its object is the defeat of capitalism with the social general strike and the establishment of libertarian socialism.

"Attack" has many contradictions, take the 2 articles on the IRA: "The idea that the IRA is an authoritarian elite, imposing its will on the community is complete bullshit", the 2nd article is criticises them: "In 1975 the Provisional IRA negotiated a ceasefire with the British army, on condition that British troops were removed from Catholic ghettos. But the minute the Brits pulled out, the IRA moved in: a different uniform maybe, but the same old police force."

Of course it wouldn't be fair to criticise "Attack" without saying they themselves don't claim to have the right answers: "If you're looking in 'Attack' for a description of the correct path to international revolution, you're wasting your time. There are no 'right' answers here, no 'correct' analysis, no organisation to join". But the mask up and stick the boot in advice from "Attack", in the absence of a revolutionary climate only leads to further marginalisation of anarchist ideas and disillusionment of the militants involved.





# Letters

Dear D.A.

While appreciating the points made in CH's letter (D.A 45) on the differences between authoritarian communism and fascism I would like to add the following for consideration.

For Lenin after the Revolution social life was to be subordinate to the party and so to the state. Mussolini (an ex-communist himself - eds) adopted the same attitude "All in the state, nothing against the state, nothing outside the state" was the fascist slogan.

In the artistic field both Stalin and Mussolini insisted that art should serve the state and clamped down on the experimentation of futurism.

More significant perhaps is the collaborationist approach taken by the Italian Communist Party towards the Fascists. Their General Secretary, Togliatti, and all members of the central committee signed the following statement in August 1936:

Direct Action,

Phoenix Press has now published Rudolf Rocker's book Anarcho-syndicalism. Thanks to everyone, in and outside the DAM, who lent money to make this possible. The book costs £2.50 and can be ordered through bookshops. If you want a copy and can't get one from a shop then send £3.00 to Phoenix Press (this includes 50p for postage) at: PO Box 824, London, N1 9DL. If you run a bookstall and want copies for that then they're available at usual trade terms from Housmans Distribution and A Distribution.



"The communists adopt the fascist programme of 1919, which is a programme of peace, liberty, defence of the rights of workers...we proclaim that we are ready to fight, with you and the Italian people, for the realisation of the fascist programme."

The mainstay of fascist support came from the middle classes. In Spain they supported Franco but interestingly in the republican zone they flocked to the small Spanish Communist Party which they rightly saw as the most effective block to the social revolution.

The end result for the working class is the same under fascism or state communism. I am sure the many Spanish comrades who were shot by the stalinists comforted themselves with the knowledge that after all, bolshevism is an entirely different phenomenon to fascism.

As for the reference in the original letter that a works supervisor was both a communist and Welsh, surely the point here is that being Welsh, a minority culturally dominated by England, he should have had more appreciation of the offense racist graffiti caused.

Yours in solidarity,

H Fantozzi.

Work has already started on a book to consist of writings by Tom Brown, a key figure in the Syndicalist Workers' Federation, forerunner of the DAM, and this will be brought out on the same loan system as Anarcho-syndicalism. This is a long term project and it is unlikely that Phoenix Press will be asking for loans for it before 1989. In the meantime, if any of you are interested in the Tom Brown book, or Phoenix Press generally, drop us a line.

On behalf of Phoenix Press, Mo.

Dear comrades,

The widespread consequences of the Wapping dispute are still to be felt nearly 2 years on in various social, political and economic aspects by many people, not least those who were most active in the struggle against Murdoch's crude capitalist empire.

Two of those most active militants were Ross Galbraith (a T&G branch secretary) and Sue Falkner (a NUPE shop steward) played important individual roles.

Ross and Sue made regular visits to Wapping and were involved in numerous pickets, fund-raising campaigns and strike support work.

During the dispute Ross and Sue were both accused of "conspiring with person or persons unknown to cause damage to TNT Newsfast Ltd" in Leicester. The charge also went on to say that Sue and Ross had conspired in Leicester and elsewhere in Wales and England. The charge was given an even more serious overtone because the "Leicester 2" were also charged with damaging a TNT lorry.

The outcome of their trial was a 6-month sentence, suspended for 2 years, for Ross and a 1 year conditional discharge for Sue. This was topped by a fine of £600 compensation to TNT and £70 costs each.

This is another attack on working class solidarity and is designed to break the fighting spirit of union and political militants. The DAM needs to emphasize its support for working people in struggle if it is to gain the respect of our class in general so I urge donations from DAM members (and readers of DA - eds) as soon as possible.

We must demonstrate solidarity to help Sue and Ross pay off their fines or we will deserve the scorn of working people everywhere.

Yours in struggle,

Alex.

Make cheques payable to Ross Galbraith and send to:

138 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1AB or  
2 Waingroves Walk, Abbey Rise, Leicester.

Dear Comrades,

I was interested to read your article on the housing situation in Hackney. You're dead right about the key question being control of the housing stock. Whatever their political colours, all bureaucrats (eg councillors, MP's, bosses, union officials, etc) hate it when we do things for ourselves, when we ignore their plans for our lives, when we reject their decisions.

But you should have talked also about how the tenants and squatters have organised against the council - not just gone on about "workplace organisation". The council workers are obviously vitally important in the struggle. But to concentrate just on them leads to dead-end work-erism. Most of the working class don't do waged work, especially in Hackney (20% unemployed, high number of pensioners, and so on). As has been shown in the past, there is much more potential and strength in struggles that are based in the community and the workplace, like the Russian Revolution, the miners' strike, the riots.

You end by saying: "Join us so we can fight effectively". Join you? Not one single member of DAM has been involved in the struggles in Hackney, to my knowledge. Rather than calling for the working class to join yet another political organisation, we should be encouraging, agitating, inciting, fighting with the working class rather than presenting solutions from the safety of a typewriter. The working class has been doing alright in Hackney in the last 6 months (compared to the general situation) without anyone from DAM telling us what to do. It would be nice for that to be acknowledged, for a change.

And, finally, who was that nasty little jibe at the end aimed at? "We despise those who believe in politicking and in spontaneous revolution by an idealised 'working class' and who will not get their hands dirty with 'reforms'". Class War? Whoever it was aimed at, at least they are doing something as compared to DAM. And I would have thought they realise how important small scale reforms are to our daily lives as opposed to the more revolutionary political absolutism of

## Poll Tax

CONFERENCE IN  
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c/o Clydeside Free  
Press, 37 High Street,  
Glasgow.

such groups as DAM.

In Solidarity, Charlie.

### AUTHOR'S REPLY

Dear comrade,

The offending sentence was aimed at left communists and other anti-syndicalists who believe working class self-organisation is only okay when they say it is. They fear syndicalism as workers' self-organisation in practice is outside their control, and they are not freer from elitism and class hatred than their more honest bolshevik mates. Despite ill-informed comments by Ian Bone in the "Heavy Stuff", I do not include Class War in that category. If I have any criticisms of CW I feel strongly enough about, I will make them to the faces of the members of CW I know in the Hackney area, not write to DA about them.

Who said the working class needs DAM? What DAM is is a self-organised federation of working people who believe in workers' self-organisation and want to put it into practice. We are not a vanguard; we are not opportunist; we don't worry about not being involved in everything because we have faith in the ability of our class to liberate itself. I won't argue about emphasis on industrial or community action here, but will say that DAM members are involved in unemployed groups and squatting (know Leslie's in Limehouse at all?), but you can't always tell because we're rarely flogging the paper when there's work to do. I urged people to join us in organising, not to follow our lead, there is a difference between organisation, discipline (based on solidarity, not obedience) and accountability, and the bureaucracy and "leadership" of political parties. DAM is a working class organisation not a political party.

In solidarity, Neill,

## DAM Aims and Principles

1. The Direct Action Movement is a working class organisation.

2. Our aim is the creation of a free and classless society.

3. We are fighting to abolish the state, capitalism and wage slavery in all their forms and replace them by self-managed production for need not profit.

4. In order to bring about the new social order, the workers must take over the means of production and distribution. We are the sworn enemies of those who would take over on behalf of the workers.

5. We believe that the only way for the working class to achieve this is by independent organisation in the workplace and community and federation with others in the same industry and locality, independent of and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies. All such workers' organisations must be controlled by the workers themselves and must unite rather than divide the workers' movement. Any

and all delegates of such workers' organisations must be subject to immediate recall by the workers.

6. We are opposed to all States and State institutions. The working class has no country. The class struggle is worldwide and recognises no artificial boundaries. The armies and police of all States do not exist to protect the workers of those States, they exist only as the repressive arm of the ruling class.

7. We oppose racism, sexism, militarism and all attitudes and institutions that stand in the way of equality and the right of all people everywhere to control their own lives and environment.

8. The Direct Action Movement is a federation of groups and individuals who believe in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism; a system where the workers alone control industry and the community without the dictates of politicians, bureaucrats, bosses and so-called experts.

The DAM was formed in 1979 from the SWF (Syndicalist Workers' Federation) and other groups and individuals believing in the principles of anarcho-syndicalism. It is the British section of the International Workers' Association. This was formed in 1922 and has national sections in more than dozen countries.

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I would like more information about the Direct Action Movement - International Workers' Association. Please send me information.

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Send to DAM/IWA, c/o Box DAM, Cambridge Free Press, 25 Gwydir St., Cambridge.

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## Deadline - Feb. 15th



# Direct Action

## "Fighting the Moral Backlash"

Open to non-DAM members — Sun, Feb 21st, 121 Railton Road, — Brixton, London — AIDS, The Alton Bill, Contraception — from an — anarcho-syndicalist perspective. Organised by DAM Women's — Commission — contact: Women's Commission, Box DAM, 52 Call — Lane, Leeds. A creche and meal will be available. —

# IRELAND: THE CLASS DIVIDED

This year is the 20th anniversary of the start of the fight by the anti-unionist minority of Northern Ireland for civil rights. By August 1969 loyalist reaction to their demands had brought war and British troops. 2 years later in August 1971 internment was introduced against anti-unionist activists (often not in the new Provisional IRA). It met generalised resistance from the minority, bringing down the Stormont government and heralding direct rule. There were rent strikes by whole communities and marches in Britain besides Ireland to keep up international interest and pressure on Britain. In Derry on 31st January 1972 British paratroopers killed 14 people when they fired on a peaceful civil rights rally. The need to defend anti-unionist communities from, firstly loyalist pogroms and then British state terror, gave birth to the Provisional IRA and is why the Republican movement is the largest anti-imperialist force in Ireland.

Housing was the area of discrimination most publicised by the Civil Rights Movement, mainly because it was used to gerrymander unionist majorities on local councils and deny the minority effective representation. To this the libertarian socialists of People's Democracy (now alas, Irish section of the Trotskyist 4th International) added more general working class grievances to gain support from Protestant workers. The benefits of the British welfare state; the IRA's decline as a threat since 1962 and Terence O'Neill's (Unionist prime minister) reforms had reduced sectarian tension to its lowest since 1932. Bernadette Devlin's majority of over 4,000 in the Westminster Mid-Ulster by-election in April 1969 showed substantial Protestant support for her campaign on that basis.

A different current in the Protestant working class was more significant. Ian Paisley's followers, often in the B-Specials (reserve police force) and the terrorists of the UVF reacted, first to O'Neill's reforms then to the Civil Rights Movement, with cries of treachery and indis-

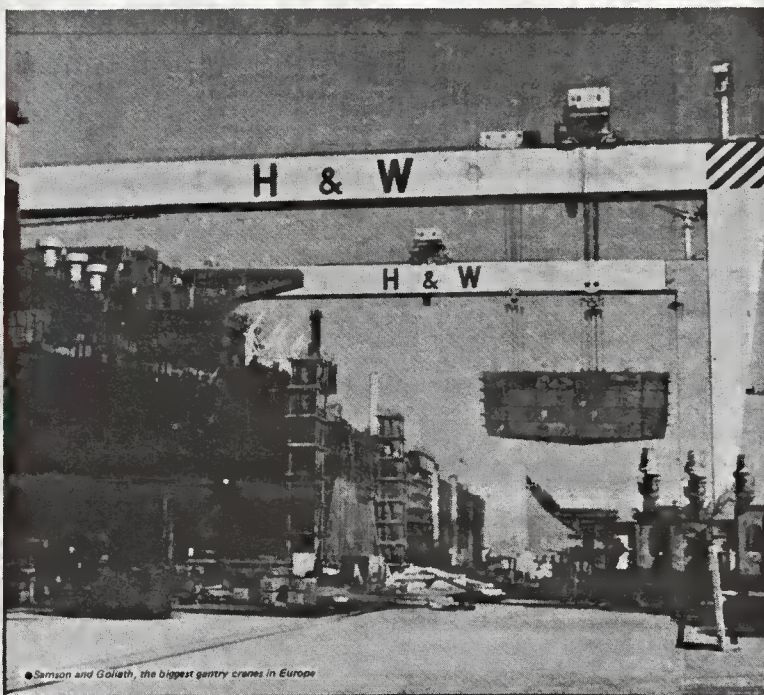
criminate sectarian violence. A UVF bombing campaign (attributed to the non-existent IRA) and mounting attacks on Catholic ghettos, tolerated by the RUC, by organisations like the Shankill Defence Association were their response to demands for civil rights in 1969. The growth of such groups included a sectarian trade unionists' group, the Loyalist Association of Workers, whose activities culminated in the May 1974 loyalist general strike that destroyed British attempts at power-sharing between nationalist and unionist politicians with the Sunningdale Agreement.

### JOB DISCRIMINATION

This reaction derived its strength, and still does, not from religious bigotry, but from something which is central to working class life in the 6 counties — job discrimination. The Plantation of Ulster with Protestant settlers in the 17th century was designed to subjugate the

most resistant part of Ireland. Combined with restrictions on Catholic property rights, it made the north east, particularly counties Antrim and Down, the most industrially developed region. Both bosses and skilled workers, who organised in exclusionist craft unions were Protestant and organised in their own ways against unskilled Catholic workers.

north east was effectively partitioned from the rest of the country by uneven economic development. Both skilled workers and bosses saw their economic interests as best served by continuing the union with Britain. Their common religion cemented this alliance as unionists against "Catholic" nationalism which predominated in the rest of Ireland.



Harland & Wolff Shipyard: a bastion of discrimination

This was strengthened by the Orange Order, a sectarian Protestant secret society formed to oppose the republican United Irishmen in the 1790's. Its role was to ensure "sound" Protestant influence throughout the establishment and increase sectarianism, including the labour movement. By the end of the 19th century the industrial

Despite some great displays of working class action across the sectarian divide in Belfast in the 1907 dock strike, the 1919 "44 hours" strike and the 1932 outdoor relief workers' strike, job discrimination and loyalist labour organisation maintained the sectarian division of the labour movement. Industrial employment is concentrated in ship-building and engineering. The major employers — Harland & Wolff, Shorts and Scirocco — have workforces that are less than 5% Catholic. This strengthens loyalist control of workplaces, in turn strengthening discrimination through intimidation and provides the base from which loyalist paramilitaries murder anti-unionists; burn them out of their homes and drive them out of their workplaces. Since the 19th century pogroms have been launched from the shipyards at times of sectarian tension. This control of industrial workplaces, and of Ballylumford power station near Larne, also gives them a hold over the Protestant community as they can deal with "rotten Prods" in the same way as Catholics.

Job discrimination, like all sectarianism, was institutionalised in the foundation

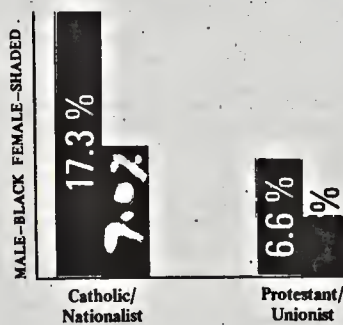
of the 6 county state on the basis of the 60/40 Protestant (unionist) majority over the Catholics (anti-unionist) in 1922. The deal let the unionists run the sectarian statelet how they saw fit, with a British military and fiscal guarantee but no political interference. The British got a foothold from which to continue strategic and economic domination of Ireland by themselves and their allies (now NATO). The legitimacy of Britain's claim to the 6 counties has always rested on the will of the artificially-created and maintained sectarian majority whose loyalty is guaranteed by non-interference in loyalist supremacy. The 1985 Hillsborough Agreement both got the 26 county government to accept that legitimacy and showed the conditions the loyalists place on their loyalty.

### COSMETIC

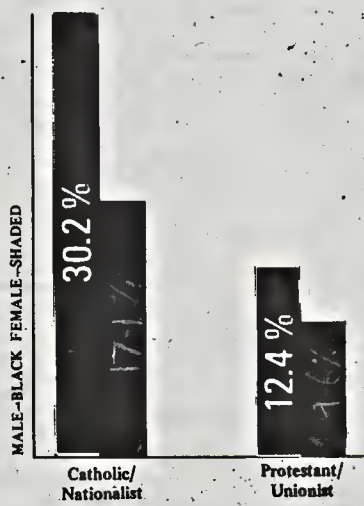
Despite cosmetic exercises to appease world opinion, since direct rule the British state has maintained and even strengthened discrimination. The ratio of unemployed Catholics to Protestants has remained more than 2-1. Investment discrimination has left predominantly Catholic areas with far higher unemployment — eg Strabane, Co Tyrone 32%; Ballymena, Co Antrim 13%. This is despite the 1973 Van Straubenzee report on job discrimination and the 1976 Fair Employment Act. The Fair Employment Agency is merely a clearing house for compensation for religious/political sackings. The British state is the employer in the case of the NI civil service, and through funding and orders controls ship-building and engineering — add a 20% turnover in the labour market each year and the scope for positive action is enormous — the will is not there.

The 6 county state is based on discrimination, for without it unionists have no reason to be loyal and anti-unionists would be too strong for stability. But the sectarian statelet cannot survive without British funding as it is not economically viable, so UDI for "Ulster" is not a real option for loyalists. Whatever tensions Hillsborough has caused between loyalists and the British government they need each other. The alternative, indeed the solution is a united Ireland — what kind of Ireland is up to the workers to decide, so to have an impact an anti-imperialist working class movement has to be built.

1971: Unemployment rate



1981: Unemployment rate



1985: Unemployment rate\*

\* Estimated figures by Bob Rowthorn, a Cambridge economist.

